

Signs of the Times.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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NO. 1.

POETRY.

BROKEN TIES.

BY J. MONTGOMERY.

THE broken ties of happier days,
How often do they seem
To come before our mental gaze
Like a remembered dream;
Around us each dissevered chain
In speaking ruin lies,
And earthly hands can ne'er again
Unite those broken ties.

The parents of our youthful home,
The kindred that we loved,
Far from our arms perchance may roam
To desert seas removed.
Or we have watched their parting breath,
And closed their weary eyes,
And sighed to think how sadly death
Can break all human ties.

The friends, the loved ones of our youth,
They too are gone or changed;
Or worse than all, their love and truth
Are darkened or estranged.
They meet us in the glittering throng,
With cold, averted eyes,
And wonder that we weep their wrong,
And mourn our broken ties.

O, who in such a world as this,
Could bear their lot of pain,
Did not one radiant hope of bliss
Unclouded yet remain?
That hope the sovereign Lord has given,
Who reigns above the skies;
Hope that unites our souls to heaven,
By faith's endearing ties.

Each care, each ill of mortal birth,
Is sent in pitying love
To lift the lingering heart from earth
And speed its flight above.
And every pang that wrings the breast,
And every joy that dies,
Tells us to seek a purer rest,
And trust in holier ties.

THE SABBATH.

"REMEMBER the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."—Exodus xx. 8.

GOD thus commanded Jacob's seed,
When from Egyptian bondage freed,
He led them by the way:
Remember, with a mighty hand
I brought thee forth from Pharaoh's land;
Then keep my Sabbath Day.

In six days God made heaven and earth;
Gave all the various creatures birth,
And from his working ceased;
These days to labor he applied;
The seventh he blessed and sanctified,
And call'd the day of rest.

To all God's people now remains
A Sabbatism, a rest from pains,
And works of slavish kind:
When tired with toil, and faint through fear,
The child of God can enter here,
And sweet refreshment find.

To this, by faith, he oft retreats;
Bondage and labor quite forgets,
And bids his cares adieu;
Slides softly into promised rest,
Reclines his head on Jesus' breast,
And proves the Sabbath true.

This, and this only, is the way
To rightly keep the Sabbath Day,
Which God has holy made.
All keepers that come short of this,
The substance of the Sabbath miss,
And grasp an empty shade.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SABBATH.

IN compliance with a request, I forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some remarks concerning the subject of the sabbath so much talked about, and show why it was given, to what nation, and how long it was binding upon them, what was typified thereby, and when it, as a day literally, was taken away, never to be observed as such by the children of God, any more than any other one of the seven days embraced in one of our literal weeks; and as the foundation of such remarks as I may be enabled to make thereon, use the following declarations: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."—Hebrews x. 9. "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."—2 Cor. vi. 2.

Not long since, through the kindness of a dear brother, I was favored with the privilege of reading an article, published "over the water," as a defense of the custom or binding principle that God's children are bound to keep the first day of the week as "holy time," or the sabbath. The article was carefully read, and I have seldom, if ever, seen more confusion in an article of the same length than in that; for the writer so mixed legal precepts, the Jewish ritual and gospel injunctions, that so far as his statements were concerned, there was a gross perversion of each, and a genuine "Ashdod" language. If the writer of said article expressed his own views of the subject, without any mental reservation, he discovered himself to be in lamentable ignorance of the difference between the law and the gospel; for not a single text was adduced from the apostles of the Lamb, the judges upon their thrones, to sustain him, and the whole of his argument was badly illustrated and essentially deficient.

If we turn to the book of Genesis we read the following, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, [kalah, completed, nothing to be added thereto, but developed,] and all the host of them. And on the seventh [shebii, from shibah, seven, the Hebrew number for perfection] day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested [shabath, to cease, but not to rest like a weary man, but cease, or stop] on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: be-

cause that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." However much men may cavil about the matter, there has been no addition to that creation since, but many strange things have been developed, many changes have taken place, since the Almighty ended his work of creation and formation; and the eruptions of the fearful volcano, the terrible earthquake, the resistless whirlwind, and the destructive current of water, one or all combined, has not added to that creation, neither annihilated one solitary grain of sand, drop of water, nor anything else. When our learned and wise geologists tell us of the great age of the earth, and how long certain material substances have been "growing," admitting the position that they have been growing so long does not in the least invalidate that truth of Scripture; for the growing of those substances does not create (call into existence) anything, neither could they grow were there not matter for them to feed upon or absorb by affinity. Whether the six days mentioned in Genesis be six of our literal days, six thousands of our years, or six millions of our years, matters not; for there is the division into six, then the seventh, showing the perfection of creation. I have been thus particular and somewhat lengthy, because, ambushed or hidden, there are infidel and atheistical sentiments where I never expected they would find a lodgment. Alas! fallen, depraved nature! where will you not lead us, if we are not restrained by grace?

In the twentieth chapter of Exodus are recorded what are denominated the ten commandments, and concerning the sabbath it reads, "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." And in the thirty-first chapter of the same book we are told exactly why it was given and what it signified, for it is thus spoken of, "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." And in the seventeenth verse of the same chapter it is spoken of again as a sign. The name "sabbath" is recorded one hundred and three times in the Old Testament from the same original word; and it was given to and

binding upon no other nation but the Jews, and they occupied only a small space of territory. It should be distinctly noticed that our God said it was a sign, therefore pointed to an enduring principle or substance, as shall be shown from apostolic authority before leaving the subject. The name "sabbath" is not a translated word, but merely anglicized; for had it been translated, the name could not have been retained in an intelligent manner, for the simple English is "rest." They who contend that the first day of the week should be kept "as holy time," have not as yet referred to the book, chapter and verse where the apostles have given the authority to transfer the name "sabbath" from the seventh day of the week to the first; neither have they informed us how to keep it in the different portions of the globe, that is, in the different latitudes and longitudes. For instance, when it begins with us, it ends on the opposite side of the globe, or those who are antipodes to us; nor have they informed us, in a latitude where there are two months day, how we shall proceed. The fact is, they have no more scriptural authority to call the first day of the week sabbath than they have to use the blasphemous titles "Rev.," "D. D.," or the papal distinctions, clergy and laity. Pious souls! they do not want the steamboats nor the cars to run on their sabbath; but they can have their servants harness up a fine "team" of horses, and ride out to their so-called church, and the poor laborer or mechanic, who has toiled the six days in which they have been idle, must either walk out or remain at home. Also, they can have a man pull away at a bell-rope, and thereby make a loud noise; they make more noise upon that day of the week than the same number of any other class of citizens. Their teachers, who occupy the "front ranks," receive from one to two hundred dollars for work that day; and the writer of this has never known one of these sabbatarians to deduct any of his interest money for that day, but exact always every cent. But he has been answered, "It is legal," which is freely admitted; but if the sabbath is so holy, how easy one seventh of the interest could be deducted; and many sabbatarians own largely in railroads, steamboats, turnpikes, bridges, &c. But do they not exact their pay on their sabbath? Certainly they do. If such conduct is not "straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel," where shall we look for it in modern times?

Having noticed some of the glaring inconsistencies of that class of characters who talk so much about a "holy sabbath" under the gospel dispensation, we will now bring their theory to the searching test of Jesus Christ and his apostles, as recorded in the New Testament, and see if their carnal theorizing is sustained therein. An inspired judge in Israel says, "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: but when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." After the baptism of Jesus his teaching commenced, and concerning the law and the prophets he said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." The Pharisees, whom Jesus so many times called hypocrites, soon began to find fault and accuse him and his disciples of being sabbath breakers, and in the twelfth chapter of Matthew is recorded one of the terrible rebukes that God incarnate gave them; and he also says, "For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day." In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew those Scribes and Pharisees are denounced by Jesus, seven times as hypocrites and once as serpents and a generation of vipers. Also, he said, "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." We have only to read carefully what has been recorded by Matthew, Luke, Mark and John, to see how many times those hypocrites attempted to entangle Christ and his disciples concerning the law, especially the sabbath day; but the carnal Jews, Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, doctors and lawyers were always rebuked and confounded. After the dear Savior had fulfilled his mission as a minister of the circumcision, the moment came when the sacrifice should be offered, and while nailed to the cross he exclaimed, "It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." The sun of that legal dispensation then set to rise no more; the requirements of the law had been met and fulfilled in every jot and tittle, the perfect sacrifice offered, and the Jewish ritual abolished. Now, as we inquire concerning this finished work, and the taking away of the first covenant and the establishing of the second, whose authority shall we take? Shall we abide by the decision of the inspired judges on their thrones, or shall we heed the doctrines of modern councils and un-inspired men? The writer of this feels that the testimony recorded in the Acts, the twenty-one epistles, and the revelation made to and recorded

by John, is of more value than the views of all the uninspired men who have lived on the earth since those judges were called away from the scenes of time. Now, as God may enable us, we will proceed to see what they say about that Jewish sabbath and the "gospel day" and the "christian's rest." There is at times much stress laid on the words, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The writer is so stupidly dull that he has never been satisfied that the expression means the first day of our literal week, named by Constantine, a heathen emperor, Sunday, or some other day of the literal week, but sometimes hopes he has known what it is in his experience to be in the Spirit; and when thus blessed, it is always the Lord's day. Admitting what the wisdom of this world attempts to sustain, (not prove by apostolic authority,) that it is the first day of the week, to whom do the other six days belong? Do they belong to man? The first day of the week would end on the isle of Patmos hours before it does here; and, as has been stated already in this article, the learned and wise teachers of our day have not told us how to proceed in the matter. The "poor, ignorant creature" writing this is so stupid that he thinks there is a certain declaration in the Old Testament that defines, explains and limits the "christian day of rest or holy sabbath," for it reads thus, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Also, this is the accepted time and the day (not days) of salvation. The gospel dispensation is called a day; and when the children of our God are in the Spirit, it is holy time, but not simply ten or twelve hours, one day in seven. The attempt to introduce carnal ordinances into the gospel church began at an early day, for "certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." And if we carefully read the entire fifteenth chapter of Acts we shall see the result. Some of the same carnal leaven is working in the church still. In the third chapter of Galatians the apostle rebukes his brethren sharply, and he begins that chapter by using the severe words, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" In the next chapter he says, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all." In the second chapter of Colossians the inspired judge declares that those ordinances were not only blotted out, but nailed to his cross; and says to his dear brethren, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in

respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath (days): which are a shadow of things to come; but the body (is) of Christ." But before he concludes he gives a positive command, saying, "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men. Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh." Now, shall we receive and believe the interpretation of this inspired apostle concerning the sabbath, or heed the carnal theory of them who assume to be wise above what is written? The apostle says those things were a shadow, and God said to the Jews it (the sabbath) was a sign; therefore neither was the substance (Christ), but pointed down through the vista of time to the gospel day, when the children of God should have peace in believing and joy in the Holy Ghost, and Christ, the Substance, would be that unto his dear people. Paul says, "There remaineth therefore a rest to [not for] the people of God;" and that rest in Christ is not one day in seven, but it has been that glorious day of rest to the church for more than eighteen hundred of our literal years.

Lest an improper and unjust charge should be made against them who do emphatically deny the authority of any man, men, or councils of men, to transfer the Jewish sabbath over to the first day of the week, it is proper and right to state that God's dear children in all countries have been a law-abiding people, so long as they have been permitted to worship God openly according to the teaching of the Spirit; and in the United States has been set apart as a day to abstain as far as possible from secular labor. I know of no class more willing to obey the law, as far as they can, than "Bible Baptists" are; but to regard it as a "holy sabbath," they do not, because they know that there is no apostolic authority for it. The writer remembers with deep sorrow a beautiful Sunday morning in the year 1861; but soon after the glorious "orb of day" had mounted his "fiery chariot" in the heaven and dispelled the darkness of night, the earth was made to tremble, and the "booming of cannon and the rattling of musketry" told the dreadful tale of death and destruction which were going on at and near "Bull Run," in the state of Virginia; and the so-called chaplains in both armies had been praying (?) for victory. Where was the holy sabbath then? O where? The piety of Great Britain, where there is so much "holy unction," and such profound knowledge of spiritual things, does not prevent her soldiers from fighting on their "holy sabbath." Is it any more of a crime to lie, to steal, to slander, to murder, on the first day of the week than on any other day? Certainly not; neither does the law know any distinction. The eternal Jehovah sends the terrible tornado, the destructive earth-

quake, the fearful volcano, and destroys life and property upon that day of the week as much as on any other day. Do not we poor mortals die upon that day? Are we not born in this world upon that day? Do not all things in nature move on the same as on any other day of the week?

When the dear Redeemer distinctly named the terrible vices and crimes which defile a man, and whence they come, does he say anything about sabbath breaking? No; but he says, "Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man." It should be distinctly noticed that those terrible things are in the heart before they are made manifest. After the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of the dear Redeemer, his inspired judges gave all laws which should be binding upon his disciples throughout the gospel dispensation; and neither of them has authorized any mortal man or men, in the plenitude of his or their wisdom, to transfer the Jewish sabbath over to the first day of the week and call that day sabbath. In the third chapter of Romans an inspired judge names eight vices and crimes, and in the fifth chapter of Galatians he specifies seventeen startling vices and crimes; yet in neither epistle to which reference has been made does he mention one word about sabbath breaking, and why? *Because it had been blotted out—nailed to his (Christ's) cross.*

Now, if God enables us, we will show what it is to break or transgress in a spiritual or gospel sense that sabbath which the church has entered upon and into, and has continued more than eighteen hundred of our literal years. In the Old Testament we have recorded the following, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. * * * * But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." During that long, dark, cloudy day of the legal dispensation, the path of the just was shining, and the prophets were enabled to predict with unerring certainty the coming of the Just One, and what should be accomplished; and Malachi (messenger of Jehovah, or my messenger) said, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, [from that dark and cloudy day of legality,] and grow up as calves of the stall." When that glorious Sun arose, the dark night of Judaism passed away, those old Jewish heavens were rolled together as a scroll, no more to mantle the church. When the glorious orb of day mounts his "fiery chariot" in the east, and rises in full-orbed splendor, the stars disappear, being swallowed up in the blazing rays of the sun; so when the Sun of righteousness arose, the carnal

rites and ordinances given to the Jews were forever removed from the church. Christ said to the woman, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such [and he will surely find them, and not be mistaken] to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him [not them] must worship him in spirit and in truth." But because this is the perfect day of the Mediator's reign and power, as Head over all to the church, it has not changed the vile passions of natural men, any more than the shining of the natural sun in the literal heaven upon the sea and land changes the nature of the monsters of the deep or the poison serpents and ferocious animals on the land; but vile man, in this perfect gospel day, remains the same wicked creature in nature and deeds, only as our God restrains him. Some dear ones, whom I think I love, think that the perfect day has reference to the entrance of the children of God into immortal glory; but I am not aware of any place or portion of Scripture where the term "day" applies to eternity; but perhaps some reader of this will say the poet sings,

"All o'er these wide-extended plains
Shines one eternal day."

Poets have penned many beautiful expressions, so far as language is concerned, and they sound very euphonious; but when tested by the word of our God they seem to be somewhat "overdrawn," and are not supported by divine authority. In this accepted time, this day of salvation, when the first covenant has been removed and the second established, this day of Mediator's power, this perfect day, true worshipers are not to kindle a fire, that they may compass themselves about with sparks, in order to walk in the light of such fire and the sparks they have kindled; for if they do they certainly will lie down in sorrow, because God has said it shall be thus. Therefore to-day true worshipers are not to offer an heifer, a goat, a lamb, a turtle-dove, a young pigeon, nor introduce a seventh day sabbath; for if any such things are done, they become sabbath breakers in the absolute sense of the word. The ninth chapter of Hebrews contains the divine exposition of the matter; and in the book of Revelation the same curse is pronounced upon him who addeth to, as upon him who taketh away. As has been already stated in this article, no man living to-day can point to the chapter and verse in one of the epistles authorizing us to call the first day of the literal week sabbath, or that the Lord Jehovah has told us under the gospel dispensation one day is more holy than another.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, let us be careful in our outward worship how we undertake to improve upon the precepts, examples and injunctions left on record for the rule of the church in and under this perfect day of gospel rest; for whenever and wherever we bring in any of that

Jewish ritual, we become sabbath breakers, for the apostle says, "There remaineth [thanks be to our God, it remains to-day even] therefore a rest to [not for] the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from his." The apostle is not dwelling upon the glorified state of believers in heaven, but is talking to the church here in her time state. I have complied with the request, but have not elaborated the subject in all its various branches, but have shown from apostolic authority that the true church has nothing to do with the seventh day sabbath, any more than she has to do with offering literal sacrifices; and there I leave the matter.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Dec. 8, 1883.

SCIO, Linn Co., Oregon, Dec. 6, 1883.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—

DEAR BRETHREN:—About a month ago I saw an inquiry in the *Gospel Standard*, over the signature of "R. H. B.," requesting the editor to give his views more fully concerning the duration of the sabbath, and the obligation that all mankind are under to observe it as a holy day throughout subsequent time, in which both the inquiry and the answer our dear brother, Elder S. H. Durand, was translated. I took up my feeble pen and wrote a reply to the editor of the *Gospel Standard*. After writing, I read it to several of the brethren here, and they requested me to send a copy of it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. This I am not able to do, as I have already sent the original manuscript to the editor of the *Gospel Standard*; but I will write in substance what I wrote to him, and if you see cause to publish it, all right; and if not, all right, so far as I am concerned.

To the Editor of the *Gospel Standard*—Dear Friend:—I have been a subscriber and a careful reader of the *Gospel Standard* for the last twenty-eight years, and have in that time received much comfort in perusing its pages, especially in relation to the christian experience. I have just received the October number of the *Gospel Standard*, in which I see, over the signature of "R. H. B.," a request for you to give your views more fully than heretofore on the subject of the sabbath, to whom it was given, and "write a treatise to show from Scripture that the sabbath or Lord's day did not cease to be with the Jewish dispensation, as the Old School Baptists say it did," &c. Now, I must say that I differ essentially from both the inquiry and the answer, but I am not so vain as to suppose that I can convince you that you are in an error on this important subject, for I well know how tenaciously people will cling to the prejudice of education; but I thought that I would merely give you, upon Scripture premises, the reasons of my differing from you.

You, in your reply, start out thus, "Both queries belong to one great subject, the divine appointment of the sabbath; therefore we have placed

them together, and shall endeavor to give a concise reply to both under two heads: 1. Relating to the universal institution of the sabbath. 2. Relating to the obligations men are under in the manner of keeping it. 1. The universal institution of the sabbath. It is an ordinance of God, binding upon all men and in all ages of time. To prove this from Scripture, we need not enter systematically into the controversy whether the sabbath was ordained for the whole world or for the Israelites only," &c. In the first place I will say, it would be impossible for me to follow you in all your meanderings, for you have wandered round and round in the dark, and have fallen at every step, and have proved nothing. I will merely take you up upon the premises you have laid down. First, relating to the universal institution of the sabbath. Now, I will endeavor to prove upon Scripture testimony that the institution of the sabbath as delivered from Sinai was universal to one nation of people only; that is, it was universal so far as every individual person, whether male or female, belonging to the family of Israel was concerned, and no further. But you further say, "Suffice it to say that we shall ground our argument on the Scripture fact that the Holy Spirit makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile in the obligations imposed upon all men to do and live, transgress and die. We are conscious that it is believed by many that the law was given to the Israelites only, and that the Gentiles were never under it." I ask you, sir, when did all men come under the law? Not surely at the giving of the Sinai law covenant, of which the law concerning the sabbath was a part. We know that the whole world of mankind came under the law and under its curse in the Adamic transgression. Did not condemnation and death reign over all nations of the earth, as supremely from Adam to Moses as from Moses to the present time? Paul says, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions."—Gal. iii. 19. But that the Gentiles were ever under the Sinai covenant, I deny. The law covenant was made with Israel after the flesh, a typical people, and with no other people. The new covenant, pertaining to the gospel, was made in the ancients of eternity with Christ, for or in behalf of his spiritual Israel, an antitypical people, and with no other people. Now, for the proof that the law concerning the observance of the seventh day sabbath being given exclusively to the fleshly Israelites, we refer to the following Scripture testimony: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that

soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death."—Exodus xxxi. 12-15. In the above quotation there are two of my positions clearly proved. First, that the law of the sabbath was given exclusively to the children of Israel. Second, that its duration expired at the expiration of the Jewish or legal dispensation. You say, The "sabbath is an ordinance of God, binding upon all men." Does the Bible say so? It does not. The Bible says, "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." Again, "Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you." Not between me and the world, or "all men," if you please. You further say, "And in all ages of time." I ask again, Does the Bible say so? It surely does not. It says, "Throughout your generations." Is that "in all ages of time?" Now I ask you, Have you proved this? I answer, You have not. Alas! what a discrepancy there is between you and the Bible. Has not the generation of the children of Israel passed away eighteen hundred years ago? My dear sir, I do not write these things to harm you, but for your good, if it may be, by the blessing of God. The sixteenth and seventeenth verses read, "Wherefore the children of Israel" (mind this, it is the children of Israel, not "all men") "shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations," (not "all ages of time,") "for a perpetual covenant." Now, sir, a sign is a mark of distinction, to distinguish the children of Israel from all other nations of the earth, according to the word of the Lord by Balaam, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."—Num. xxiii. 9. This sign was to distinguish Israel as a separate and distinct people, as the highly favored of the Lord, and whose God is the Lord, and to whom were given the oracles of God. Circumcision was another sign peculiar to Israel. Paul says, "Abraham received the sign of circumcision."—Rom. iv. 11. Those signs were to continue with them throughout their generation, or as long as they remained a separate and distinct nation of people from the nations of the earth. But now the sceptre has long since departed from Judah; hence these signs have ceased forever. But the law of the sabbath was to continue with the children of Israel "throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant." This covenant belongs to and is a part of the covenant that God made with the children of Israel when he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, and the new covenant nowhere speaks of any day of the week as a sabbath or holy day. And Moses saith, "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this

day."—Deut. v. 2, 3. Now this shows beyond contradiction that the covenant concerning the observation of the seventh day sabbath was not given to or enjoined upon any people prior to the Sinai covenant, and also that it was given exclusively to the children of Israel, as Paul saith, "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves," &c.—Romans ii. 14. Again, "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held: that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."—Romans vii. 5, 6. It will be observed that this last quotation was spoken especially to Jewish believers at Rome. For in the first verse he says, "I speak to them that know the law;" which of course were Jews, and would imply that there were those who did not know the law, (Gentiles), and that as a consequence were never under the Sinai law covenant. This must suffice as far as a seventh day law sabbath is concerned. And when we search for a gospel sabbath, it cannot be found in the first, seventh, nor any other day of the week; no, indeed it cannot. I this evening defy the whole Arminian world to show within the lids of the Bible, from the beginning to the end, a "Thus saith the Lord" for a "Sunday or first day of the week sabbath." The inquiry may be made, Is there then no gospel sabbath? Yes, there is; and I praise and adore the God of all grace that there is a glorious gospel sabbath day! Yes, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."—Heb. iv. 9. And the prophet spoke of this glorious sabbath day more than seven hundred years before it began to dawn on the earth in these words, "And in that day" (mind, that day is the glorious gospel sabbath day) "there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek," (remember this also), "and his rest shall be glorious."—Isa. xi. 10. The Gentiles had no interest in the old covenant sabbath; but they have in the new and everlasting covenant gospel sabbath day of rest. This is the glorious antitypical sabbath day, that all the weekly, monthly and yearly sabbaths pointed to as their antitype. This glorious day began to dawn when John the Baptist began preaching in the wilderness of Judea. Then was fulfilled the prophecy of Malachi iv. 2, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." This glorious Sun has risen, and shall never go down, according to Isaiah lx. 1-4, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And

the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side," &c. This is an eternal sabbath of rest. The glorious Sun arose at the coming in of the gospel kingdom, and shineth more and more unto the perfect day, when it will be consummated in glory. "The sun" (that is, the natural or created sun) "shall be no more thy light by day," (that is, the gospel sabbath day,) "neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."—Isaiah lx. 19, 20. O, is not this a glorious sabbath day of rest? Let others grasp the shadow; but let us, who have felt the burden of sin, and have been sinking in deep mire where there is no standing, and have been laboring under the sentence of condemnation, and are weary with groanings, flee to Jesus Christ, the antitypical sabbath, and rest in his spacious bosom. It is there I desire to rest my weary head. I can find no rest to my weary soul anywhere else. The psalmist saith, "Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."—Psalm lxxxiv. 9-11. Now, as the natural sun rules the natural day, so in like manner does the spiritual Sun rule the spiritual or gospel sabbath day, if you please.

But you say, "And the Lord having completely fulfilled the law of works, together with all the types of the ceremonial law, as the Head of the new dispensation of grace, he was at perfect liberty to change the sabbath day, while still retaining its obligations." Dare you say that Christ changed the sabbath day from the seventh to the first day of the week? Are you a teacher in Israel, and teach an inquirer after truth such a notorious absurdity as this? I challenge you to prove such an absurdity by "Thus saith the Lord." I boldly affirm, without fear of successful contradiction, that the Lord did not make such a change; but he took it out of the way. Hear what Paul says concerning it, "And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abound-

ing therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."—Col. ii. 4-17. Now, these were all law ordinances that Christ took out of the way. He could not have taken the ordinances of men out of the way, for Peter admonished his brethren to "submit themselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake."—1 Peter ii. 13. But the ordinances referred to are such as these, the passover, and the priestly offerings, together with those named above, new moons and sabbath days. These are all shadows of things to come, which the ordinances of men are not. But the body or substance which these shadows point to is of Christ.

Now, as respects the first day of the week sabbath, profanely called the Lord's day, I will say that it is merely a traditionary sabbath day, which is no sabbath at all. You say the Lord changed the day from the seventh to the first day of the week. I say if the Lord had thus changed the day, it certainly would have been so recorded in the Scriptures; and from the fact that no such record can be found, we take it for granted that the Lord did not change the day. So we are forced to look elsewhere for the change; and history informs us that there was no day of the week observed by the early christians as a sabbath until the days of Constantine, the Roman Emperor. Smith, in his dictionary of the Bible, page 819, says, "We have never found a passage, previous to the conversion of Constantine, prohibitory of any work or occupation on the former;" (that is, the first day of the week;) "and any such, did it exist, would have been in a great measure nugatory, for the reasons just alleged. After Constantine, things become different at once. His celebrated edict, prohibitory of judicial proceedings on the Lord's day, was probably dictated by a wish to give the great christian festival as much honor as was enjoyed by those of the heathen, rather than by any reference to the sabbath or the fourth commandment; but it was followed by several which extended the prohibition to many other occupations, and to many forms of pleasure held innocent on ordinary

days. But it was surely impossible to observe both the Lord's day, as was done by christians after Constantine, and to read the fourth commandment, without connecting the two." And Constantine named the first day of the week "Sun day," after the name of his heathen god; for he was a worshiper of the sun. Thus we see that *Anno Domini* 300 Constantine instituted the Sunday or first day of the week sabbath; and Constantine was the source and fountain-head from whence sprung Catholicism. Thus, then, Sunday, profanely called the Lord's day, is of Roman Catholic origin; but the Lord's day is altogether a different thing.

We will now examine your Scripture quotations in order to prove the validity of the first day of the week sabbath. Your first quotation is John xx. 19, 26. First, 19: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst," &c. Does that prove anything? Of course he had either to rise on the first or some other day of the week. Verse 26: "And after eight days again his disciples were within." Was that the first day of the week? It surely was Monday, the second day of the week. Your next is, "Also the day of pentecost was the first day of the week." &c. Well, it is a true saying, "A drowning man will catch at a straw." The day of pentecost was a great day with the Jews, when the Jews from all nations would be at Jerusalem on that memorable day (long before spoken of by the prophet Joel) and witness the descent of the Holy Spirit, and hear the apostles speak in the tongues in which each one was born. The Holy Ghost descended and lighted upon the head of Jesus at his baptism; but to say that the Holy Ghost descended to honor any day of the week, is too absurd for a wise man to even think. You say, "Thus Father, Son and Spirit have eminently honored the observance of the first day as the day of rest." This is truly outrageous! Your next is, "Paul met the disciples at Troas, and break bread to them on that day."—Acts xx. 7." This is the only passage that has any weight whatever; and even here you are mistaken again. He preached on that day, but he did not break bread on that day. The passage reads, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. * * * And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him, said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day,

so he departed." So you see that it was after midnight when he break the bread, consequently it was on the second day of the week. But aside from this, Paul abode with the disciples at Troas seven days, and he was no idler, as he said, (2 Thess. iii. 8,) "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you." It is then presumable that the apostle preached every day of the seven that he abode with them, especially as he preached all night the night before he left them, never to see them again, as he said in verse 25, "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." And we have no Scripture testimony to prove that even this was the Lord's supper, as it was customary in those days for the disciples to assemble at their houses and break bread and eat together, as shown Acts ii. 46, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." And this is also what is meant 1 Corinthians v. 11. And Christ always broke the bread before eating, as in the case of the five and seven loaves. Also was known to the two disciples in breaking bread, because it had been his custom while he was with them to break the bread on all occasions.—Luke xxiv. 30, 35. But suppose it was the Lord's supper, it was not on the first day of the week; and if it had been, it does not prove that that day was sanctified by the Lord as a sabbath day of rest or worship. This one case only that we read that the disciples assembled on that day for worship, does not establish it even as a custom, much less as a command. But as Paul had been preaching all day and all night, perhaps without refreshment, he doubtless was hungry, and he break bread and eat as his breakfast, preparatory to starting on his journey. The preaching of Paul at Troas upon the first day of the week is one isolated case; but we read (Acts xviii. 4) that he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks, &c. Again, "They came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures."—Acts xvii. 1, 2. And again, "And on the sabbath [day, margin] we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither."—Acts xvi. 13. Now, these are only a few of the many passages of Scripture which show that the apostles preached on other days, as well as on the first day of the week. And if Paul preaching one time upon the first day of the week make it obligatory (as you say) on all men to observe it as a holy day, how much more would Paul preaching so many times on the seventh day, as stated

above, make it still binding on all men to observe it as a holy day, as the "Seventh Day Adventists" of America contend. But in all your hard labor and wresting Scriptures in order to prove the sanctity of the first day of the week, you have failed to produce even one scriptural command. And what does all your carnal reasoning amount to without one "Thus saith the Lord?" I say it amounts to nothing. Then you have only proved your sabbath system to be false, nothing more. And I repeat, if God had instituted the first day of the week in lieu of the seventh, he surely would have told us so somewhere in the Bible; but when we get outside of that good book, we are walking on slippery ground, and are sure to get a fall.

You say, "A minister among the Old School Baptists in America says, 'If my strawberry-bed needed weeding on the sabbath day, it would not hurt my conscience to weed it.' Well, but, friend Durand, it might hurt some other person's conscience, and give him offense," &c. Our dear brother, S. H. Durand, is a minister in high standing among the Old School or Primitive Baptists in America, and an orderly walking christian man, and stands as a pattern of godliness among all good christian people, and it grieves me to hear him thus calumniated. Brother S. H. Durand had doubtless reference to the seventh day sabbath. He does not esteem the first day of the week a sabbath day at all, neither do I; but it would hurt my conscience to weed my strawberry-bed on the first day of the week, for this cause: an apostle has commanded, saying, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake."—1 Peter ii. 13. And I look upon the first day of the week institution as being nothing more than an ordinance of man; but as it is the law of our nation, and that, too, for the benefit of mankind, it is our duty to obey it, and if we fail we sin against the laws of our country. But it does seem to me that you strict Baptists of England take special pleasure in traducing your brethren of America; and nothing but a sense of the justness of the cause of truth has induced me to take my pen, even at the advanced age of seventy-seven years, in defense thereof. So you see I am not a novice.

Now I will write a few words by way of application, and bring this very lengthy letter to a close. The Lord's day occurs only once in the Bible that I now remember, and it is in the book of Revelation i. 9, 10: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," &c. This day is not measured by twenty-four hours, neither is it measured by the risings and settings of the sun; but it is an eternal day, that shall never end. Its sun shall never go down. It is the day the prophet looked forward to when he said, "In

that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." And every poor, laboring, heavy laden soul who is so happy as to enter into that glorious gospel rest, ceases from his own law works, as God did from his works of creation.—Heb. iv. 10. God did not cease from his own works until he finished creation; then he ceased forever. In like manner the sin-burdened mourner never enters into this glorious antitypical gospel rest until he has finished his legal works, (which are emblematically set forth by the six days labor previous to the seventh day sabbath). Then he ceases forever, and the soul finds rest in Jesus. It is such he calls to come unto him. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. xi. 28-30. O what a glorious sabbath of rest! after the six days hard labor and sore travail of soul under the law of works, to enter in through the gates into the holy city, the new Jerusalem, the gospel kingdom of heaven, and there with the blessed Jesus sit together in heavenly places, and find rest to their souls! Thus they cease forever from their own works, as God did from his. O how far, how very far this glorious gospel sabbath transcends all temporal law sabbaths, which can only give temporary rest to the body after the six days bodily labor, but cannot give rest unto the soul. But this blessed gospel sabbath gives eternal rest to the soul, when the soul labor under the law is finished. This is the sabbath day that I feel more particularly interested in.

Yours, &c.,

JOHN STIPP.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Nov. 6, 1882.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Several months have passed since I received a request from a member of the Maple Creek Church, Washington County, Pennsylvania, to write through the SIGNS upon the Song of Solomon vi. 10. In the midst of much care and travel in different and distant places, I have had but little opportunity to write, yet I have ever remembered the request with a desire, if possible, to comply. There have been times when the unspeakable beauty of the King and the unsearchable riches of his kingdom have been unveiled in grandeur before me, impressing a desire to write or speak of them; but frequently, after such attempts, I have seen such imperfections in what I have spoken or written, that I have become discouraged. Yet the thought comes to encourage me that it is only as Jesus speaks through us, or dips our pen in the living fire of gospel truth, that we can speak to the comfort of his people; and that all such messages, no matter in what light we may regard them, must ever be confirmed by the great King as messages from the

immortal throne in the accomplishment of his purposes.

The verse in question reads as follows, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" I understand it to be a presentation of the triumph of the church in her Lord, of her exceeding majesty and beauty, and of the fall of all her enemies before this all-conquering reign. I will not occupy time in writing even briefly of its connections, although of exceeding preciousness to me, for it is the Song of songs. All the songs of Zion spring from its overflowing fountain, and unite in its one ascription of praise unto the Redeemer, who stands as the central figure of all its beauty, and his church the object of his tender care. The introductory clause of the text does not express a doubt upon the mind of the writer regarding what he sees, but it is an exclamation of rapture, as the church of the living God arises before him in the splendor of her triumph. She looks forth, he says, "as the morning." This is a declaration of triumph, as the morning triumphs over the night. A similar figure is used in Revelation xii. 1: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." There is not, I think, in all the realms of nature a figure illustrative of complete triumph more than this. The night cannot stand before the coming of the day. Darkness must always flee when light cometh. That light, pouring its golden rays into the darkest caverns, penetrating into every dark corner, illustrates the splendor of gospel triumph. What folly to talk of "resisting the progress of the gospel." As well might the night talk of baffling the day, of preventing the rise of the morning sun. This was tried at the crucifixion of the Redeemer. The powers of darkness then and there used their utmost, marshaled their dark legions in bloody array, in an endeavor to extinguish the light of the gospel. The fiendish spirits of hell in human form were gathered in council about the cross and at the tomb; but they were there "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," "to do," continues the inspired record, "whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." The powers of darkness were gathered at the "new tomb" of Joseph to prevent the resurrection of the dead. What availed all these things when the appointed moment arrived? Blooming with immortal vigor, the Lord of life and glory arose a mighty conqueror over death, hell and the grave.

"Tis the Savior! angels raise
Fame's eternal trump of praise."

The long shadowy way, the Jewish evening or night, was at an end. The church arose in that glorious resurrection from under the law and its curse in vital oneness with Christ, her living Head. Destroy this great foundation principle, and all is con-

fusion and despair. No ray of hope brightens the dreary scene. But faith reveals the foundation upon which all our hopes of salvation rest, the vital relationship of Christ and his church. Upon this principle, and upon none other, he could bear their grief and carry their sorrow; "wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. Thus,

"In all that Jesus did on earth
His church an interest have;"
"And when he breathed his dying breath
His saints with him o'ercame."

Have our eyes been opened to see this vital fact? If so, we know something of the principle upon which the eternal truth of the text rests. "Thy people," says the psalmist, "shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning." Here, then, is the "day of his power." The sun had arisen, the morning had dawned upon Israel's hitherto benighted tribes. What a glorious morning, and what a splendid triumph! And from the womb of that morning in the experience of the trembling child of grace, from the dawn of that wonderful day, Jesus is the "chiefest among ten thousand," the lovely Redeemer to him. This trembling child knows the Savior by precious experience. Jesus had come to him when "darkness was upon the face of the deep" of his own depraved heart, and spread the glory of his triumph there. The King had rode by in the wonderful chariot of his love. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," had shined in his heart, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." That face, beaming with the brightness of the glory which he had with the Father "before the world was," and with everlasting love, is known by the child of God. When turned upon him in his wayward walk, it calls in his wandering feet. When waves of fierce temptation roll around him, and dark storms of doubt and fear obscure his sky, it is this blessed Jesus who looks through the storm and calms its angry powers. Does not the redeemed child know him? Does not the music of his name touch the most tender chords of his being? Of this the poet sang,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear."

But let us notice the next clause of the text: "Fair as the moon." This, I presume, is designed to express the radiant beauty of the church as seen by an eye of faith. There is nothing in that sight calculated to terrify or trouble a child of grace. He can say, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord." The church reflects the glory of her God. There the brightest displays of his power are seen. She echoes back his praise, and the glory that she had in him before the world began. "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." This is not

the view which the ungodly world have of the church, hating as they do her doctrine, her order, and all that pertains to her glorious travel. She is not fair to them. "Away with this people," they say; "we cannot bear such doctrine, such order." This world has never beheld the church as the text presents her. No polluted eye can gaze upon her glory, any more than they can look upon the glory of her King, "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."—1 Tim. vi. 16. It is folly to talk of conforming the church to the world. It is utterly impossible to show them one of her beauties. As they knew not the Master, so they know not his children. But this beautiful church is beheld by the redeemed child, who can clearly see a distinction between her and all other denominations. It is a church adorned with heavenly raiment, and who shows in all her faith and order the stately steppings of the Lamb of God.

"Clear as the sun." John speaks of the gospel as "a pure river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." It is this gospel clearness that adorns the church in the language of the text. There is emphatically but one gospel system of redemption. This is not made up of the various creeds and theories of this or any other polluted age. It comes from heaven, and not from man. Salvation does not in a single instance proceed from Sunday schools, mission boards, distracted meetings, or any such polluted source. The religious denominations of this world love and practice these things. They are but the mists and fogs of human reasoning that arise from these dark places. They arise from and belong to the systems of this world, and the slimy feet of the antichristian serpent can always be traced in these dark doings. These denominations form no part of the church of the living God. Human reason is not her guide; popular approval is not the tribunal whose decisions she regards. "And the city," says John, "had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." "I came down from heaven," the Master distinctly asserts; and all that pertains to the way of salvation bears this heavenly seal. "Out of Zion," says the psalmist, "the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." It is in the light falling from the "great white throne" that we see the church, those floods of living splendor falling from her gospel altar. In that brilliant light we behold her in the text. It is in her standing in Jesus that we now see her. It can well be said of her here, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." No earthly conditions hang about her. No creeds or theories of men's invention mar her perfect beauty. Her wonderful and glorious travel rests not upon earthly contingencies. It

could not be said that she was clear, if there were such earthly spots upon her. Remember that I am referring now to her standing in Jesus. She must be clear as the sun. No darkness is concealed in its rays. Clouds and fogs arising from the earth may obscure for a time its beauty from those who are upon the earth, but they do not mingle with its light. It is this "gospel of the kingdom" in its purity that we need. The slightest deviation in the preaching of it from its doctrine or order, can never result in the least possible good to the church. We may make bungling work sometimes in preaching this gospel, but that does not interfere with its clear, steady light. That light is in and of itself. And as it shines out of and falls upon this glorious church, it shows her redeemed out of every nation, tribe and kindred, standing upright in her living Head, "clothed with the sun." It was thus the psalmist saw her in the language, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof." There are times in our earthly pilgrimage when these things are clearly seen, when the church appears before us in the splendor of her triumph. How beautiful is the sight! how lovely are her palaces! How great and holy is her King, and what wisdom shines in the ways of her God. Moses must have seen her thus in the enraptured language, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places."—Deut. xxxiii. 29.

But we will pass to the consideration of the closing clause of the text, "Terrible as an army with banners." There is an awful majesty surrounding the church as she rises before us in the exaltation of her God. "How dreadful is this place!" says Jacob. "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."—Gen. xxviii. 17. But how different are the feelings that she spreads among her foes. An Old School Baptist Church, in a good, healthy travel, is a terror to the enemies of the cross about her. But she is certainly not in a good, healthy travel when there is an inclination to mix with the nations around her. As she furls the old banner and lies down in the belly of the lion, she ceases to be a terror to the enemies of the cross. "They are not so selfish as other Old School Baptists," "or as they used to be," is now heard among those whose whole lives are spent in blaspheming the name of the most high God. "We like you so well," "You preach exactly what we believe," our enemies say to the minister of the old church, as they would reach him with their poisonous tongue, pouring into his ear their disgusting flattery.

"Come, walk into my parlor,"
Says the spider to the fly."

"Let us bait our hook," they say, "with the applause of the world, and such earthly inducements. Put them on thick, for we have plenty to spare."

Are the war-worn veterans of the cross to be gulled by such vanities? Is this fair church to bow her head and receive the favor of a polluted world, to wear the yoke of bondage to the decrees of popular applause? This can never be. Yet such is, undoubtedly the inclination where there is a disposition to temporize or shrink from plain gospel doctrine or order. The faithful servant of Jesus is not even to inquire what would be popular with his brethren in this respect. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God," says Paul to Timothy. We cannot expect to cleave unto the cross without making enemies of its enemies. The very word "army," in the text, implies this warfare. There would be no use for armies if there could be no enemies to fight. It is not a struggle for eternal life that we are writing about. It is the life in the christian's heart that begets a warfare, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." This warfare is not the cause, but the evidence of life eternal. So in the church of the living God, these conflicts for the truth are not the cause, but the evidences of life from on high, unmistakable evidence of the victory of the Lamb. "His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." Here is our mighty Conqueror, the source from whence all our victories come. And that army, clothed with his presence, must ever remain victorious over all the powers of darkness.

But let us notice, in the next place, the banners which wave in the eternal sunshine of its presence. Says the psalmist, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." This banner is a declaration of the glory of the kingdom and of her exalted King. Engraven upon it are the wonders of his love and the victories of his grace. The doctrine of God our Savior is seen here. Notice that this banner is to be displayed, not hidden. "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel," says the Savior. Cleave to this glorious banner more closely in the thickest of the fight. Hold it firmly, ye standard-bearers of eternal truth, as the enemies of the cross gather around you. It is the sure emblem of your victory, and of the brightness of your Father's glory. "And his banner over me," says Solomon, "was love." This is the banner of the church, it is exclusively for her, the ensign of her King, the emblem of her glorious victory in him. Encircling her on either side, underneath the lowest places reached in her travel, rising above her a mighty canopy of everlasting love,

it speaks in thunder-tones of almighty power, of infinite wisdom, of sovereign grace, and of the unsearchable treasures of wisdom and knowledge in that great fountain of eternal love. It must rise above the towering heights of time to give lasting comfort to the child of God. This world is but a land of desert and drouth, a wilderness of woe to the trembling child. There is no abiding comfort upon its sin-cursed shores for him. There is within him a yearning for something above and beyond it all. "O for rest from toil and pain in the holy mountain of our God," is his constant cry. Heaven is the only panacea for his woe, and earth has no sorrow that it cannot heal. Thus onward and upward moves this bannered host of the most high God in the triumphs of her living Lord, until the ages of time shall have been gathered, and the blazing glories of immortality shall dawn forever upon her.

"There the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet;
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul."

Not one is to be left out in this glorious triumph; all are to reach its unbroken rest, and join in the exalted song of victory unto God and the Lamb forever. In the fervent hope of this blessed gospel we press on to the bright realization of its "eternal weight of glory." And as this vessel of mercy is tossed upon the storm-covered way of time, we realize continually that this hope is as an anchor of the soul, "both sure and steadfast." It reaches above the angry crest of every billow of trouble that rolls in upon our soul, and takes hold of the great white throne, "whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 20. Through this blessed hope we look up in a bright path to the cloudless realms of eternity, and see this victorious army clothed in heavenly raiment, shining in the glory of her exalted King, bathing in the boundless ocean of everlasting love, while heaven's eternal arches ring with shouts of sovereign grace.

In the bright assurance of this blessed gospel, I remain, as ever, yours in its holy fellowship,

WM. M. SMOOT.

P. S.—I would say to brethren and friends in Pennsylvania that I returned to my home yesterday in safety from my recent visit among them, and was favored to find all well at home. I was absent from home about three weeks, and realized some precious evidences of the Lord's goodness and mercy upon the trip.

W. M. S.

FAULT-FINDING.

DEAR BRETHREN:—While this is not a word in the Bible, it yet includes the substance of several words that are used there, descriptive of several habits into which men are apt to fall, and which when engaged in

by professed christians, bring wounds and reproaches upon the cause of Christ. For this reason I desire to write about it, warning against forming the habit.

1st. It is good to keep a careful watch for the truth, and to rebuke error wherever it may be found. But this is not "fault-finding." In this sense the Lord finds fault with men, and in this sense we have a right to find fault. But that to which I desire to call attention at this time is the constant criticism of little things, little weaknesses or slips of others, and that behind their backs; perhaps saying there what we are careful enough not to say to their face. It is that disposition to use a microscope every time we look at another, so that his faults look much larger than they really are, and then to pick flaws even when they do not exist. This disposition would say that an angel's form was not perfect, and seek for flaws in the exalted throne of the Majesty in the heavens itself. The habit of speaking disparagingly of every one of whom we speak, of talking over their failings and weaknesses rather than their good qualities, is what I mean by "fault-finding." It is a weed that needs very constant watching, else it will grow in us rapidly, and choke the growth of precious christian graces in our hearts.

2d. Let us see what evils are included in or related to this monster evil. It is closely related generally to hypocrisy. Those given to fault-finding are nearly always given to great pretensions of friendship and great expressions of admiration for the good traits of another when in his company, but woe to his reputation when behind his back. It is also the near relation of boasting. It says, "See what a pattern I am. Look at that brother's faults, and then refresh your eyes by a look at such a pattern of righteousness as I am." "That brother," it says, "does so and so, or is so and so, but of course I am free from such faults." It is also refusing to obey the word which forbids "judging." It says, "I am capable of judging my brother: I will not leave him to be judged by God." We are commanded to judge ourselves and not others. To judge others argues an entire ignorance of our own selves. I have generally found that fault-finders are guilty of nearly every imperfection and wrong which they see in others. At least it is sure that they lack that charity which "thinketh no evil." This evil also includes the evil of "tale-bearing." Is there a meaner, more despicable habit than carrying wherever one goes tales to the harm of another? Such and such a report is going about a brother. It is said that he has such and such a habit, or has done this or some other wrong. This is the form such conversation takes. "Slander" also is its twin brother, so near in appearance to "fault-finding" that it is hard to tell the difference. And if we allow the latter a lodgment in our intercourse, soon we shall find that the former has slyly crept in also, and that we have mistaken

the one for the other. And there is so little difference that we might as well harbor one as the other. Besides as a general thing they are inseparable. "Bearing false witness" follows close upon the heels of "fault-finding." Either the faults are magnified or else multiplied until the real truth is lost sight of, and this is "bearing false witness." Then if we talk of a brother's faults, and not of the many good qualities which he may possess, we are creating false impressions again. It matters not how much that man may love God and his cause, and how devoted his time and talents and means may be to that cause, these fault-finders, like crows, always scent the unsound spots and feast upon them with great delight. I know of no poorer living than other people's failings. But fault-finders, like crows, furnish poor eating themselves. Fault-finders are generally "busybodies" in other men's matters. Having no legitimate business of their own, they must needs pry into that of others. And it is very soon that they detect something wrong; and so they go about to set it right by telling all around what a bad thing this brother has said or done. And they do this for a pretended interest in the welfare of that brother and the cause. Let each one take care of his own vineyard, and he will have little time left to see after the weeds in his brother's vineyard. I remember that once when I was teaching school I said, "If any one sees another look off from his book for the next half-hour, I want him to tell me." Pretty soon a boy said, "Teacher, I saw such a one look off from his book." "Well," I said, "what were you doing?" If each one will be busy about his own task it will save a good deal of fault-finding. "Whisperers" belong to the same family as the fault-finders. A whisperer will take you one side, and say, "Have you heard so and so about such a one? You must not tell it, nor let it get out for the world." And so the evil thing is told, and naught is heard but the sibilant sound of the letter S, like the hiss of a serpent as he projects his venom. Even the world despises the whisperer, and the fault-finder is a first cousin to him.

3d. From what does the spirit of fault-finding arise? I would answer, From a heart at variance with the command to love our neighbor as ourself. Love will seek to conceal a brother's faults if any are seen, and love will prevent our seeing many. But to be more particular for a little while I would say that sometimes it has its root in "envy." There is a secret feeling like this, "That brother has an advantage over me; he has some gifts, or abilities, or good qualities, that I have not; he is in a higher position than I am," &c. And so the spirit of envy begins to hunt after weak spots, and begins to blazon them abroad, to the hurt of that brother. Sometimes, also, it proceeds out of "jealousy." A brother is of good report and stands high in the esteem of others. He is

loved, and the people show him great attention. At once the cruel fire of jealousy is kindled in some one's heart, and burns until it consumes all kind feeling and brotherly love, and leaves in its place nothing but the ashes of bitterness and enmity. And so the tongue begins to speak foul and slanderous things, still under the pretense of great zeal for the cause. "Hate" also is to be detected in this evil habit of fault-finding. As love means the desire for another's advantage, so hate means the desire to harm another. And therefore I say that hatred is at the root of this evil. "Pride" also shows its head here, and "self-sufficiency" is not far absent. The secret feeling is, "See my superior goodness." I always feel sure in the presence of a fault-finder that he also sees plenty of flaws in me, and only waits the presence of the next brother and my absence to begin to make them known. Of course I know that he thinks meanly of me, or else he would not suppose that I would delight to hear of the faults of my brethren. "A boastful spirit" also is a fountain of fault-finding. A spirit to herald abroad what self has done and said, to claim great piety, great love of holiness and great abhorrence to sin, to set the light of one's own goodness out the clearer by holding it up against the dark background of another's faults. The most subtle kind of boasting is that which endeavors to show how unworthy others are. "Mean, petty spite" has something to do with this vile habit. Some fancied slight, some suspicion of coldness upon the part of that brother to ourselves, some word or act of that brother which did not bend to our desires, rankles and festers in our hearts, and so we strive to injure him by fault-finding; perhaps unconscious of the sly, creeping serpent of spite in our own breast. This habit also argues an implacable, unmerciful, unforgiving spirit. It seeks not the good of any one. It is one unmitigated evil from beginning to end. It is conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and is an everlasting shame.

4th. This evil of fault-finding leads to many evil consequences. And chief among them, it seems to me, are the results to the guilty one himself. Such a habit indulged in turns his conversation away from that which is spiritual and profitable, and his thoughts and meditations cease to be of Christ and him crucified. Thus his usefulness and power to be of benefit to his brethren is injured. There is fostered in him a hard, censorious disposition, and he loses his former warm love to his brethren. In this way he loses the joy of salvation. Peace flees from his heart as a dove from the hawk's nest, and disquiet and unrest are his; because in his evil-doing he cannot commit the keeping of his soul to God, where only is rest. Then also see the evil results to others. Some are sure to copy after him, and so the evil widens and spreads, and soon he learns that he also is being criticised; the biter is being bit; he, like Haman, has

built a gallows for himself. As this evil spreads like an eating cancer, the whole church feels that infection, and pain and suffering are the result. Instead of dwelling at peace and in union and mutual trust and helpfulness, they become sore and suspicious and distrustful, and can walk heartily together in nothing. Besides this, how many a brother who was strong to be of use has been injured in his work by this abominable habit of fault-finding. A fault or weakness of which he may or may not be guilty is told among strangers to his lasting harm. How many hours of grief his own heart feels that those whom he loves should so wound him, and they are things of which it is worse than useless to complain; perhaps failings over which he has wept and grieved many a time. His heart needed binding up and his hands staying up, and when he looked for help behold a blow. O how blessed it would be if "each could hide a brother's fault, and with him bear a part." If nothing else is to be considered, the good of the cause certainly should be kept in view. And is the cause advantaged by this spirit of fault-finding in any way? When brethren meet together it is far better that they should speak of Christ and his salvation, and if they speak of their brother at all speak of him as a trophy of grace and how grace is reigning in him, rather than of things which do not manifest its reign. This would be to the encouragement of our own souls and to the glory of God. Besides it violates the commonest principles of fairness to be pointing out and dilating upon a brother's faults behind his back. If we are to try a brother, let him be present by all means.

5th. I cannot close this letter without pointing out some ways in which this spirit of fault-finding exhibits itself. First, It includes everybody and everything except one's own self. Second, It excludes all other conversation perhaps for hours; for when one delights in garbage he is not apt to have much of a supply of healthy food. Third, It exhibits unmitigated self-conceit. If the fault-finder did but know it, his self-conceit is patent to every one. Fourth, One such spirit in a room of brethren is like one dead fly in the ointment of the apothecary, it will pollute the whole company, and impart its unsavory flavor to the whole conversation, and unless grace prevents will send each one to his home corrupted; because "evil communications corrupt good manners." It will show itself by such expressions as these, "I do wish such a brother would not preach so long; that he had better gestures; that he would not speak so fast or so slow," &c. "Did you not hear such and such an expression from him? I do not think that is exactly sound or wise," &c. "Such a brother is too quiet or too noisy; does not talk enough or talks too much; is too gloomy or has too much humor about him." Or perhaps it will be some custom in his order of worship, if he be a minister, or some custom in the church which is wholly immaterial in

itself that is criticised. The fault-finder is ready to insinuate, if a brother has a good report in the world, "O he yields some principle of truth, else it would not be so." "I fear he is not sound, else so many would not go to hear him," if he be a minister. If such an one hears of a large ingathering into any branch of the church, he is ready to suggest that he thinks that pastor and that church are too anxious to get members in, and are not as careful as they ought to be as to whom they receive. The fault-finder is quick to detect any lack in a sermon, and to see that it is wanting in spirituality or something else, when he could not tell what a sermon ought to be to save his life. He can see that certain things said ought not to have been said, and things unsaid ought to have been uttered. The fault-finder never praises anything; his eye is fixed, seeking after something to censure. After he has talked all day about a brother he has not said one good thing about him.

Lastly, brethren, let us guard against this habit for our own sake, for our brother's sake, for the sake of the cause. May God give us grace to guard our tongues from evil, that they speak no guile. May love reign in us forever and ever, is my prayer.

As ever, your brother in hope,
F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Dec. 5, 1853.

P. S.—Dear brother Beebe, since writing the above article, the SIGNS for December 1st has come to hand, and I desire to express my joyful approval of the editorial upon "the hunters and fishers." It calls attention to many things which I fear have been too often forgotten by us. I have long believed that to understand rightly the figurative language of prophecy we must remember that it first had its application literally to the Jews and the nations around them, and then, as that people and their foes were a type of the church and her foes, the language applies spiritually to-day. And to understand its spiritual application there must be some understanding of its literal application in that day. This you have set forth in your clear editorial. Just as the scattered Jews were hunted literally to restore them from the bondage under which they groaned, so God sends forth his servants to-day, who in every way, whether by pulpit or fireside preaching, hunt out his scattered children. And I felt like rejoicing over the clear expressions touching our duty in this matter. God's predestination is absolute, it is true. I believe and love it with all my heart. There is not an event that is outside of God's decree. But God's secret will or predestination is not our rule of conduct. Express commands are our rule, and woe to us if we neglect them to follow inferences which we (not the Spirit) shall draw from any revealed doctrine. Because salvation is of grace, carnal reason draws the false deduction that we may therefore sin with impunity. It is equally a false and fleshly reasoning when we say,

"God has predestinated all things, therefore let us be idle." This shoves obedience to God one side equally as much as the other. One says, "Live as we list, if we are saved by grace." The other says, "Live as we list, because God has predestinated all things." If God will bring his people in in his own time, it is equally clear that he will drive out the wolves in his own time. But I notice that those who are satisfied to let the Lord's predestination bring in the lambs are not satisfied to let it also keep out or drive out the wolves. "O consistency, thou art a jewel!" The truth is, as you have so ably set forth, we are to do our duty as God has commanded. "Revealed things belong to us and our children forever." Brethren, look out for the lambs and wandering sheep. Hunt them and fish them. I wish all would read brother Beebe's editorial again, "and be not hearers only, but doers."
F. A. C.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."—Matt. xviii. 20.

These were the closing words of our Savior while instructing his disciples, concerning offenses and trespasses; and the preposition "for," beginning the sentence, indicates a close relation to something going before. In the first verse of this chapter the disciples asked, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" being prompted, no doubt, like many are to-day, by a spirit of aspiration, thinking that our frail faithfulness in duty and head obedience will commend us in the sight of God, and that our worthless names will be written as great in the kingdom of heaven. Such, no doubt, have their reward.—Matt. vi. 16. But in answer to them Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Dear brethren, we need not enlarge on this last passage, for every one that has felt the heinousness of sin, their just condemnation in the presence of a just God and his righteous law, their utter imbecility and lack of power to raise themselves above their helpless state, must know something of the helplessness of little children. As a little child upon its earthly parents is dependent for every means of temporal support, for food and raiment, care and protection, counsel and chastenings, and all other things that tend to its comfort and discipline, so every child of grace is dependent upon their heavenly Father for all blessings, both temporal and spiritual. "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is [not will be, provided he humble himself, but is] greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Then we see that a feeling sense of their littleness and helplessness is what humbles them. It is a manifest evidence of the indwelling of the holy Spirit of God, or "Christ in you the hope of glory." For it is only by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit

implanted in the heart that enables each child of grace to see his imbecile state, which humbles him at the feet of Jesus. The finger of God alone can keep him there. And our blessed Lord declared that the receiving of such a little child in his name is the receiving of himself. But he gives a solemn warning to as many as shall offend one of these little ones which believe in him. He then told his disciples that there is a "needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." The paragraph at verse fifteen and after the twentieth, indicates a close relation of the subject therein contained. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name." Let us consider what it is to be gathered together in the name of Jesus. The gathering together in church organization is described by the mouth of the prophet. "Fear not, for I am with thee; I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather them from the west: I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, (even) every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 5-7. To be gathered together in the name of Jesus is to be gathered together in the strength of Israel's God. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I [not will be] in the midst of them." Jesus is the nucleus, the bright morning star. They are gathered by his Spirit's power, and drawn by the sweet cords of his love. And as many as are thus walking, they have the sweet assurance of his, "Lo, I am with you always, (even) unto the end of the world." Jesus described to his disciples the necessary requirements to entitle one to an entrance into his kingdom, and then forewarned them of offenses, telling them that it must needs be that offenses come, and instructed them how to dispose of offenses. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Then, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." There seems to be a difference in disposing of offenses and trespasses. An offender is to be cut off, but a trespassing brother is to be regained. Mark you, it is a brother that has trespassed, and we are to go to him as such. We must go in the spirit of a brother. "Now, the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "If he hear thee, [which he will not fail to do if there is that reciprocal love of God dwelling richly in the heart of each,] thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect

to hear them, tell (it) unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Yet in all this they could go forward only in the strength of Israel's God. He says, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the Vine, ye (are) the branches: he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." Now, brethren, this is a strong figure, but there is no figure stronger than the substance. We find in the figure that the branches are but an outgrowth of the vine, drawing all their life, strength and succor from the vine, and all deriving their life and existence from the germ of the seed of the vine. Wherefore he saith, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." "Again, I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." This we find to be in perfect harmony with John xiv. 13. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." How important it is that we be found abiding in Christ our Head, and his love, his guiding Spirit, be found dwelling richly in our hearts. May Zion's children ever be kept by his power, having no righteousness of their own, but clothed with the righteousness of Christ, is my prayer. Amen.

ALBERT DAVIS.

FOREST CITY, Mo.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, Mich., Nov. 21, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—There is such a fullness in the Scriptures, which are given for our instruction, correction and reproof, that we realize the more we speak of them, the more remains to be spoken; and the more we write or try to tell of them, the more we see that the half cannot be told. And among the things written we find these words, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." These words were addressed by James, the servant of God, to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, whom he calls brethren. Sometimes they are called holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling. How then came they to have faults, which they are to confess one to another? This same servant of God asks us, "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence even of your lusts which war in your

members?" Bringing to view the warfare or conflict which is in every one that is born of the Spirit, which is indeed holy and heavenly. But the flesh is weak, and in it dwells no good thing. And it is by the Spirit that we are led to see our faults and frailties, and to confess them one to another. Why are we to so regard one another? We might think that if we confess to God that is all that is required. But we are taught that we are not independent of each other, being all members of that one body which is knit and joined together by bands, and that groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. And none have a right to defile this temple, and sin one against another. We all wish to have a place in it; we do not want to be destroyed; we wish to be members of this glorious body. But do we always remember that we are members one of another, in considering the brethren? If we think we are Christ's, do we also think they are Christ's? If we feel that with all our faults and failings Christ still loves us, so with all their faults he also loves them. We are all of his body, the church, and one cannot say to another, I have no need of thee; although to our weak comprehension we may not see what use they are to us. But it is God that hath set the members in order as it hath pleased him. And if one member becomes weak or sickly, and the whole body suffers with it, we can quickly see that it is of the body, if we suffer or feel for it. And if any member is overtaken in a fault, he is bound to confess that fault. It may have been done long ago; we may not have realized how aggravating it was; we may wonder why the brethren are cold or estranged from us; why we are troubled and vexed on every side. We begin to search ourselves, or rather the Spirit searches all our hearts, and opens up our secret sins in the light of God's countenance; we see ourselves as God sees us; we feel that we are vile in his sight, and we pray, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults." We are vile in our own eyes, and we know we are in the eyes of the brethren. We feel to confess to them. But if we do this only in form, or because we find it commanded, and think that we have done all that is required, it will do no good, unless there is granted us true repentance. But when our grievous faults are brought before us, and we weep bitterly over them, and sorrow after a godly manner, and confess that which we so plainly see to be wrong, the brethren will be sure to forgive us, if they are also in the right spirit, though it may have been something done in time long past; like as Joseph's brethren, who sold him to the Ishmaelites. How long the time was until Joseph had waxed great. And they who had sinned against him were brought very low, and had to come bending to him. And when they were in great trouble, their sin was brought to their mind, and they said, "This is because of the evil we did unto our brother." So the Lord brings us to confess our

faults one to another, and admonishes us to love one another, to forgive one another, to use hospitality one to another without grudging. Not that all the graces are to be expected of one, and the rest say, That is all right, it is just what they should do. But let each and every one take all these things to themselves; it is for every one; one to another. If we say we are glad to see such ones acknowledge their faults, that it is something we have long felt they should do, and perhaps think we do well to forgive them, and feel very well satisfied with ourselves, we may be the very one that is the farthest away; for "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, he [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." And we are also told what we should not do. This same servant of God tells us, "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned. Behold, the judge standeth at the door." And one asks, "Why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? For we should all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." And we are not to be "provoking one another, envying one another." Some would think that they who are all children of God and all brethren would not do this, and would not need this admonition. But we read of the chosen people, the children of Israel, that they envied Moses in the camp, and Aaron the servant of God. We are told that "wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who can stand before envy?" And it was for envy that Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt, because they knew their father loved him. But God remembered him. And there was a blessing on the head of him who was separated from his brethren. So if we try to injure each other through envy, it may fall on ourselves, and at the last we may have to come confessing our faults one to another. Not that we should say, They have wronged us, and must get down at our feet. No, indeed! If they were to do this, we would feel the most humiliated ourselves; but let each and every one examine themselves, and make all due confession. It is sweet to feel that we are at the feet of the brethren; but it may not be as well to want them at our feet.

"And pray one for another, that ye may be healed." That which is whole cannot be healed. And when we see the sick, lame, halt or withered, how do we feel towards them? Do we indeed long to hear the dumb speak, to see the lame leap like the hart, not turned out of the way, but rather that it be healed? If this is our earnest, fervent desire, then we are praying for them. And when we see poor, erring ones led captive, or out of the way, how do we feel towards them? Is it the honor of the kingdom or our own honor we are afraid they will wound? Is it not our pride that is cut a little? Are we afraid they will disgrace us? or do we in any way despise them?

or do we pity and grieve and pray for them? Are any cold, or lukewarm, or puffed up? There may none be so poor as those who are saying, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee [saith the Spirit unto such] to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see." Do we feel envious and hateful towards these, or do we pity and pray for them? If we pity and pray for them, they shall be healed; for the prayer of faith shall save the sick. Not that we have faith in the prayer, but we have faith in God; therefore is our prayer unto him, knowing that he can raise the sick and forgive their iniquities; that he is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Only to think of being faultless; of being partakers of that exceeding joy. We have sometimes here rejoiced with exceeding joy; we have had some sweet earnest of the joy to come. There is nothing so sweet on earth; there can be nothing sweeter in heaven than the glory of his presence.

KATE SWARTOUT.

CHAMBLISSBURG, Va., Oct. 7, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—By your permission I will write a few lines for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for the consideration of the lovers of the truth, and especially for the benefit of brother H. J. Redd. While he is a stranger in the flesh, (I hope not so in the Spirit), his communication in the SIGNS of September 15, 1883, has borne upon my mind in such a way that I feel impressed to write, hoping at least to drop him a consoling word or two.

Brother Redd, when I read brother Rittenhouse's answer to your communication of May 1, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I was perfectly delighted with his answer, and thought it was in time and season, and I hoped for a fruitful result, which I now feel satisfied with. I think I understood you just as he did, from the tone of his letter. Your answer to him is consoling to me, and I am drawn out in sympathy to you, and feel to say that you are not alone; that the feelings which you express in your communication, desiring to know whether your labors are acceptable among the churches or not, is one that is common among preachers, according to my judgment. Such feelings arise from a sense of unworthiness, and it yields the peaceable fruits of the Spirit. The apostle Paul was desirous to know on some occasions that his labor was not in vain. You speak of your gift as being so small that you feel it is not worth the attention of the brethren. The apostle must have had similar feelings when he thought himself the least of all the apostles. Now, if I know any-

thing about the feelings of a gospel minister, there is laid upon them a necessity, and that necessity is such that it creates within them a burning desire for the welfare of the saints and the glory of God. There is a work now for them to do, and the Spirit of the Lord is upon them to qualify them for the very work which he designs them for. If he intends one for a pastor of churches, we need not be surprised at the desire arising in him to baptize believers, and also a desire to know that his ministerial labors are acceptable with the churches. I have thought that when the Lord is qualifying one for the ministry, that it is like unto a child learning to walk. The child is encouraged to make the effort, and tries; but fails. It then seems discouraged, and so fearful of falling, that it is hard to make another attempt. But by encouragement it finally makes the second effort, and so on to the third, and through great fear of falling it finally walks. Now, the child has learned to walk, amid great fears of falling. And the more danger it sees of a fall, the less apt it is to fall. The pastors of churches have much responsibility resting upon them, and have much to encounter, and necessarily must be prepared for hard jars, and to meet the false doctrines and teachings of the world. Now, brother Redd, I expect you are desirous to know one thing, and that I desire to know also, which is, that the Lord has called you to preach the gospel. This desire comes, I think, from the Lord. Obedient children obey their parents through love, and not through fear of punishment. Just so we, through love to our heavenly Father, desire to know his will and to please him.

Brethren editors, I was called off from finishing this communication, and have failed to find time until the present, (November 23), and having a remittance of ten dollars to make for the SIGNS, I have concluded to send it to you for your disposal, and I hope you will do with it as seemeth best.

As ever, your brother in gospel bonds,

P. M. WRIGHT.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Although I lost two weeks last month from work on the History, on account of sickness, I still hope, if the Lord will, to send you the manuscript in January, 1884.

Yours in love,
SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., Dec. 5, 1883.

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

We still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars, see advertisement on last page.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

We have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME FIFTY-TWO.

WITH this New Year we greet our patrons through the first number of the fifty-second volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Divine goodness and mercy were abundantly displayed in sustaining the founder of this paper against the storms and trials of almost a half-century, and enabling him to see the fruit of his labor in the encouragement and comfort of thousands of the afflicted and poor people of God in their scattered locations, before the welcome voice of his Lord called him home to rest, after he had passed the age of four score years, laboring in the work of love to the last, and so wonderfully strengthened that to the very day of his departure he was enabled to speak with unflinching tongue the praises of his Redeemer, to the profit of those dear saints to whom he delighted to minister with tongue and pen. Since he fell asleep the same evidence of the favor of the Lord has been manifested in the kindness of the lovers of that doctrine of God our Savior, for the publication of which the paper was established; and now in the commencement of a new volume it is with humble gratitude for mercies past that we look forward, trusting in the same grace for support through the opening year. Highly as we appreciate the sweet fellowship and kind forbearance of the saints, the unknown future would be full of doubt and danger to us were it not that the immutable love of God is our refuge. Trusting in his grace, which is ever sufficient for all trials, we are encouraged to continue our labors, and still to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The doctrine of salvation by grace is immutable as its Author, and unto all who believe Jesus is still precious. That doctrine of which Christ crucified is the sum, can never fail to be food for them which are ready to perish; and he who laid down his life for them will ever supply them with that food in the proclamation of his gospel "as the truth is in Jesus." It is not necessary that there should be any new doctrine devised for the gratification of the capricious appetites of such as love not the truth. They have their food furnished by antichristian teachers, and the world hears such; but it is the design of this paper in the future, as in the past, to know nothing as sound doctrine but that which has the seal of inspired authority. Those who are led by the Spirit of God will recognize in this the truth which they have been taught in their own experience; for that Spirit never teaches anything but what is written by those who were moved by the Holy Ghost. In expressing to each other the things so learned, there is a mutual witnessing to the truth, by which fellowship

is developed and brotherly love is continued. For this object this medium of correspondence was established, and its success is attested by the fact that the circulation of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES now extends into all sections of the country, and finds many thousands of readers who love its visits. It was feared by some that when the original editor was called home, that steadfast devotion to "the simplicity that is in Christ" might be sacrificed in pursuit of the allurements of popular approbation. During nearly three years which have elapsed since his departure, many have expressed their gratification that the same principles have been maintained which were announced by him in the first issue of the paper; and many most gifted writers have continued to enrich our columns with contributions which, tested by the standard of the Scriptures in the light of christian experience, will compare favorably with any writings of men since the apostolic age. Deference to inspired authority and courteous regard for the views of others have been prominently characteristic marks in the articles submitted, so that angry controversies have not annoyed our readers, leaving a large space in our columns to be occupied by many who have felt constrained to record the goodness of the Lord in their personal experiences. To those dear brethren and sisters who have thus favored us with their generous assistance, is largely due the credit for the extended usefulness of our paper; and while thanking them sincerely for past favors, we earnestly solicit a continuation of their highly esteemed correspondence on all subjects of interest to the scattered children of God. Local and personal discord can in no case be profitably published to the world; therefore we shall regard it as a favor if none will ask us to inflict such matters upon the patrons of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In no case can we knowingly admit such articles in our columns. If there are any who require as the price of their favor that we must espouse their quarrels, we must resign their patronage, as we are accountable to him who says, "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."—2 Tim. ii. 24-26.

While strife is to be avoided, however, discussion on any point of gospel truth is desirable; and as long as it is conducted in the spirit of meekness, it tends to edification. Such discussion will be acceptable at any time, and our patrons will be interested in its perusal. As none can assume to be infallible, all should be willing to carefully consider any objections to their views which may be presented in meekness and courtesy, with the scriptural reasons on

which such objections are founded. This discussion is entirely different from controversy, wherein the subject discussed is lost in personal strife for the mastery. Every item of gospel truth is of inestimable value to them who love the Lord; but it is of little moment to the saints whether one or another is triumphant in a personal contest.

In entering upon this new year of the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we solicit the continuance of the same charitable forbearance with which our patrons have kindly judged our efforts in the past. Although with thankfulness we adore God for his mercy and grace by which we have been sustained in the past, it has been so entirely by his power that no room is left us for boasting or self-confidence. Relying alone upon that same unfailing grace, therefore, we go on with the work of serving our brethren in the publication of our paper, maintaining the same doctrine and contending for the same principles to which it has been devoted since it was founded. While we can only promise to labor with such ability as the Lord shall give, our desire is that the dear saints may find comfort and encouragement in reading the coming volume, as so many thousands have done in those which have preceded it. The terms for the ensuing year will remain the same as for the last year, the style and quality of mechanical execution being unchanged. While every reader is solicited to aid as his judgment may authorize in procuring paying subscribers, those whose names appear in our published list of agents are especially requested to assist in extending our circulation as far as they can do so. For terms, see advertisement on page 12.

GOOD HOPE THROUGH GRACE.

It is to the trembling little children of God one of the most important questions whether the hope upon which they have fled for refuge to lay hold is indeed that good hope which is set before the saints, and which is Christ in them the hope of glory. That they do desire to have that assurance of hope they are confident, but they fear lest they may have mistaken that desire for the hope itself. Knowing by personal experience the painful anxiety which is produced in those who are troubled by this question, we would suggest some thoughts of comfort from the sure testimony of the inspired record, as applied by the Spirit in the experience of these troubled ones. Nothing else can relieve their doubts but that which they have been taught of the Lord; therefore it is only by stirring up their pure minds by way of remembrance that they can be strengthened and encouraged. Clearly none can remember anything which they never knew; and for this reason the very same truth which brings strength and encouragement to those who have been taught of God to know its preciousness, is to them that perish foolishness and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. The opposite effect

produced upon the different classes of hearers by the declaration of the truth, discriminates with infallible certainty in every case between the subjects of divine grace and those who know not God. When Jesus is preached as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes, only such as have so learned Christ can receive that word with gladness. To all others it is either an idle tale, having no interest, or a hateful doctrine, destroying all the self-righteousness in which they trust. Neither of these characters has any desire to love the truth which exalts Jesus as the only name whereby we must be saved. If by the eloquence of Apollos and the irresistible logic of Paul these enemies of the doctrine of Christ could be rationally convinced of its truth, they could attain to no better belief than that which causes devils to tremble before the almighty power which they know only to fear and hate. The holy Spirit of God alone has power to give a new heart and produce love and hunger and thirst after righteousness. Therefore, where this fruit of the Spirit is found, the unmistakable seal of that indwelling Spirit marks an heir of eternal life and of that full redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Without love to God there can be no wish to be conformed to the righteousness which is revealed in our Lord Jesus, for all the mind which the sinner has by nature is the carnal mind; and as that is itself enmity against God, it is manifestly impossible that any desire for righteousness should arise from that mind. They who trust in their own deeds for justification certainly feel no desire for the righteousness which is of God by faith; for going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. In their self-confidence these have no need of any hope through grace. Being in themselves rich in imaginary good works, they despise that hope which is all the dependence of the conscious sinner. But that hope which is through grace alone is the only "good hope." All else is the delusive imagination of that carnal mind which cannot be subject to the law of God. This is the divinely authorized test by which to distinguish between that "good hope," which is exclusively through grace, and that spurious vain confidence which is called the hope of the hypocrite, which, like the spider's web, is corrupt and frail as the source from whence it originates. All who look to their own righteousness to render them acceptable in the sight of God, are relying upon this false hope, which can never bear them above their own attainments; and as all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, there is no possibility that a robe of that material can ever afford protection under the piercing scrutiny of that Judge who desires truth in the inward parts, and whose unalterable declaration is that only they who follow peace with all, and holiness, shall see the Lord.—Heb. xii. 14. This standard of perfection ex-

ceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, who trusted in obedience to the law of Moses. It is the righteousness of God revealed in Jesus Christ, applied by faith to the justification of all you, "who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God."—1 Peter i. 21. There can be no mistake as to this being "good hope." As it is "in God," it is well said to be "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. vi. 19, 20.

Some tried and bewildered child may say, "All this is very consoling to those who have that good hope; but my trouble is the doubt whether mine is really that hope." It brings little comfort to such a child to be told, even by those whom he believes to be saints, that his hope is genuine. It is too vitally important a matter to be settled by the fallible judgment of man. But we have endeavored to refer every one who is so tried to the evidence of the work of the Spirit in his own experience, as attested by the testimony of the inspired Scriptures. This is the witness which cannot be mistaken; and yet it is not possible for the assurance therein given to be received by the tried child of God until the Comforter shall take of these precious things of Jesus and show it unto each one in its personal application to him. Then he is not only assured that he has a good hope, but sees clearly that it is entirely "through grace."

So strongly does the carnal mind, even in the saints, cling to its own pride and self-sufficiency, that it is only when cut off from all resources in self that the helpless child is made to rejoice in that "good hope through grace." Nor is one experience of the vanity of his own efforts enough to impress the truth upon his mind for his whole pilgrimage through time. Again and again the lesson must be repeated in all its painful details. His failure of yesterday must be repeated to-day, and continually must he be brought low that he may cry to the Lord "out of the depths." It is only from a felt sense of utter helplessness that this cry can proceed. The Lord always will regard the prayer of the destitute, and he never will despise their prayer. Thus they are qualified to testify to the unfailling grace through which they have that "good hope" which sustains them in every trial. Any condition to be fulfilled by them would not only rob them of all comfort, but it would deprive them of all hope; so that instead of this "good hope," they would have to sink in utter despair. Then for such helpless sinners "through grace" is the only door of hope; and to such this "good hope through grace" develops everlasting consolation, which shall in every trial "comfort your hearts." The provision of such boundless comfort indicates the purpose of God that they for whom

it is designed shall pass through much tribulation. Without trials there would be no need of comfort, and then the rich supply of consolation would be useless; but our God has appointed all things in his own infinite wisdom, and his way is equal, just and true. So our gracious Lord has left the assurance to his followers that "In the world ye shall have tribulation." But this "good hope through grace" is the power by which all the tried saints are sustained, and enabled to endure afflictions and rejoice in all their tribulation, that they are counted worthy to suffer with their Lord.

To natural reason this doctrine of grace seems to lead to licentiousness; and even in the apostolic age it was slanderously reported that they said, "Let us do evil, that good may come." But in the close of this sentence the effect of this good hope through grace is said to "stablish you in every good word and work." This blessing was written by inspiration, and is therefore true. If the assurance of a good hope through grace encourages any to continue in sin, it proves that such have not been made to love righteousness; but every one who longs for deliverance from sin, has the witness in that very desire, by which it is fully proven that he is the character on whom this inspired benediction rests, and he is one to whom God, even our Father, has "given everlasting consolation and good hope through grace."—2 Thess. ii. 16.

"DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES."

ON the first column of our last page will be found a card and prospectus of a book of the above title. The copy is complete and in our hands, and the work is now in press and will be ready for delivery in a few weeks. We have not had an opportunity to thoroughly examine the work, but can say that the brethren mentioned in the prospectus as indorsing it are old and able advocates of the truth, and brethren in whose judgment we have every confidence.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY or two days meeting will be held, if the Lord will, in the meeting house of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the first Saturday and Sunday in January, 1884. A general invitation is given to ministers, brethren and sisters of our faith and order, and all who love the truth, to attend.

By order of the church,

I. HEWITT.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the branch of the Otego Old School Baptist Church at Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 9th and 10th, 1884. A general invitation is given to all lovers of the truth. All friends will be met at the depot and cared for.

H. W. CATOR.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Wm Sharp Sr 2, J T Nay 2, Martha A Young 2, Bedford Roe 2, Ruben Thomson 2, R G Marbury 2, Dr J B Fonville 2, T J Wesley 2, Francis Odom 2, Elder W Hefner 2, Mrs D A Downing 2.—Total \$22 00.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR EDITORS:—I write to inform you of the death of my husband, **Wm. K. Blasdell**, which occurred on the 12th of May, 1883, in the 80th year of his age. He had been a subscriber to your paper for nearly thirty years. It was a great comfort to him as long as he could read or hear it read. He was very deaf. His last days were peaceful, though a great sufferer.

CAROLINE BLASDELL.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—By a request made by my mother a few days before her death, I forward you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a brief notice of her departure.

Mrs. Nancy Pontius was taken sick on the first day of April, 1883, and lingered until the first day of July following. Her age was 79 years, 5 months and 2 days. She was a member of the Old School Baptist Church and also a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years. She was buried in West Alexandria Cemetery, Preble Co., Ohio, by the side of my father, John Pontius, who preceded her to the grave eight years. She leaves one son, a daughter-in-law and four grandchildren to mourn their loss. She gave evidence before her death that our loss would be her gain. Please publish this and oblige her only child.

LEVI M. PONTIUS.

WEST ALEXANDRIA, Ohio.

Mrs. Libbie Seeley Dorman, wife of Mr. Daniel M. Dorman, and daughter of the late Bezaleel and Mary A. Seeley, departed this life at the residence of her uncle and aunt, Mr. L. L. and sister Jane Purdy, in the village of Middletown, N. Y., on the morning of November 7, 1883, aged 25 years, 4 months and 8 days.

The deceased was a granddaughter of our late brother Joel and sister Esther Hoyt, of the New Vernon Church. Her parents died in her early childhood, after which she was adopted by her uncle and aunt, with whom she lived until she was united in marriage with Mr. Dorman, about ten years ago. She had been in declining health for several years, which finally terminated in consumption. She was possessed of a remarkably amiable disposition, which endeared her to all those who were favored with her acquaintance. Although she had never made a public profession of religion, yet she enjoyed a hope in the mercy of God, which was a support to her in her last days. While attending the "Centennial Meeting" at Brookfield last August, and listening to the discourse of Elder W. J. Purington, on the words, "Underneath are the everlasting arms," she said she was greatly strengthened and comforted. During her last hours a thick cloud was upon her mind, although her hope was steadfast, and she expressed a strong desire that the Lord would grant her another token of his love and favor, that she might recover strength before she should go hence to be here no more. Her end was peaceful. She leaves an affectionate companion, four children, her uncle and aunt, with many other relatives and friends to mourn her early departure.

Her funeral was attended at the Old School Baptist meeting house in Middletown, when a discourse was preached by Elder Benton Jenkins, from Romans viii. 14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," after which her remains were laid by the side of those of her mother, in the cemetery of the New Vernon Church.

My life's a shade; my days
Apace to death decline.
My Lord is life, he'll raise
Me up again, e'en me.
Sweet truth to me, I shall arise,
And with my eyes my Savior see.

I said, sometimes with tears,
Ah me! I'm loth to die.
Lord, silence thou my fears;
My life's with thee on high.
Sweet truth to me, I shall arise,
And with my eyes my Savior see.

What means my beating heart,
To be thus shy of death?
My life from me can't part,
Though I resign my breath.
Sweet truth to me, I shall arise,
And with my eyes my Savior see.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1884. NO. 2.

POETRY.

THE DAYSPRING FROM ON HIGH.

THE Dayspring from on high
Hath visited the earth,
To make the darkness fly,
And fill our hearts with mirth.
He brought in light, no more to cease,
To guide us in the way of peace.

Dear mercy of our God,
Who sent his Son to die,
And bear our sinful load,
Sweet Dayspring from on high.
His praise shall never, never cease,
Who guides us in the way of peace.

Undone and lost we were,
Helpless and hopeless too;
Then did the Christ appear,
And brought new light to view.
He came to give our souls release,
And guide us in the way of peace.

My soul admires his grace
Who fills a glorious throne,
He saved his chosen race,
And for their sins atoned.
His praise shall evermore increase,
Whose blood is now the way of peace.

—Gospel Standard.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."—John xiv. 12.

What wonderful words are these! Can it be possible that a feeble, finite man can do greater works than Jesus did while he was here on earth? Yes, this must be true of every believer, for so our dear Savior has said. If I truly believe on the Son of God, then I, poor, weak, ignorant and sinful as I am, must in some manner have already done greater works than Jesus had done when he spake these words. But how can such a thing be? How are we to understand it? What greater works could be done even by the Lord Jesus himself than when he opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the deaf ears, caused the lame to walk and the dumb to speak, raised the dead, multiplied a few loaves and fishes until thousands were fed, and caused the raging winds and waves to obey his voice and be still? Did even he ever do greater works than these? Yes, infinitely greater, as the heavenly reality is greater than the pattern, as the substance is greater than the shadow. All these works concern natural things, exhibiting the creative power which caused the light to shine out of darkness, and belong to time. The greater works concern spiritual things, manifesting the saving power and every glorious attribute of God, and belong to his eternal kingdom. He did the greater works when he died, for then he destroyed the powers of darkness, executed justice and judgment for all his people, and re-

deemed them from under the curse of the law, made an end of sin and finished transgression, and in his resurrection brought in everlasting righteousness.

Here, as in many other places, the Savior declares the wonderfully exalted condition of one who believes in him. Belief, even concerning natural things, is not a voluntary act of the mind, but a state or condition of mind produced by evidence. Without evidence it is impossible for one to believe. When the evidence is furnished we are compelled to believe, whether we wish to or not. Concerning natural things, however, there is a possibility of mistake in respect of any kind of evidence, so that upon any natural subject we may believe what is not true. The error may be caused either by the untruthfulness of the evidence presented to us, or by the inaccuracy of the sense which receives it. As, for instance, a false statement may be made to us which we believe to be true, or our ears may fail to hear correctly the statement which was truly made. In either case we believe what is not true. Again, a false appearance may be presented to the eye, as the mirage of the desert, or the *ignis fatuus* in a swamp, or as a distorted figure seen in an uneven mirror; or the eye may be so defective that it will not render to the mind the true color or form of the object presented to it. In all natural religion there is a defect both in the evidence and in the capacities that receive it. It is all untrue.

The believer in our Lord Jesus Christ is raised above all these possibilities of mistake. The capacity by which he receives the evidence is not natural, but spiritual. It is faith; and this faith is not ours by virtue of our natural birth, but it is the fruit of the Spirit.—Gal. v. 22. There can be no defect here. Faith may be regarded as the eye which sees spiritual things and renders them truly to the spiritual intelligence; as the ear which hears the words of heavenly wisdom and makes no mistake in receiving the thoughts of God concerning us; as the hand which reaches forth and takes of the things of the kingdom of God, and which cannot possibly receive or handle anything but the eternal truth. To this faith the righteousness of God is revealed, with all the precious things which God hath prepared for them that love him.—Romans i. 17; 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. Neither can there be any defect in the evidence, for it is provided by that God who "keepeth truth forever," and who is himself the truth.

The evidence and the power that receives it are in a manner one, for this faith is itself born of God, is "the substance of things hoped for," and is therefore itself "the evidence of things not seen." The belief of God's people is based upon this infallible evidence, and must therefore be absolutely sure, embracing only that which is eternally true in God, and which also is true in us. We can believe nothing spiritually but that which is shown us by the Spirit, and whose power, therefore, has been in a measure known in our experience. Even the truth of the resurrection we cannot believe unless we have known the "power of the resurrection" in some measure by the mysterious work of the Spirit within us. We may often be unable to distinguish between the spiritual belief and the natural workings of the mind in our own experience; but the word of God can and does make the distinction clear, for it is sharper than any two-edged sword, and divides between the soul and Spirit.—Hebrews iv. 12.

What we have experienced through the revelation of God we believe, and it can never be lost to us. It is a part of our spiritual life. But to believe is one thing, and to understand the nature and power of that belief, and the things it concerns, is another. The apostle desires for the Ephesians that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened, that they may know concerning those heavenly things which they have believed, and the power by which they have believed them.—Eph. i. 18–20. And he desires for the Colossians that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, and that they might be "knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The assurance that an understanding concerning what we have already experienced gives us, can be feebly illustrated by a figure. Suppose one to be struggling in the waves of the ocean, and "ready to perish." All at once his feet touch a rock, and he stands firmly amid the waves. The waters are still about him, but he sees that while he occupies his present position they cannot possibly go over his head. But the rock is hidden from his sight, and he does not know how broad or deep it is. He cannot tell but that one step either way would plunge him again into the depths, nor does he know

but that the raging waves may prevail against the rock, so that it may give way beneath him. So he stands still, trembling. Yet his feet feel the firmness of the rock just as fully as though he knew it to be as broad as the ocean and deeper than its greatest depths. How like this is to the case of one who first experiences a hope in Jesus and believes in him. His faith feels the solid, eternal Rock, and it sustains him firmly; but he does not yet know anything of its breadth and length and depth and height, and is subject to great fears, often questioning whether this is indeed a true experience of grace, and fearing lest the present comfort and support may be lost. The storms come against him, the waves appear to carry him away, and he is on the verge of despair; but his feet still feel the Rock. The deep appears to boil with rage, and he trembles as the billows hurl themselves against the Rock; but it does not move in the least degree. Now if that one whose feet have touched a rock in the ocean, and who stands still, trembling and fearing to move, yet rejoicing in his present safety, could be shown with absolute certainty that the rock on which he stands is broader and deeper than the waters, and higher than they can possibly ever rise, what joyful assurance would fill his soul, and what liberty he would feel. Yet his feet would not stand any more firmly than before. So as we are enabled to grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to know him more and more in our soul's experience as the eternal Rock, we come to enjoy more and more of heavenly and sweet assurance. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" asked Jesus of the man whose eyes he had opened. He had already experienced the saving power of Jesus, and through declaring that power he had lost all things dear to him before; yet he did not know that he knew Jesus, but answered, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe?" Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee."—John ix. 35–37. How often thus is one made to look back to his own past experience, and is shown that it was Jesus who opened his eyes to see the truth, and who spake to him at such and such a time. It is a great blessing to have one's eyes opened to see heavenly things, but the blessing becomes to us of infinite value as we learn that it surely was Jesus who opened our eyes; and as we learn more of his glorious character as the only wise God our Savior, and as we come nearer to him in the fellowship of his

sufferings, and in the experience of his cleansing blood and justifying righteousness, and in feeling the power of his resurrection, the more precious does the blessing appear to us. The fullness of the knowledge of Jesus can never be attained to in this time state. We shall never reach so far in the knowledge of him but that we shall still have to say, with Paul, "That I may know him."

This spiritual Rock is broader than time. When Jesus arose from the dead God said unto him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."—Heb. i. 5; Psalm ii. 7; Acts xiii. 33. In that resurrection he was the first-born from the dead, and was declared to be the Son of God with power.—Col. i. 18; Rom. i. 4. But we must go further back than the resurrection to see the beginning of the Sonship of Christ. Twice in the days of his flesh came the voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son." And the angel said to Mary, "That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of the Highest." But we must go further back than his birth in Bethlehem of Judea to find the beginning of his character as the Son of God and Mediator of the everlasting covenant. "God sent his only begotten Son into the world."—1 John iv. 9. He was the only begotten Son of God before he was sent into the world. Jesus Christ came in the flesh. If he had not existed before he could not have come. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."—Heb. xiii. 8. His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.—Micah v. 2. We must go further back than the experience of the first to whom he ever appeared in salvation, further back than the foundation of the world, to find the beginning of the Sonship of Christ. If the Rock were no broader than time, it must sink when time shall be no more. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—John i. 1. As Christ, as the Son of God, he was before the world began, and all his people were chosen in him then.—Eph. i. 4. He was verily foreordained for them before the foundation of the world, (1 Peter i. 20,) and they were predestinated by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself.—Eph. i. 5. They were seen as members of his body while as yet there were none of them, (Psa. cxxxix. 16,) and as sinful men, as vessels of mercy, they were elect unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.—1 Peter i. 2. (None but sinners could be elect unto the sprinkling of that precious blood.)

The apostle evidently refers to him as the Son of God before the world began in the expression, "The first-born of every creature."—Col. i. 15. His birth from the dead is referred to in concluding that paragraph in a manner to show that the two expressions, "The first-born of every creature" and "The first-born from the dead," do not refer to the same thing. The Rock, then, is broad as eternity.

He is the eternal Son of God, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. There is our sonship in his. There is all the relation of sonship to God that ever was or shall be known. The relation is eternal. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." What a glorious but unsearchable mystery! "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." When that life shall have been fully manifested in all its glorious power in them as chosen vessels of mercy, as members of the body of Christ, then they shall all be one, as Christ and the Father are one. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."—John xvii. 21, 23. The holy relation will still exist, and yet they are one in God. Our experience of that unity, which must be but very imperfect and in part only here in time, is all the way in which we can ever enter into any knowledge of that mystery of the unity of the three that bear record in heaven, ever three, yet ever one.

But I did not intend to dwell even this long upon so mysterious a subject; for although it is full of deep and solemn interest to me, I feel my ignorance concerning it the more I meditate upon it. This relation, eternally existing by virtue of the life that was given them in Jesus Christ, is made manifest in the vessels of mercy in time. As poor, fallen sinners they are quickened, and by the light of that divine life are made to see and feel their sins and their condemnation, and to experience in some measure the awful depth of their depravity and helplessness. In God's own time the holy power of that life is felt in them. What Jesus did and suffered and experienced as the Son of God and Mediator between God and men, his people did and suffered in him in a mystical sense; and the power and virtue of that eternal union of life between him and them is now made manifest when they experience the fellowship of his sufferings, and the power of his resurrection, and the blessedness of his salvation. His glorious and mighty works are manifest in them. The poor sinner, sinking under the weight of his sins, and acknowledging the justice of his condemnation, and seeing no way of escape, now feels within him a most wonderful power. He rises above his sins, and they are subdued under him. He meets the law, and its charges are all satisfied and withdrawn forever. Death loses all its power, and becomes only a shadow. He overcomes the world. He experiences a glorious victory over every foe. What wonderful change is this which has taken place in this poor sinner? What power is this that works so mightily within him? This is the power of faith, the faith of God's elect. This faith is born of God, and by its power mountains are removed, blind eyes are opened, all maladies are healed, all infirmities and all obstacles of every kind are done away, and the world is overcome. By this faith those who believe in Jesus do all that he did

while here, and the greater works he did when he died and rose again; because he went unto the Father when he had finished the work of salvation, and sends forth upon his people power from on high, and works all his works in them. One who has this faith, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in Jesus shall never die.—John xi. 25.

Great battles are fought and great works are accomplished by the power of this faith, but not in the sight or hearing of men. Down deep within the mysterious chambers of the soul the conflicts and the working go on. There hosts encamp against us, but when faith is in exercise our hearts do not fear; there war rises against us, but in this we are confident, that God is the strength of our life.—Psa. xxvii. 1, 3. Our sins and iniquities rise to our view and seem to prevail against us, so that we cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then the sword of the Spirit is handed to us, and as we grasp it we can say, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." All nations compass us about with persecutions, with false religion and vain philosophy, with flattering baits and every delusive snare; but in the name of the Lord we destroy them. Death appears in view, and we tremble, doubting whether we shall not be swallowed up by this last enemy. But the weapons of our warfare are experienced again, and the soul feels the power and safety of all the armor of God, and we can say in holy triumph, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus all the Lord's redeemed shall be brought to believe in Jesus, shall "fight the good fight of faith," shall rejoice and triumph in the works of his hands, and shall come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that hath loved them.

SILAS H. DURAND.

HERRICK, Bradford Co., Pa., Dec. 22, 1883.

"THESE that have turned the world upside down are come hither also."—Acts xvii. 6.

These words were spoken of Paul and Silas after having preached three sabbath days in the synagogue at Thessalonica. Paul's preaching was exceeding troublesome.—Acts xvi. 20. The doctrine of Christ when proclaimed by his chosen ministers is always offensive to the world and its different sects of carnal worshipers. It turns Arminianism upside down. As long as a man's preaching leaves the world right side up, we know that he has not preached the gospel of Christ. A gospel without a stumbling-block is a gospel without Christ. Those whose preaching does not turn the world upside down, have never been turned upside down themselves; and those who have not been turned upside down, have never been called by grace; for a call by grace always turns a man upside down. It had

this effect on Paul. The religion of Jesus Christ is contrary to nature. Christ was put to death on a cross. Arminianism teaches that God is the Father of all mankind, and as such deals with all men as his children. They even came face to face with the Lord Jesus with this pernicious doctrine, saying, "We be not born of fornication: we have one Father, even God."—John viii. 41. But the Savior silenced their presumptuous blasphemy with the cutting rebuke, "If God were your father, ye would love me." "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John viii. 44. This same generation of Satan are in the world to-day, under a cloak of carnal religion, denying that they are born of fornication, and claiming one father, even God. And nothing is more tormenting to them than to point to their true parentage, as did the Savior. These same teachers of the world hold forth a Savior who has left the shining courts of his Father's glory, and came to this low ground of sin and sorrow, suffered and died the ignominious death of the cross, to do men's wills; for they say he will save them if they will. But the word of eternal truth turns this upside down, and hurls it back into the bottomless pit of human lies, and declares that he came down from heaven, not even to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him.—John vi. 38. Our Savior was no Arminian; for he came not to do his own will. Neither are his brethren Arminians. For in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.

These same soothsayers teach that Christ, as an offering for sin, is made to man, and man is moved and coaxed by the Spirit and bride to accept him. They call themselves the bride, and exhort their hearers not to resist the Spirit, for fear it may take its everlasting flight. But the inspired record turns this upside down, and discovers under it Satan, the father of lies, and lets us know that Jesus through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, and by that one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Offerings for sin are made to God, and to God alone. Christ as an offering for sin is not made to us. They also teach that Christ is held forth in what they call "the general tender of the gospel," and that we must believe in him in order to be saved, and that we believe according to our own free will. But the inspired Scripture, that fatal touchstone of the world's religion, meets this doctrine of infidelity, and turns it upside down; declaring that we "believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead."—Ephesians i. 19, 20. When men came to Christ wanting to work the works of God, he told them, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."—John vi. 28, 29. They say, We believe according to our own free-

will. Christ says, We believe according to the working of the mighty power of God. They say, It is man's work to believe. Christ says, It is the work of God. Which is right? These same "tower-builders" teach that all men can come to Christ; but the Savior said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—John vii. 44. Here they give the Savior the lie, and yet pretend to love and obey him. They further teach that it is God's will to have all men come to Christ and be saved, and that it is God's purpose and pleasure to save them if they will but come; "If they will only fall in with the overtures of mercy, and be saved upon the easy and equitable terms of the gospel, before it is finally and everlastingly too late." But the Savior turns this upside down, and reveals their refuge of lies, and tells us that all that the Father giveth him shall come to him. Never can one that God has given to Christ stay away. God will make them come. Christ says, "Ye will not come unto me;" and, "No man can come." Men will not come, cannot come. And "will not" and "cannot" is a double not, which nothing but the finger of God can untie. With men these things are impossible; but with God all things are possible. These same "way-makers" teach a broad and easy way which all men can find, because they claim to clearly point it out; and that all men can and may walk therein. They would like to prove that our Savior lied when he said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it." I do not dispute their claim to the "broad way," but only deny that it leads to life. For "Broad is the way that leads to death, and many there be that go in thereat." These same "encompassers" of sea and land must have a universal religion. Their prayer is that the world may be converted to Christ. They are of the world, and pray for the world. But the Savior was not of the world, and declared that he prayed not for the world.—John xvii. 9. Their prayers are not modeled after Christ's, but after "vain repetitions of the heathen," which Christ commands his disciples not to use. How long have their joint petitions gone up for "every house to become a house of prayer, and every heart a fit temple for the indwelling of the holy Spirit?" Has this prayer ever been answered? If it should be, could the Scriptures be fulfilled? The fact that this is not answered is evidence that it was never promised, and the asking is proved to be amiss. Again, these learned Rabbies of modern theology teach that "men are not the sheep of Christ because they believe not." But Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, whose own the sheep are, turns this upside down, and exposes their learned ignorance of the true God and his grace, and says, "Ye believe not because ye are not my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."—

John x. 26. Men believe because they are the sheep of Christ; not to make them sheep. In the same way which they call "proclaiming life and salvation," they teach that as many as believe, are ordained to eternal life. But the eternal record destroys this refuge of lies, and reveals the glorious truth of God's predestinating grace, and says, "As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed."—Acts xiii. 48. If you wish to arrive at the truth, always reverse Arminianism. Again, these will-worshipping idolaters claim that by their teaching, accompanied by the persuasive influence of the Spirit, men are brought to a knowledge of the truth, and then can be saved by laying hold of offered mercy. But the Scriptures turn this upside down, and tell us that God will have men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.—1 Tim. ii. 4. The Scriptures teach, first, saved, and then a knowledge of the truth. Men teach, first, a knowledge of the truth, and then a probable salvation. They have Sunday Schools, Tract Societies, money systems, and a hundred other inventions unauthorized by the word of God, to forward this work of teaching what they call the religion of Jesus Christ. But the Scriptures turn this upside down, and show it to be the commandments and traditions of men. "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest."—Heb. viii. 11. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me."—John vi. This is the teaching that brings men to Christ. It brings all who are taught. Christ says, "Every one that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." There is no failure here. When a poor sinner is taught of the Lord, when Christ, the true light, is revealed in him, he denies himself, and learns to touch not, taste not, handle not, the commandments and traditions of men, because with him they all perish with the using. Again, these "Doctors of Divinity" teach that all men are called by the gospel and the Spirit, and can be saved if they will only yield to the influence of the Spirit, and obey what they call the gospel, and keep the commandments. But our Savior has stopped their mouths again; for he declares that the world cannot receive the Spirit, which he sends to comfort his children.—John xiv. 17. The apostle says, "Who hath saved us, and called us."—2 Tim. i. 9. Hence we are saved before we are called. If not, why does the word say so? "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved [or saved] in Jesus Christ, and called."—Jude 1. But the salvation that men preach is after the call. Then it is plain that their call and salvation are not the call and salvation of our God. Their call is not only before their salvation, but it is immensely broader; for they say that all men are called, and but

few saved. But the call of our God is not so. The promise is to all that are called. "For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 39. This promise is to "as many," not to all. Again, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."—1 Cor. i. 26. Somebody is left out of this call. But why do we reason? for hath not the apostle said, "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate;" "and whom he did predestinate, them he also called?"—Rom. viii. 29, 30. Here we see that the call of our God is limited by his predestination, coupled with his eternal foreknowledge. Thus we see that their doctrine of infidelity is turned upside down by God's own words, and the foundation thereof discovered to be human ingenuity and craftiness, speculation being the chief corner-stone. These same atheistic teachers preach that God begins the work in all men, but carries it on in but few, and that thousands who are awakened and moved by the Spirit, die in their sins, and sink into the torment of an ever burning hell. This is mighty poor grace, and a very unsuccessful and sadly disappointed spirit; but we feel sure that it is neither the grace nor the Spirit of our God; for we are assured in his word that his grace "reigns through righteousness unto everlasting life."—Rom. v. 21. It reigns through righteousness; does not fail through weakness. And when our God begins a good work in a creature, he "performs it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6. And what our God doeth shall stand forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.—Eccl. iii. 14. Thus through the inspired Scriptures every phase of the doctrines of men is turned upside down, and their falsehoods brought to light. These same master builders of the high places of Molech preach a faith that is the fruit of the creature, and man must exercise it. But Paul preached a faith that God is the author and finisher of; a faith that exercises the creature; that works by love and purifies the heart; a faith that is the gift of God; a faith that moved Noah to prepare an ark; a faith that threw down the walls of Jericho; a faith which subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, works righteousness, and overcomes the world. This is not a faith that is the fruit of the creature, and exercised by man; but it is that faith by which we understand the world was framed; the faith of the Son of God. These same evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, (2 Tim. iii. 13), and preach a birth of a spirit which can be produced or prevented by man; a birth without a begetting, without a travail, and brings forth something that can be annihilated, or cease to exist, by the disobedience of the creature, and regain the condition occupied before

birth. They call this "being born of God." Now, this is not only contradicted by the word of truth, but there is not a syllable of common sense or reason in it. There are laws of birth, and without these a birth is impossible. First, the existence of life or seed in the parent; second, a begetting; and third, travail, or bringing to light and manifestation the being whose life had its existence in the parent. And this being can never pass back into that state again. The Scriptures inform us that we are born of God. How can this be, except our life was in God, and of the same nature as God? Before this birth of the Spirit, there must be a begetting; and James informs us that God of his own will begat us.—James i. 18. And if begotten of the Spirit, we are bound to be born. For God says, Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?—Isa. lxvi. 9. These same gainsayers of Korah preach that in infancy we are all the children of God; but when we cross the line of accountability, if we do good God will still love us; and if we disobey, he will hate us, and we will cease to be his children, and become the children of the wicked one. This line of accountability, of which they preach so much, I can never understand, as there is no such thing intimated in the Scriptures of divine truth. But the word of God turns this upside down, and discloses ignorance, superstition and human imagination, as its foundation. These words of eternal truth forever settle the question with all lovers of the truth. "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger: as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Rom. ix. 11-13. If this Scripture read in this way, The children being both born, and having crossed the line of accountability, one did good and another evil, that salvation by works might stand, it was said unto her, Jacob I love, but Esau I hate; then the Scriptures would not have to be revised to meet the demands of the present age; neither would the Arminian clergy have to dodge the word, as they do. But our God does not have to wait for the birth of the creature, to fix his choice; but his sovereign, electing love fixes on the object before its birth, before it does good or evil, even before it is in a capacity for doing good or evil. The eternal choice of our God was made not only before the birth of the objects embraced therein, but was made in Christ before the foundation of the world, and sealed by his immutable decree of predestination; and the foundation thereof standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Dear kindred in Christ, it is in much weakness that I have tried to notice a few of the most prominent points in which the doctrine of our Savior turns the world upside down. If all the points of difference were

noticed and compared, I suppose the world itself would not contain the books that should be written. I fear I have already worried you with unprofitable matter. I am young and ignorant, but I hope that the grace which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto me, and through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus my Savior, I hope to stand accepted in the Beloved, with all the redeemed family.

Yours in hope,
H. M. CURRY.

NEWFOUNDLAND, Ky.

NEWBURY, Ont., Dec. 21, 1883.

DEAR CHILDREN OF GOD:—"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." O how much we need the grace and peace of God to be multiplied to us. Often when reading the communications of brethren and sisters in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have I been edified and comforted, and have felt to desire of the Lord his blessing to be manifest on all the chosen of God. For some months past I have been much troubled in mind by some things that have been written in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES upon 1 John v. 7. When I read Elder Wm. J. Purington's understanding of this Scripture, it grieved me very much. I wrote to him a letter, of which the following is a copy:

NEWBURY, Ont., April 5, 1883.

TO ELDER WILLIAM J. PURINGTON—DEAR BROTHER:—Though we are unknown to one another in the flesh, yet I am encouraged to pen a few lines to you, hoping we are brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ. I have read with profit your communications in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, especially upon the Resurrection. In your communication of April 1st, I read and re-read with varied emotions the following: "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." Please notice particularly, it does not say, These three make one, but are one; therefore it is settled that there is not a trinity of persons, but of the offices filled, or manifestations of God's attributes." Now, dear brother, if "it is settled," as you say, how can there be any reality in the mediation of Jesus Christ, in the intercession of the Word, the only begotten Son of God? Can anything but a person mediate "between God and men"—"lay his hand upon us both?"—Job ix. 33. "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. ii. 5. "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—1 John ii. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man,

he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 6-8. "The man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts."—"Emmanuel."—Zech. xiii. 7; Matt. i. 23. Jesus, the Word, in John xiv. 16, says, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." If "therefore it is settled that there is not a trinity of persons," would it not be the right way of expressing the matter to say, I will pray to myself, that I may give you myself, that I may abide with you forever? In that precious prayer, when our precious Jesus, the Word, "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father," &c., was this "offices filled," praying to "offices filled," or offices personified, praying to offices personified? "There are three." "These three are one." If "these three" are "not a trinity of persons," when the end cometh, and Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, (1 Cor. xv. 22-28), will not the "offices" of Father and Son cease? If so, will not our relationship to God and the Father have an end? For our sonship is bound up in the Word, the only begotten Son, who said, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."—John xx. 17. If so, what is the meaning of the Scripture, "The everlasting Father?"—Isaiah ix. 6. If person is ascribed to the Father, (Heb. i. 3), is it erroneous to ascribe person to the Word?—2 Cor. ii. 10. "Who, being the brightness of his [the Father's] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power." "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."—Heb. i. 3-8. You say, "Please notice particularly, it does not say, These three make one, but are one: therefore it is settled that there is not a trinity of persons, but of the offices filled, or manifestations of God's attributes." Now, dear brother, your axiom is not settled in my soul, neither do I think that all the mathematics known among men can solve to the faith of God's elect the mystery of the being of God. "There are three." "These three are one." If "therefore it is settled," &c., show by the Scriptures (Acts xviii. 28) that it is so.—Acts xvii. 11.

I have tried to write with great plainness of speech, and I hope I have written in love. Wishing you grace, mercy and peace in Christ Jesus, I am, I hope, your brother in Jesus,
FRED. W. KEENE.

If it is my letter that is referred to when Elder Purington, on page 242, says, "The writer has had his attention called to the rules of Arithmetic lately," I am sorry that my meaning has been misunderstood. Elder Purington's language seemed to convey to me that what he has declared in the following words, "Please notice particularly, it does not say, These three make one, but are one, therefore it is settled," &c., is a self-evident truth; so I used the expression,

"Your axiom." I did not mean to ask for any information in mathematics, neither did I mean that Elder Purington has made the attempt to solve the mystery of the being of God by mathematics; but I do believe the mystery of the being of God is infinitely above all mathematics to explain. My knowledge of the meaning of terms and the law of language is small. I may therefore often fail to express what I desire. It is recorded in the Scriptures, "Ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire."—Deut. iv. 15. And I am pained when any illustration is used to make "clear to any understanding mind" what is set forth in the name, Lord Jesus Christ, or to illustrate the glorious mystery of the "Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." On page 242, Elder Purington says, "In the Acts of the Apostles, the twenty-one epistles, and the revelation made to John, the plural number is not applied to the eternal Deity; and the writer of this article has not dared to do what the inspired apostles did not." Why begin at the Acts of the Apostles? Elder Purington cannot mean to exclude the rest of the Scriptures. In Gen. i. 25, plurality is applied to the eternal God. "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness." Again, in Genesis iii. 22, "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." Also, in Genesis xi. 7, "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language." "Also, I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"—Isaiah vi. 8. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."—John xiv. 23. Also, see John xvii. 21, 22. These, and other Scriptures which speak of the plurality of persons in the Godhead, I do believe, is a revelation of what the Lord is, and not of what he is not. On page 266 of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the writer tells us, when commenting upon the words, "And he shall give you another Comforter," Paul the "inspired penman, tells in positive terms who the Comforter is; that he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort."

The Comforter, of whom the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, is speaking, in John xiv., Jesus tells us in the 26th verse, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Also, John xv. 26; xvi. 7. The Comforter mentioned in these Scriptures is the Holy Ghost. Not, "I will pray the Father," and he shall give you the Father. The offices filled by the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost are not three only. The manifestations of attributes of the Father, the Word and

the Holy Ghost are not three only. The Lord is our Savior, Hiding-place, Prophet, Priest, Shepherd, Husband, Shield, &c. But from the following Scriptures I do believe that the persons in the Godhead are three, and only three. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."—John. v. 18. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."—Phil. ii. 6. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."—John xiv. 26. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."—John xvi. 13-15. "David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool."—Mark xii. 36. "We will come unto him, and make our abode with him."—John xiv. 23. "And the Lord said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."—Gen. iii. 22. "The man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. xiii. 7. And I do believe that the distinction of persons and the plurality of persons here revealed of the one individual God is real, and not assumed.

Dear brethren and sisters, beloved of God, I have tried to express some of my thoughts upon this precious and glorious mystery. All in whom the truth dwelleth will love the truth, and will greatly desire to walk in the truth. I have felt, and still feel, to pray to the Lord our God that the promise of our precious Jesus may be fulfilled in me, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." May the Lord grant that what I have written may be received by the children of God only as it is according to the Scriptures of divine truth. "All error must perish in the fire of God's eternal truth. The only doctrine that can feed and comfort the saints is that which God has given. All else must be consumed." "But the word of the Lord endureth forever; and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."—1 Peter i. 25. Amen.

I am, I hope, your brother in hope of eternal life,

FRED. W. KEENE.

ALVINSTON, Ont., Nov. 11, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I can scarcely tell why I take my pen to address a few lines to the poor, lonely ones scattered through the length and breadth of the land, for I know that I cannot

write anything of myself that will edify or comfort any of the Lord's living family; and yet it is to them only that I have any desire to write. And if I write of the breathings of the Spirit of truth, to them only can I write, as no others either have or can have any desire to hear the things of the Spirit of God. While the natural mind of some may acquiesce in these things, it is very different from receiving the truth in the love of it, and feeding upon it like the prophet of old, when he said, "I found thy word, and did eat it, and it was the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Had I the ability of some of the dear brethren who write for the SIGNS, I would be glad to write a little about the word which the prophet speaks about, which I do not consider the written word of inspiration, as it is commonly termed, nor the word of the preacher, be it ever so powerful or truthful. He says, "I found thy word and did eat it," which does not convey to my mind the idea that he was studying the writings of those who preceded him, or that he was listening to some grand orator who had such eloquence that he was persuaded of the truth of what he said, and embraced it. Ono. But I rather look at the poor, lonely prophet in the dungeon, or alone amid the desolation and wickedness that surrounded him, almost ready to give up in despair, not knowing where to look. And yet in the depths of his heart he was saying, "Our eyes are unto thee, O Lord;" when, as if some mysterious power (and it is mysterious) had lifted him above all his troubles, he rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. Yet no sound of word is heard, and like as the prophet says, his voice is not heard in the street, but is a still, small voice that no one hears but those to whom it is spoken, and is beautifully illustrated in the case of the woman of Samaria, to whom the Savior said, that the water he gave to his own would be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. And how refreshing and satisfying is the springing up of this water of life in our souls! and what is it but the word of God that we are sometimes made to feed upon and taste its sweetness? O what a blessed effect this food has in strengthening and nourishing the poor, fainting one, and how it drives away the poisonous and pestilential diseases of sin that we are so prone to. If you will show me a child that is feeding on this food, I will show you one that is fulfilling the law of Christ in his walk and conversation, being filled with the Spirit of the Savior, and having no malice, or envy, or hatred, or wrath, or strife, against any of their kindred in Christ; nay, further, neither against any one, either saint or sinner. Perhaps some may differ with me here; but to the law and to the testimony. I read that the fruit of the Spirit (or word) of God is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, &c. There is no room for anything else. But again, some one may ask, Why do you call the Spirit the word of God. Jesus

says his words are spirit, and they are life. And if any of God's living family feel disposed to make any distinction between God and his word, or his Spirit, it is more than the poor unworthy writer can understand; nay, more than I wish to know; for my soul rejoices in the glorious truth that the Lord God dwells in his people, as in 2 Cor. vi. 16, "I will dwell in them and walk in them;" also 1 John iv. 13, "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us;" and many other passages that are to my mind beyond controversy. And I can only stand and contemplate (when so privileged) with wonder and amazement this wonderful union that no finite mind can ever see, and is only known by those to whom it is revealed by the Spirit of God dwelling in them. And even to them it is only seen as through a glass darkly. But when we drop this veil of mortality, we shall see and know even as we are known. Then there shall be no fears, no woes, no sin or sorrow, but all will be perfect peace and love.

I had no intention, when I began this, to write as I have; but being disappointed in not getting to meeting to-day, I felt sad and lonesome, and could sympathize with sister M. A. Jones, of Kansas City, Mo. I read her letter with much comfort and satisfaction, and felt inclined to write privately and tell her so; but if she reads this, she will know that one at least, and I trust many, were benefited by her letter; and I could say that she told my feelings in many things better than I could myself. I hope she will write often. Dear sister, when you speak of wandering far away from all the brethren and sisters whom you love, and with whom, doubtless, you have often taken sweet counsel, and of the disappointment you met with in not finding, as you expected, some who feared the Lord, and to whom you could tell your hopes and fears, how much I could sympathize with you, as I well remember some years ago how I, too, wandered far away from those I loved, and how much I longed to hear again the sweet sound of the gospel trumpet, that joyful sound which only God's dear children know. And when in a far distant land I met with those that I knew were brethren in the Spirit, (though not at that time brethren in church relationship), my heart was made glad, and I think I felt like Ruth when she said, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." And nothing can part us in the spirit. It seems to me I can never forget the warm reception I there met from entire strangers in the flesh; and though I had come thousands of miles, and from a different nation, I felt that I was not a foreigner or stranger, but a fellow-citizen with them in the city of our God; and the satisfaction and comfort I then felt, in knowing that the same feelings, the same hopes and fears, possess the children of God in all ages and all nations, and that from ocean to ocean, and from pole to pole, here or in the isles of the sea, the people of God have the same spirit,

have never entirely left me. And there is a fellowship and union between them that the world, either professing or profane, knows nothing of, but is a secret which only the people of God know, and is only known by them by relation of his Spirit. But O how often is this beautiful union and fellowship broken or marred by the evil spirit that often leads captive the children of Zion! And what a sad sight it is to see brethren fall out by the way, and utter cruel, bitter words, which cause heart-burnings, and bring grief and trouble in their train! O how often do these things come in, perhaps, under a cloak of zeal for the cause of truth! But if we probe to the depths of our heart, we will find that it is not the Spirit of God or of truth that is at work, for that is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, and thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, (that is, wrath or strife), but rejoices in the truth. I often feel that I dare not try my own heart, conduct, walk and conversation by this rule; for the very first thing I find there is evil thoughts, envyings, jealousies, and anything but the Spirit of God and of love. Instead of loving the brethren with a pure heart fervently, I am easily annoyed or offended at some of their words or actions, and the evil spirit, transformed into an angel of justice, says, "They have been cold or indifferent, and you cannot help it." And alas! I find how ready I am to listen to these suggestions. But I do not read that I am to return evil for evil; but if my brethren have not walked according to the gospel rule, I am justified, nay, it is my duty, to tell them; but still I am to love them with a pure heart fervently, or come under condemnation. Alas! I do daily come under it, and it is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed. And as I look back over all my crooked pathway, and see how the Lord has led and upheld me, I can say with wonder and amazement, How manifold are thy mercies, O Lord: they are new every morning; and if I should count the sum of them, they are more than can be numbered. And yet the stubborn, ungrateful heart is constantly murmuring and rebelling against God's dealings, so that I feel by sore experience it is enmity against God, and will never be anything else, until the glorious adoption, namely, the redemption of the body, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory. Then, and not till then, will we be able to realize the length and breadth, the height and depth, of the love of God in rescuing us from the unutterable depths of sin and misery into which we were fallen, and to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, saying, "Not unto us, but unto thy great name be all the praise." There are times when I feel to stretch forward to that glorious hour, when I shall be near and like my God, when there will be no veil between to dim the unclouded glory of his presence; when sin, my worst enemy, shall vex my eyes and ears no more.

I find that I am writing much more and very differently from what I intended when I took my pen. If anything I have written will be calculated to injure or offend the feelings of any of God's dear children, I trust you will commit it to the flames, and use your own judgment as to whether you shall publish it or not, and I shall be satisfied. Having gratified my feelings in committing these thoughts to paper, it matters not to me what becomes of them. I very often feel a desire to be more with and speak more to those that fear God, but it is not often I have the opportunity; yet I trust the Lord will grant me a quiet, humble, waiting spirit, and to all his children everywhere.

Yours in love,

R. SCATES.

HANNIBAL, Mo., Dec. 16, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—For a period of almost fifty consecutive years I have been remitting for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for myself, and much of the time for others also, and often for a goodly number, and always in advance; and now in the beginning of the seventy-second year of my mortal pilgrimage, and the fifty-second volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I once more have that privilege. My years and consequent increasing infirmities admonish me that I shall not have this privilege long, if indeed ever again. I shall soon be, if not already, recorded upon the old man's list, and my time is short. I do not mean the old man which the apostle admonishes us to put off; he is an old man only "concerning the former conversation," and I feel much of his workings in my mortal flesh, and a constant desire to put him off. But I mean the old man to whom the grasshopper is a burden, and whose desire shall fail, because he goeth to his long home, and whose dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it. A retrospect of the time I have been a subscriber for the SIGNS, a period of almost its entire existence, shows many changes to have taken place. Nearly all those brethren who wrote for its pages, including the late beloved and lamented editor, your father, have gone to enjoy forever the fruition of the blessed faith and hope which led and guided them in their pilgrimage in the flesh; and we shall soon follow them, and I trust enter also into the same unfading and eternal glory. The paper has been ably conducted from the beginning to this present time, and it is remarkable that not more than one number has ever failed to come to me. I have read every number that has been published since I became a subscriber, and I believe every editorial and communication in them. It has passed through many difficulties, discussions, and even some controversies; and it would be almost incredible had there been no errors, heart-burnings nor evil passions of old, carnal, corrupt nature engendered, doing "hurt to the daughter of my people." There were discussions upon the subjects of

justification, resurrection, regeneration, eternal vital union, old and new man, who or what is born again, &c., and much of them resulted in the confusion of brethren, and a breach of fellowship and division of churches; and at last we have to come to the starting point, and say, with the beloved apostle, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The discussions and contentions upon these subjects, together with most of those engaged in them, have passed away. May we not hope that those who remain will endeavor to "follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another?" A kind and brotherly interchange of views upon any or every point of the doctrine of God our Savior, is not only admissible, but desirable upon all proper occasions; but it is almost impossible to write so as to be apprehended fully by all, and therefore brethren should be the more careful. There have been several inquiries and editorial replies lately upon the "relationship of Christ to his church." Most of the replies have been according to my mind, especially that the relationship is in the Spirit, and not in the flesh, as you have (very clearly to my mind) shown in your reply to brother Patrick, in the SIGNS for November fifteenth. In this sense only do I understand that "Adam is the figure of him that was to come." Yet there is one expression in that reply which I do not exactly understand, that in parenthesis, "(not to be put into him.)" My understanding is that the choice of all the subjects and objects of the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ was made in him before the foundation of the world, "which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalm cxxxix. 16. The objects and subjects of this choice are Adamic men and women, and were not there present when the choice was made. In the letter of our esteemed brother Chick, in the number for December first, page 268, I read this paragraph: "The very life which he [Christ] assumed when he became a man, and the very life in which we had sinned, was that which he laid down. No other life was demanded than the life which was given to Adam, and no other life would satisfy the demand. Jesus took this life and yielded it up for us." It seems to me that the life of Adam had already been demanded and yielded up, and he and all his posterity were under death, condemnation and wrath, for God had said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." They were dead, and under the curse. But in reference to the life of the chosen, elect people of God, it is recorded in the gospel by Luke, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus." Mary had no idea of this wonderful conception, but sup-

posed all generation was natural, fleshly, for she said, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" Through man only is produced the relationship in the flesh. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Now, this is the "God manifest in the flesh," "the true God and eternal life," and this is the life which was laid down for the chosen, elect people of God, which were among and of the sons and daughters of Adam. They are "his body, the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Now, that this Jesus, "Immanuel, God with us," as manifest in the flesh as a man, was and is himself the life of the church, we have the infallible testimony of the apostle John. He says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." This is the one and only life of the children of God, and this is the life which was laid down for their redemption from sin and death in Adam. This life is one in him, and the same one in his body, the church. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be one in us," are the words of our Redeemer. This is unity, oneness; and it is in the Spirit, and not in the flesh. Relationship is developed from the seed; and Christ is that "incorruptible seed" of which all the elect people of God are "born again," and by virtue of which they are his children. This life of Jesus did not begin when he was "made of a woman," but was eternal; and it was that which took on the "seed of Abraham," "was made flesh, and dwelt among us," and was not an Adamic life, that comes only by being born of the flesh, and is corruptible. In the record given of the manifestation of God in the flesh as the life of his people, I discover nothing of an assumption and laying down of the life given to Adam for the redemption of the elect of God; but we find that "through the eternal Spirit [he] offered himself without spot to God." Brother Chick says further in this connection, referring, as I suppose, to the life which Jesus assumed, and which he says was that given to Adam, "This life is one life. In it is unity. It is also eternal life." Does he mean that Jesus was raised with this life in him, and it was made eternal, the very life, too, that was given to Adam, and was corruptible? I can hardly think he does, and yet it reads so.

But I must bring this to a close. With the letter of brother Chick I was for the most part well pleased, and read it with much pleasure and satisfaction. I may have misapprehended him in what I have men-

tioned. I think I know him too well to suppose he will complain of the liberty I have taken. The subject is full of interest and comfort to the children of God. It is indeed a wonderful mystery that "God was manifest in the flesh;" and still it is plainly revealed that he is the life of his people, for it is written, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And he and they are brethren. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." What a blessed tie this is! Do we not, dear brethren, realize it in that fellowship we have in the Spirit with one another, and which, John says, is "truly with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ?" May the Lord grant that this love and fellowship may abound more and more, and that all his dear children may endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

I submit, brethren Beebe, for your disposal, what I have written. It is full of imperfections, like myself. May grace, mercy and peace be multiplied among the dear saints of God for Jesus' sake. I am, as I fondly hope, "your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,"

W. F. KERCHEVAL.

STATE ROAD, Del., Dec. 20, 1883.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—I will offer some comments on a passage of Scripture for the examination and criticism of your readers, in the hope of interesting and profiting some of them.

The portion of Scripture may be found John v. 2-10 inclusive. In these verses are embraced the account of the pool called Bethesda, of the troubling of its waters by an angel, and of its professed consequent healing virtue, &c. The paragraph commences, "Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches." It seems to have been quite generally accepted among our approved preachers and writers that this pool was typical, and was designed to represent the provisions of gospel grace for the leprous and sin-sick, in which they might be healed. So we have in one of our approved poems,

"Beside the gospel pool,
Appointed for the poor," &c.

It might seem like sacrilege for me to attempt to overturn and destroy such pretty theories, and mar to any extent the beauty of such pretty hymns as the one cited above. Whatever I may write I am willing that it should rest upon its own merits. I will not question but that there was at that time in Jerusalem, or at one of its gates, such a pool, named in Hebrew Bethesda. The first part of this name, "Beth," signifying a house, would indicate that apartments had

been built here for the shelter and comfort of those who on whatever account should be gathered here; and there being five divisions or porches, and the fact that one invalid had remained here for years, would imply that the buildings were quite extensive. For a good while past I have been led to regard the whole story about the healing efficacy of the pool, and the requisite previous disturbance by an angel, and whoso should step in first, &c., as a mere Jewish tradition. The water in the pool, like other water supply for the city, was most likely brought in by pipes or aqueducts. If there was a pool with such healing virtue in or about Jerusalem that even a holy angel should recognize and invest with miraculous power, I think some other of the New Testament writers would have had something to say about it. Not one other ever mentions it. If it typified anything important, or was necessary to complete the typical economy, should it not have been provided for in the law of Moses? Should not the priests and the prophets have been aware of its existence and its virtues? It might be asked, on the other hand, why the evangelist John gives us such an apparently candid statement, if it is to be regarded as a deception and mere tradition. I understand that in narrating events he is among the people, and writing to the people who knew of these places and the names by which they are called; and his business was simply to tell the people what Jesus did, and where the healing work took place. It was no doubt a grand speculation. If they could make the ignorant and superstitious people believe that they had a monopoly of the healing business, and that the angels were at their service, and helping them to carry it on, they might well build porches and enlarge their apartments to accommodate a multitude. The term "pool" signifies an artificial supply of water, both the basin and the water supply being under the control of the men in charge. There was a fountain opened in the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem that is not subject to the control of men, that never was opened by their wisdom or labor, that is not an artificial contrivance, as a pool; but ever living and ever flowing, and does not require an angel at certain seasons to either trouble it or give it virtue, neither does it require some man to put the suffering invalid into it. But this pool of Bethesda and its virtues are not confined to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem at all, but are equally open to all who can comply with the terms, and equally efficacious to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and the whole as those who were supposed to be sick. I doubt whether this pool business ended with Bethesda and the palmy days of Jewish piety. I believe it has been carried on quite extensively in modern times. Almost any required number of pools can be had, and they are of equal virtue anywhere where the business will pay. They

are provided with quite as many porches as in old times. As for the angels, they are all engaged, and they have better business than troubling the pools that men have fixed up for the accommodation of religious speculators. They are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. The probability is that those people either troubled the water themselves, and then said an angel had done it, or else the applicants had to take their chances like in a lottery; not professing to know when the troubling took place, only by the effect after some one had been benefited. There was a multitude in that place, as there always will be a multitude in such places. And no doubt many of them were willing to try the experiment; and more or less of them no doubt felt better, or thought they did, after their bath in the pool. The certain season when the waters are always troubled, in these days, is after the busy season of outdoor work is over, and the long and pleasant evenings come on. It is claimed that during this season, and while the waters remain troubled, all characters and classes of men may be speedily healed, whatever their disease may be. In the first place, there is a strong presumption that this multitude were not really sick at all. If they had been sin-sick, and the disease had palsied them, or brought them to the point of death, the pool would have done them no good. There was no man there to put such characters in; and so, as far as any benefit from the pool was concerned, one poor suffering invalid had to remain there in his suffering helplessness for thirty and eight years. This was not a provision to reach the case of the lost, the helpless, and those that were ready to perish. It was there for those only who could comply with its terms, who could come to it and appropriate its provisions.

No one can doubt the faith or the zeal of the poor invalid. Thirty-eight years' constant, unceasing waiting and watching is long enough to show that he was sincere and believed in the pool. On the other hand, it was long enough to demonstrate clearly that whatever there might be there for others, there was nothing there for him. Such a system of conditions would never reach his case. It would have been in vain for him to have waited longer. He did not go to the Savior. He could no more go to him than he could put himself in the pool. He did not know the Savior. The Savior came to him, where he was. The salvation came to him. Jesus knew that he had been a long time in that condition; he knew just how long it had been. The man did not know that there was salvation for such as he. The one case out of all the multitude in that place is all for which the presence of Jesus is needed. To this case he comes in the fullness of the gospel of his grace. Jesus has no more to do in that place. The word is, "Wilt thou be made whole?" There can be little room to doubt but that he is now entirely willing to be

made whole, and ascribe all the praise of it to the Savior. His schooling has been about as long as Israel was in the wilderness, and he has no doubt waited upon free agency, the use of means, &c., long enough to have learned that his own efforts could not save him. There is this remarkable feature about it, that the man is healed and his distress is gone without his even knowing how it had been done, or who it was that did it. He is afterward found in the temple, just where we might expect to find him, and his attention is called to the fact that he had been healed. He is now made aware that it was Jesus who had wrought the healing, and a gentle admonition comes to him as to the way wherein he should hereafter walk. It is a sad commentary upon all such human contrivances that a case of real need is beyond their reach; and the poor sufferer would suffer on and perish unpitied and without remedy. Jesus in his gospel comes to the broken-hearted and contrite in spirit, and they do not know him nor the word of his gospel until they find him in their own deliverance, and find the word of his grace as it is fulfilled in their own hearts in a sweet and blessed experience. If any one was ever really healed at the pool of Bethesda, except this one, that the Redeemer in love and in pity rescued out of their hands, and delivered from the gross imposition and deception of which he had so long been a victim, we certainly have no record of it.

Yours to serve in the gospel,
E. RITTENHOUSE.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Nov. 13, 1883.

MY DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I have experienced great troubles and trials of which I would write you. I joined the Methodists when quite young, but the Lord has brought me through many a trial since that time. After leaving them, and when in trouble of mind, I would read my Bible, but I seemed just the same as before. I would think that I was not the Lord's, and would go away and try to pray, but could find nothing but trouble, and that day by day; so I gave up and said that there was nothing in this wicked world for me but sin and sorrow. I felt that I had done wrong because I had joined the Methodists, and troubles increased on every side. I felt to be a miserable, wretched sinner. In this condition of mind we moved near the meeting house of the Occoquan Church, at Oak Grove, in Prince Wm. Co., Va. I would go there sometimes to hear the Old School Baptists preach. That, I thought, was the hardest doctrine in the world. I did not know that the Lord was leading me, therefore I did not like the people. Yet I could not stay away from their meetings. The Lord was leading me by a way that I knew not, and I was found of them that sought me not. I could not see this until I was brought to know the truth as it is in Jesus. During this time I would mourn, and wander about, and cry unto God to be merci-

ful unto me, a sinner; for I had spent my days in anguish, pain and misery. Thus,

"Through deep distress and sorrow,
My Savior led me on."

I felt that I had not a friend in all this wicked world. I tried to ask the Lord to grant me one petition, to forgive my sins, to lead me to hear the gospel, and give me a seat among his people. I felt weary of myself, and life sometimes seemed to be a burden, yet I would try to hide my feelings. But this blessed peace I could not find until the Lord saw fit that I, so vile a sinner, such a blessing should receive. I visited an Old School Baptist at this time, and received much comfort and encouragement, and while on my way home from her house it pleased the Lord to relieve me of my great burden. The blessed light of Jesus came pouring into my heart, as I felt his pardoning blood applied to cleanse me from guilt. I looked around, and the sun did not appear to shine as it always did. Everything seemed so bright. I raised my eyes to God in thanksgiving and praise. I could hardly believe where I was for the glory of God, for he had relieved me of that heavy burden of sin that had borne me down these many years. I cannot express to you my feelings; it is more than I can tell. The sweet words came to me,

"While I am a pilgrim here,
Let thy love my spirit cheer,
As my God, my Guard, my Friend,
Lead me to my journey's end."

It seemed to me that my tears were all wiped away. That night I laid down to rest my weary head. It was the sweetest night's rest I had enjoyed for many weeks. I did not awake until the sun was shining everywhere. Lord, I felt to say, the debt of love I owe can never be paid. I then felt that I must see the Old School Baptists, and I asked the Lord that he might open the way for me to go to Occoquan, which was eight miles from my home. I felt that I could not wait until the regular meeting, for it was three weeks off. I felt that I must tell what the Lord had done for this poor sinner. The Lord gave me strength, and opened the way for me to go, and there I met with eleven of them at one of their social meetings. While I listened to them talk and sing, and looked around upon them all, I felt surely the Lord was there. I said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." At the regular meeting of the church I went before them and told them my feelings. I felt so unworthy because I could not talk and tell them of my experience as I wanted to. I thought, If I am a christian, surely I am the least of all. But I felt that I loved this people with a godly love. They received me, however, and I found a blessed home among them. I was baptized on the 8th of April last. O it was a happy day to my trembling soul! When I was led into the deep water all seemed light around me. When I came out of the water these words came to me,

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow,
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply,
The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine."
Then I could say,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear."

The Lord will make bright clouds, and give his children rain in season. "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." After I was baptized I did not feel satisfied until I could write and tell some of my troubles that the Lord has brought me through. He soweth the seed within us, and it brings forth fruit, and every tree is known by its fruit.

Yours in fellowship,
ELIZABETH A. MILSTRED.

NORCROSS, Ga., Dec. 19, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—As I have an opportunity, I will drop you a few lines, the Lord being my helper, upon the all-important subject of religion; and as a foundation I will call your attention to Philippians iv. 19, which reads as follows: "But my God shall supply all your need." This is the language of the apostle Paul to the church at Philippi. What a glorious promise to the poor, way-worn pilgrim, who feels so exceedingly poor and needy, to think that there is a God in heaven who possesses all power in heaven and earth; who can weigh the hills in scales, and measure the waters in the hollow of his hand; who has declared by the mouth of the apostle that he will supply his need. Yea, he ever maketh intercession for us; for he says, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."—Psalm xxiii. 1, 2. "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."—Psalm xxxiv. 17-19. No matter how poor he may feel, no matter how forsaken or despised, or how many troubles, trials, losses, crosses, sore afflictions, conflicts, doubts and fears he may have; God's grace is sufficient for him. The Lord never meets with a case that is too hard for him. He has the very kind of medicine or food that the poor sinner needs. There is nothing that one of the children of God feels in need of but what God has it in store for him, and is ready to give it to him at the right time. For "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Psa. xli. 1. Yes, dear christian, he will shelter and shield you from all the many besetments which you have to pass through. He loves his little flock, and is ever watching

over them. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."—Isa. xl. 11. "And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord."—Jere. xxiii. 4. Then, little children, fear not, for God is with you. Be not dismayed; he is your God. He will strengthen you, he will help you, yea, he will uphold you with the right hand of his righteousness. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."—Isa. xli. The above quoted Scriptures are sufficient proof that God will supply all our needs. He never finds a case but what he has the remedy, and he never makes a failure. He only has to speak, and it is done; to command, and it stands fast. He supplies the need of the poor mourner, who is mourning on account of his load of guilt and sin, by removing that burden, and revealing himself to the poor beggar as the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. He also supplies the need of the poor pilgrim, while he is in this thorny maze, with both natural and spiritual blessings, though we often feel that he has forsaken us; but bless his holy name, he will never leave us nor forsake us. He will keep us by his almighty and omnipotent hand until the glorious morning of the resurrection, when Jesus will come the second time without sin unto salvation, and gather all the purchased of his blood, and those who are sleeping with their mother earth will come forth. Though the dust of their bodies may be blown to the utmost parts of the earth, God knows where it is, and will raise it in his own likeness. Then we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; changed from natural bodies to spiritual bodies, (not spirits). Then we shall be permitted to hear that welcome plaudit, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Then we will be adopted into that heavenly family, and receive that glorious robe which Jesus wrought out, which will fit every one of his elect. Then all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes; no sickness, pain or death can enter there to mar our peace, but there will be one eternal round of joy.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun."

Then, dear christian, we may be separated here, but there we shall meet to part no more. May the Lord enable us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and not be striving about words to no profit.

Yours in gospel bonds,

LEE HANCKS.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Dec. 11, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have just received the SIGNS for December first, 1883, and am so well pleased with some expressions in it that I feel I cannot take time to read it all until I express my appreciation of it. I feel specially comforted by brother Purington's remarks on the new covenant and adoption. Also, I wish to say that I exactly agree with him in reference to the Godhead; and also with you, Elder Beebe, in regard to human creeds, &c. The longer I live, the less use I have for human creeds and written articles of faith and rules of Decorum. We say, "We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice;" and I would to God that all his dear children would stick to that article. If they would, they would have little use for any other. It is astonishing to me that brethren will appeal to Noah Webster, Clark's commentary, Cruden's concordance, or to any other book than the Bible, to prove any doctrine as heresy, or to sustain their own cherished theories. I have long since decided to take the Scriptures alone for my guide in faith and practice, regardless of the consequences, or of the opinions of others. By the Scriptures I am willing to be tried, and condemned if found guilty.

"Blessed Bible! book divine!
Precious treasure! thou art mine!"

And now I wish to add my testimony to the truth of this so-called heresy, "Sabellianism." Christ is called Immanuel, which being interpreted is, "God with us." Paul says, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Christ says himself, "I and my Father are one." On one occasion Philip said, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."—John xiv. 8-11. In the Old Testament it is written, "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Again, Paul calls him "The only wise God our Savior." John says he is the Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God. A prophet says, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Again, it is written, "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He was verily God and verily man; not half God and half man. He was as completely God as he was completely

man. I firmly believe that all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in the one person of Christ; so that, instead of there being three persons, there is only one person, and that person is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Scriptures teach that Father, Son and Holy Ghost were all embodied in the "man Christ Jesus," just as soul, body and spirit are embodied in the man William L. Beebe. It takes these three elements to constitute a man; and so I conceive that it takes Father, Son and Holy Ghost to constitute the one God. I have no sympathy for any doctrine that makes my dear Redeemer anything less than the eternal, immortal, all-wise, omnipotent God. Adored be his blessed name forever and ever.

I have not written the foregoing to elicit strife or controversy, but simply to add my testimony to that of the inspired record, and to that which has already been written. It did me so much good to read the remarks of Elders Beebe and Purington, that I felt I must also cast in my mite.

Brethren Beebe, I submit this to your judgment. If you publish it, please correct all mistakes, and believe me to be a well-wisher to the SIGNS, and a firm believer in the general tenor of the doctrine it advocates. Long may it continue to publish glad tidings of good things to the scattered saints.

Yours in that blessed hope,

H. J. REDD.

CHESTER, Ky., Dec. 16, 1883.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I feel that it is a solemn duty, as well as a pleasing privilege, to bear my testimony, though feeble, to the great worth of our dear departed brother and companion in the gospel, Elder J. M. Theobald, the chronicle of whose death has already appeared in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Our dear brother was much beloved by all lovers of the truth, and by a great many who did not love it, for he was a man of unflinching integrity. I do not think it can be said truthfully that he knowingly wronged any man. He was not only honest in his dealings, but he was also conscientious. Whatever he said could be relied upon as being strictly true. He was a devoted son, having taken care of an afflicted mother until death came to her relief. As a father he was forbearing and indulgent; as a husband he was kind and loving; and as a servant of God and a true yoke-fellow he was all that could have been asked. He was not only able in the defense of truth, but he was unflinching. He could always be relied on when in his judgment the necessity of the case demanded the buckling on of his armor with all his holy boldness; for he was bold as a preacher, and in no other sense, and wore his laurels with meekness. To the weak he became weak, and to the strong he recognized no leader but Christ. He was as free from fleshly pride as any man could well be.

After the demise of our beloved brother and father in Israel, Elder J. F. Johnson, he was chosen Moderator

of the Licking Association, thus attesting the confidence the association had in him. I have been intimately acquainted with him reaching back ere I became a member of the Old School Baptists, which is now twenty-five years past. I have esteemed him as worthy to be imitated in his life, conversation and deportment by all lovers of the truth. We have never differed on any doctrinal point; our hearts were perfectly knit together. This leaves us weak in the ministry, compared with former years, in our association; but our Savior is our defense. Our dear old brother Dudley is still spared to us; and while he cannot go and preach to us, yet we have his counsel, for which, I hope, we are thankful. The dear Lord I know is able to raise up others to stand on the walls of Zion, and to contend earnestly for the faith. I hope our dear association will be as perfectly joined together as it has been for more than twenty-five years, and not be shaken in mind by the lo heres and lo theres. I think there never was a time when the watchmen should fail to lift up their voice, not only to contend for what they do believe, but to tell their brethren what is not sound doctrine, and not out of deference to timid brethren shun to declare all the counsel of God. Whenever we are swayed by any consideration whatever from exposing error from whatever source, we then become the servants of men. Our dear brother fought the good fight and kept the faith. Our dear sister Theobald knows she has our sympathy; and our prayer is for grace to sustain her and us in this deep affliction, and to try to imitate the example of our dear brother. May the God of heaven save us in heaven, for Jesus' sake.

As ever, your companion in tribulation,

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

FORT SCOTT, Kansas, Dec. 9, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The first of the year will soon be here, and as that is the time for the renewal of my subscription to the SIGNS, I inclose you the amount for that purpose. I have no doubt that you have many subscribers who are negligent in remitting, for which there is no valid excuse, while others would do better if they could. I am sorry that this is the case. Let every one that can be prompt in remitting, for by so doing we make you better able to furnish those who cannot pay for their paper.

I read my paper sometimes with great satisfaction and comfort. Your editorial reply to my inquiries was unexpected; but as so many others have been troubled in the same way as I have been, I hope the space was not alone occupied for my benefit. I must say I thank you; yes, I thank God that he directed you to furnish the reply. I wondered why I could not have seen those instances you pointed me to before, and then to hear that you who yet live are thus tormented; all these strengthen me. I have been anxiously looking in

each number of the SIGNS to see something from or in reference to our dear aged brother, T. P. Dudley. I feel sure your readers will unite with me in making inquiry for him, and at the same time assuring him that he is not forgotten in his old age and affliction. My prayer to the God in whom we trust is that he will greatly bless him in his last days. I will here refer to his kind reply to a letter I wrote him, thinking it might be as comforting to some others as it has been to me. I had been greatly troubled that my convictions had not been sufficiently pungent. I wanted to feel that deep and raving sorrow for sin of which I had heard others tell; but I, like poor brother Eugene Durand, desire to state things just as they truly seem to me, without magnifying or exaggerating anything. I know I am a poor, weak sinner of Adam's fallen race, unable to do the least thing to better my condition before a just and holy God. I will here quote brother Dudley's language when he replied to this matter. He wrote, "You fear that your convictions have not been sufficiently pungent. They have been and are shared, I apprehend, by the entire household of faith. Our acceptance with God does not depend, neither in whole nor in part, in the pungency of our sorrow for sin. The standard presented by an inspired apostle is recorded thus, 'That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' No, my dear brother, it is nowhere said, that I have seen recorded in the Bible, that each of us should spend a certain number of sleepless nights, and refuse to eat for a certain length of time, on account of our sins, in order that we might be saved."

I notice many good pieces in the SIGNS. May we all be kept humble, is truly the wish of your brother,
M. B. WEEDON.

MARSHALL, Minn., Dec. 21, 1883.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—It has been, in the providence of God, that I should meet with some of the dear people of God in this place. Some of the Elders, and a few of the readers of the SIGNS, will perhaps remember riding in a lumber-wagon from Wayland, N. Y., to South Dansville, where the Western New York Conference was held some twelve years ago. There were nineteen in that wagon-load, and we all stopped at brother Oliver Patterson's. What a warm welcome he and his estimable wife gave us that night. This brother and sister Patterson now live in Marshall, Minnesota, where I have had the privilege of talking with them of the things of the kingdom. They were in New York State during the summer and fall, visiting brethren and friends. Since their return he has been quite sick, but is at the present writing slowly gaining, and we hope it is in the purpose of God to restore him to health and strength. It has also been my privilege to meet brother and sister Barnes, of this

place, and to enjoy sweet fellowship and communion of the Spirit with them. Their united experiences appeared in the SIGNS about a year ago. It brought tears of joy to my eyes to hear them, and brother and sister Patterson, relate how providentially and mercifully they found each other here in this far-off western country. A neighbor, seeing a copy of the SIGNS at brother Patterson's, told him that Mr. Barnes, living about two miles from them, took the same paper; which proved to be true. The joy, comfort and gladness of heart which this meeting gave them can be known only by them who dearly love the truth, and who have been separated from the brethren and the privileges of gospel preaching perhaps for years, and have thus been deprived of the company and fellowship of the saints.

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

And these wonders will never cease while our dear Savior has children here to comfort and establish; but he will send by what instrumentality he chooses "to confirm the hearts of his saints." And here is our assurance, that Christ has not only accomplished the salvation of his people, but he will also save them from the power of evil, and instruct them in the way of righteousness. "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord; and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken."—Isaiah lxii. 12.

Yours unworthily,

B. F. HAMILTON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., Nov. 17, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERS:—Another of our dear brethren of the Licking Association is gone, Elder J. M. Theobald. He has ceased from his labors, run his race, and is called home to that blessed abode where there is no more parting, and no farewell tear is shed. He is basking in the smiles of his blessed Redeemer. He has gone to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and with all the redeemed that have gone before. None but the redeemed ever enter that holy place, that place of rest, where moth doth not corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. Brethren, we ought to be reconciled to the will of our blessed Redeemer, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Our departed brother was a loving brother, a faithful minister, never shunning to declare the truth as it is in Jesus, and preaching Christ and him crucified. While we feel the loss of our dear brother, I trust it is his eternal gain. We sympathize with the churches that he had the pastoral care of, for we know what it is to lose a faithful minister. We lost one when we lost our dear brother, J. F. Johnson. May the Lord guide and protect us while we sojourn here in this land of sin and sorrow.

J. J. WATERFILL.

ATWOOD, Ind., Dec. 28, 1883.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERS IN CHRIST:—The

close of another year reminds me that my remittance for the SIGNS is about due. I have taken it so long, and cannot see how I could do without it. I have thought that I would take it until your lamented father was taken away, and then stop taking it, for I thought there was not another man in the United States who could manage and conduct it to the interest, welfare and instruction of the dear saints of our God. But I am happy to say that I see no change, for the same doctrine and principles are contended for that were by your father. I was very glad to see you take the step you did in regard to controversies among brethren. It hurts us all to see our brethren at war with one another, and especially to have it published to the world.

Inclosed you will find two dollars in post-office money order, for which you will please send the SIGNS another year. I hope you will not forget me when our Church History is ready to mail.

DAVID FAWLEY.

MEMORIALS.

WHEREAS, Our all-wise God has seen fit to remove our dear brother, Deacon Samuel Orrison, from our midst to his eternal abode, we, the New Valley Church, desire to leave on record the high esteem in which brother Orrison was held by us.

We do earnestly desire to bow in humble submission to the will of God; and while we mourn and sorrow for our loss, yet we feel to say, Thy will be done; blessed be the name of the Lord. Brother Orrison was one of Jesus' blessed lambs, whom he gently led along. His life was peaceful and happy. In him was found the faithful deacon, the loving brother, the blessed peacemaker; and who was unwavering in his devotion to the church and to the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace only.

We desire to assure the family of brother Orrison of our unfeigned sympathy for them, and trust that God may sanctify this dispensation of his providence to our eternal good. We do believe that brother Orrison is at home, at rest, and that he who rules and reigns has given him the victory over the last enemy, which is death. Dear brethren, may our sorrow be seasoned with hope, that our devotion may be more to God.

Done by order of the church at her December meeting, 1883.

JOSEPH FURR, Mod.

F. S. TITUS, Clerk.

IN memory of our worthy brother and pastor, of Salem Church, Shelby County, Tennessee, we, the members, have met in conference and passed the following resolutions:

Elder Thomas C. Horn was born in North Carolina, September 6th, 1808, and died August 18th, 1883, making him on the pages of time seventy-four years, eleven months and twelve days old.

Brother Thomas Horn joined the

Primitive Baptist Church in October, 1848, was elected clerk in January, 1852, licensed to preach in 1853, and ordained in 1859. He served his Master's calling for thirty years, with faith and hope of immortal glory, defending the doctrine set forth in the old and new Scriptures with unflinching integrity to the last, and we can but say, Blessed are they that endure to the end; a crown of righteousness is laid up for them.

Resolved, That the loss to his widow and children, brethren and neighbors, is his gain, and we bow in submission.

Resolved, That we sympathize with sister Horn and family in their bereavement, and that these resolutions be spread on the minutes of the church book, a copy sent to sister Horn, and one to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

By order of Salem Church.

CLAY IRWIN, Clerk.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

WILL Elder William J. Purington please give his views through the SIGNS on the two expressions of our Savior recorded Luke ix. 60, 62? "Let the dead bury their dead," and "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

WM. F. SLONE.

CLAY VILLAGE, Ky., Dec. 30, 1883.

WILL our dear brother, John Stipp, of Oregon, please give his views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Malachi i. 2-5, and oblige a friend and brother, I trust?

W. B. MCADAMS.

SALLIS, Miss., Dec. 23, 1883.

INFORMATION WANTED.

WILL some one please inform me through the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, or by private letter, in regard to the location of the Old School Baptist Churches in northern Illinois? Also, if there are any of the faith near Sandwich, DeKalb Co., Ill.

M. K. HUBBARD.

SANDWICH, Ill., Dec. 31, 1883.

CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

PLEASE give notice to all my correspondents of my present location, 1015 West Commerce Street, San Antonio, Texas, so that they may address me correctly, as we have free mail delivery in San Antonio. If any of the members of the church of Christ should visit this city, I should be glad if they would call.

ELKANAH JOHNSON.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERS:—Although I lost two weeks last month from work on the History, on account of sickness, I still hope, if the Lord will, to send you the manuscript in January, 1884.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., Dec. 5, 1883.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

REPENTANCE.

"AND the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts xvii. 30, 31.

This portion of Scripture is often cited as authority for the theory that salvation is offered to all sinners on the condition that they will repent and believe the gospel. While it is clear to every unprejudiced reader that nothing is contained in this text which can sustain that conditional system, yet to some minds the exact sense in which these inspired words are to be understood is not so manifest. Even detached from its connection, this passage would not sustain the doctrine of conditional salvation, since no promise is attached to the command; but when it is taken as a portion of that sermon which was preached by Paul from the text inscribed upon one of the altars on Mars' hill, "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD," it will be readily perceived that the ignorance to which the apostle referred was the same which was confessed in that inscription, and the argument was directed against that superstition of which he spoke in the beginning of this discourse. From the earliest records of our fallen race there has been no lack of devotional disposition in the mind of man. The first man born in the world was a worshiper, and brought as an offering unto the Lord the best he could present, "the fruit of the ground," representing his own toil; but his sacrifice was not acceptable, for it manifested his ignorance of the fact that "Without shedding of blood is no remission." In this consisted the superiority of the offering of his brother, which expressed the truth of salvation by the blood of Jesus, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."—Hebrews xi. 4. The religion of Cain is still the dependence of all natural men. This was the superstition which built the altars on Mars' hill, and whose ignorance of the true God was confessed in the inscription of which Paul was speaking. From the calling of Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees, throughout the prophetic dispensation, the Gentile world had not been reprov'd for idolatry, nor had the law been given to them as it was given to Israel. This is the sense in which the apostle says "God winked at" the times of this ignorance. To understand this expression as meaning that on ac-

count of the ignorance then prevalent, idolatry was less sinful than at a time when there was more intelligence, would imply that the apostle was inflicting on his hearers the most serious injury by declaring unto them the true God. If in their ignorance God regarded more leniently their idolatry, then it had been far better for that ignorance to continue, since when Paul had preached to them it is recorded that "some mocked; and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter." Evidently these did not repent; and they were therefore in a worse condition than when they were in that ignorance which was by this theory a palliation of their sin sufficient to excuse them in the judgment of God. If ignorance can screen sinners from divine indignation, then there can be no benefit in declaring to them the true God; but this proposition is too absurd for discussion, since it would not have been needful that Christ should die to save those whose ignorance rendered them free from sin. It is Jesus only who saves sinners from their sins, and neither ignorance nor worldly wisdom is his rival in that glorious work. That God in whom we live, and move, and have our being, has given no more liberty to worship idols to the ignorant than to the wise. But under the typical dispensation of the Sinai law, while he visited awful judgments on Israel in punishing them for idolatry, the heathen world were not thus chastened. So he says to the children of Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. Now, Paul declares that the times of this ignorance have ceased, and that God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

Much confusion results from failure to observe what is meant by the word *repent*. The popular understanding is that it signifies the profession of sorrow for sin, and that this profession is a condition on which the salvation of sinners is dependent. According to this idea, it is not by the blood of the Lord Jesus that sinners are saved, but by their own action in fulfilling this condition, since without this action of the sinner he will not be saved, although the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for his sins. Then, it necessarily follows that salvation is secured by the sinner fulfilling the condition in repenting, and not by the blood of Christ. The falsehood of this conclusion is too evident to require demonstration to any who know themselves as sinners already lost in their own merit, and whose only hope is in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The real meaning of the word *repent*, in this command, is to turn from their idolatry; and in the connection in which Paul used the expression, it is plain that he referred to the removal of that middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles by which all the law and the prophetic messages had been formerly confined to the Jews. Now, that the typical dispensation was closed, the command (or message) from God

spoke to all men everywhere, no less to Gentiles, to whom this discourse was primarily addressed, than to them who had been the chosen people nationally to whom God had formerly spoken exclusively. Then, the plain meaning of the words of the apostle is that this command is not limited to the nation of Israel, but speaks alike to all men everywhere, Repent, leave the worship of idols, and confess the God who created all things by the word of his power. This, the same apostle says, is "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."—Rom. i. 20, 21. This is the sense in which this command speaks to "all men everywhere;" and the fact that they have no desire to obey this message is evidence that they are destitute of the love of God. On the other hand, every one who loves the true God, and desires to worship him alone, has the infallible seal of his holy Spirit, which marks him as an heir of eternal glory; and the very bitterness of self-condemnation, which is felt as forbidding his hope, is confirming evidence in manifestation of the truth that he is led by the Spirit of God.

The reason assigned in verse thirty-one sustains the view presented of the preceding portion of the text. If he were not the sovereign God whom Paul preached, he could not have appointed that day of righteous judgment of the world by that Man whom he hath ordained. He challenges all idol gods to attest their deity by declaring future events, (Isa. xli. 21-24,) and says in demonstration of his own omnipotent sovereignty, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xli. 9-11. This wonderful display of his divine power attests his authority both to ordain the righteous Judge of quick and dead, and to appoint that great day for which all time was created, wherein the Man Christ Jesus, sitting in the throne of his glory, shall judge the world in righteousness. The Spirit of the Lord God upon him is the holy unction with which he is ordained; and "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" dwelling in him, fitly qualifies him for the great work for which he is set upon that throne. That Jesus Christ is the Man by whom the world is judged is unquestionable; and the day appointed for the manifestation of his righteous judgment is that day which shone with divine radiance, when from the

throne of his glory he shed upon his apostles the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire on the day of pentecost; and that day shall not expire until in the final glory of the full accomplishment of his mediatorial work the last vessel of mercy shall be manifested and brought experimentally into the enjoyment of everlasting bliss. Even then the light of that wonderful day shall not be lost in night; but when time shall cease, the lustre of that great judgment day shall be swallowed up in the unutterable glory of the light of the eternal presence of God. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.

The command of God to repent, which now speaks to "all men everywhere," is deduced from the fact that he hath appointed this day "in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." This judgment does not merely search the external actions of those who are judged, but it discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. This can only be done by the power of the divine Judge. Finite intelligence can never judge anything but that which is developed in words and deeds, and these may mislead that judgment; but that God whose judgment is infallible desires truth in the inward parts. In this penetrating scrutiny all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him who sits upon the throne of judgment. "In righteousness he doth judge and make war." There is no possibility of error in his decision in any case, for "The Lord knoweth them that are his." However they may write bitter things against themselves, and hate their own life also because of their vileness, yet he knows them as his redeemed people, and by his own precious blood they are cleansed from all sin. His righteousness alone can make the sinner just; and all who trust in any other refuge bear witness against themselves in his sight. Now, in this great day of judgment is the Son of man come in his glory, and throughout the whole of this day he is separating his sheep from the goats.—Matt. xxv. 31-46. The righteousness of his judgment is attested even by them who are condemned; for they with one accord blaspheme his sovereign judgment, thus exposing their enmity against him, and proving the justice of his decree against them. In defiance of his command they worship idols of their own imagination which cannot save them; but the subjects of his grace, having been cut off from all false gods by experimental knowledge of their vanity, are made willing to trust in him alone who is the God of salvation. These are led by the Spirit of God, and worship him in spirit and in truth.

The last clause of this text refers to the witness of the fact that Jesus

is ordained of God to be the sovereign Judge of all men, in that he was raised from the dead by the power of God, or by the glory of the Father, as it is recorded Romans vi. 4, in which is the full proof of the divine character of this glorious Savior. None but he "who only hath immortality" could thus triumph over the power of death. Therefore in his resurrection God has given assurance (or demonstration) to all that he is the Judge who is ordained of God. So glorious is he that the Spirit of the Lord God upon him is the holy unction with which he is ordained; and while he is the Son of man whom God has made strong for himself, (Psalm lxxx. 17,) and the "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," (1 Tim. ii. 5,) "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."—Col. ii. 9. He is exalted with the right hand of God "A Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts v. 31. This repentance is not the act of the sinner, nor does it originate in the natural mind of man. Like the faith which is peculiar to them who are born of the Spirit, this repentance is the gift of God. While it is the infallible seal of the Holy Spirit, without which there is no evidence that a sinner is born of God, it can no more be produced by the sinner than the forgiveness of sins, which is invariably given with this repentance; and this gift is exclusively "to Israel," and bestowed alone by that Jesus whom Peter preached, who has the witness that God has ordained him, "in that he raised him from the dead."

This command to "all men everywhere to repent," (that is, to turn away from the worship of idols,) no more implies the promise of eternal life for obedience, than did the command given in the decalogue to the nation of Israel. Obedience to that law secured only temporal blessings, but it could not give life.—Gal. iii. 21. As sin had already brought death upon all men, no repentance on their part could remove the curse. Only Jesus by his perfect atonement has power on earth to forgive sins; and he gives to them for whom he died "repentance and forgiveness of sins." The worship of idols, whether of material forms or of imaginary doctrines and commandments of men, is but the manifestation of the sinful rebellion against God, which possesses the hearts of all men in nature; and if any sinner has the desire to worship God alone, it is evident that the enmity of the carnal mind cannot produce that desire. It must spring from that repentance which Jesus gives, and is always inseparable from the forgiveness of sins.

This article has been written in compliance with the request of our esteemed friend, Mr. George M. Duke, of Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, in SIGNS of May 15th, 1882, which had been overlooked until recently. Begging pardon for the delay, we hope he will find something satisfactory in what is here submitted.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

We have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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ORDINATIONS.

MET pursuant to a call of the Pleasant Ridge Old School Baptist Church, the following named council, viz: M. J. Abernathy, J. B. Dean, G. W. Norris, S. C. Johnson, Deacon B. K. Bankston and William Gipson. Organized by electing S. C. Johnson Moderator, and R. F. Papasand Clerk. Being in session with said church for the purpose of examining and ordaining J. C. NABORS and D. J. MOORE. The church being of the same mind as when the call was made, delivered the said Nabors and Moore into the hands of the presbytery, who proceeded as follows:

1. Elicited christian experience and call to the ministry, by J. B. Dean.
2. Examination in regard to soundness in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, by G. W. Norris.
3. Ordaining prayer by M. J. Abernathy.
4. Charge by S. C. Johnson and M. J. Abernathy.
5. Right hand of fellowship by the Moderator and presbytery.
6. Returned said J. C. Nabors and D. J. Moore, set apart to the functions of the gospel ministry, whom the church received by extending the right hand of fellowship.

S. C. JOHNSON, Mod.

R. F. PAPANAND, Clerk.

TUSCALOOSA Co., Tenn., Oct. 28, 1883.

MARRIAGES.

ON Wednesday, January 9, 1884, at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., by Elder Benton Jenkins, Mr. Holmes S. De Coursey and Miss Ella, daughter of Mrs. Mary J. Hogeland, both of Bucks Co., Pa.

ON December 19, 1883, by Elder William J. Purington, at the residence of the bride's parents, James B. Drake and Carrie Blackwell, both of Hopewell, N. J.

ON December 22, 1883, by the same, at his residence, Hervey S. Drake, of East Amwell, and Maria H. Dilts, of Hopewell, both of New Jersey.

ON January 1, 1884, by the same, at the residence of the bride's father, Hon. John Kugler, James Alpaugh, of Trenton, and Hulda W. Kugler, of Kingwood, both of New Jersey.

DEC. 25, 1883, by Elder Smith Ketchum, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Wm. A. Varnes and Miss Ida M. Riner, both of Elmwood, Peoria Co., Ill.

DEC. 25, 1883, by a Presbyterian minister, Mr. John P. Stuart and Miss Manda Brid, both of Trivoli, Peoria Co., Ill.

OCT. 3, 1883, by Elder J. W. Timmons, at his residence near Berlin, Worcester Co., Md., Jackson S. Denes and Amanda S. Adkins, both of Worcester Co., Md.

JAN. 2, 1884, by the same, at his residence, Noah C. Adkins and Rittie J. Baker, both of Worcester Co., Md.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, at his residence near New Church, Accomac Co., Va., Dec. 26, 1883, Mr. Cornelius J. Byrd and Miss Rebecca J. Dunkin, both of Accomac Co., Va.

By the same, at the Indiantown meeting house, Wicomico Co., Md., Jan. 2, 1884, Mr. James H. Laws and Miss Kate Jarmon.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—We request you to publish the death of our dear father, **Isaac Mann**, who died November 17, 1883, aged 82 years, 10 months and 19 days. He was born on Indian Creek, Monroe Co., W. Va., Dec. 23, 1801, and died near the place of his birth. He was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church nearly thirty-five years. He was very regular and attentive at the church meetings, and was always ready to give a helping hand when necessity required. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of free grace, and ascribed to God all the power, honor and glory of salvation. He remembered well the time of the division among the Baptists, and remarked a few days before his death that the church stood, as it ever had, in the apostolic faith. I have heard him tell portions of his experience when he was quite young, how he saw himself a great sinner before God. During his last sickness which did not last long, he never murmured or complained, and a little child could wait upon him. He was naturally possessed of a great deal of patience and forbearance, which is truly a virtue. I was with him in his last moments. He had been confined to his bed about three weeks, but revived considerably. One evening he was taken very badly, and continued so until the next evening. He tried every position to get ease, and asked to be seated in his chair, which he walked to with my help. After a few moments I saw that he was breathing short, and feared that he was passing through the dark valley of death. His whole nervous system was in a great struggle, and the temple was rent from top to bottom. His head fell back upon my arm, and he fell asleep, as we hope and believe, in Jesus.

Father was a constant reader of the SIGNS for more than twenty years, until his eyesight failed. He leaves our mother, six children, one brother, (who lives in Indiana, aged eighty-nine years), grandchildren and great-grandchildren, to mourn his departure.

"Why should our eyes with sorrow flow?
Our bosoms heave the heavy sigh?
When Jesus calls, the saints must go;
'Tis his eternal gain to die."

Yours in love,

JOHN MANN.

HUNTER'S SPRINGS, W. Va.

DIED—At her residence in Halcott, Greene Co., N. Y., after a long illness, **Abigail D. (Alaben) Maben**, wife of Elder Buel Maben, in the 65th year of her age. January 1, 1884, would have completed forty-six years of married life with her surviving husband, which union gave to them three sons and four daughters, all of whom survive the deceased. This is the first break in the immediate family, covering a period of nearly half a century. Having been an invalid for several years past, her decease was deemed probable at any time during the past year. Her illness seemed a complication of maladies, the most marked of which was of a character to cause much physical discomfort and a gradual decadence of her reasoning faculties. For some months prior to the end, but feeble light seemed to pervade her once strong mind. When about twenty-five years of age she was baptized by Elder James Mead, and formally united with the Old School Baptist Church in Halcott, N. Y., where she remained ever after, an exemplary christian and church member. She was endowed with superior womanly characteristics. Virtue, love, devotion, forbearance and self-sacrifice were strong features of her nature, and marked all she did in life, and will remain a lamp to guide others in life's pathway. Elder Gass, for his discourse at her funeral, took as appropriate for the occasion, the text, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."—Psalm cxvi. 15. All who knew her could but feel that this was well chosen language and sentiment to apply to her transition; for that which seemed a loss to the living is but gain to the deceased. Although no longer precious in presence here, (except in memory), it is believed that she is now with her Creator, the Lord over all, and will be in his sight forever "precious."

It has become my painful duty to write the obituary of my dear mother, **Jane Y. Harmon**, who fell asleep in Jesus at her home, October 20, 1883, aged 59 years, 5 months and 5 days. Her disease was intaretus. No mortal tongue or pen can describe her sufferings, yet she bore all with christian fortitude rarely witnessed by any person. She often spoke of wanting to go home from this world of sin and sorrow, to reign with her blessed Savior above; but she said she was willing to wait her Maker's appointed time. She was a firm Primitive Baptist, always filled her seat in the church when not providentially hindered, was always pleased to entertain the brethren and sisters, and loved to converse on the Scriptures. I have thought that she and sister Kate Swartout had deeper knowledge of the Scriptures than any sisters I ever knew, or they let it be known more. She belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church forty years, and was beloved by all the brethren and sisters who knew her. She was always ready to lend a helping hand in time of need, and was a devoted wife and a loving mother. She was the mother of three children, though one died in infancy. I, her only daughter, and one son, are left to mourn our loss. Our father died six months lacking one day before our mother. No one can imagine how desolate and lonely I feel. O the sorrow that fills my heart no one knows but my great Redeemer. But what a blessed consolation it is to have the evidence that they have gone to rest with the redeemed. I desire an interest in the prayers of the brethren and sisters, that I may be resigned to the Lord's will at all times, and say, Thy will be done, and not mine.

ANN E. KING.

WAKETON, Texas.

DIED—At her residence in Union Grove, our dear daughter-in-law, **Sarah A. Elmendorf**, whose maiden name was Brown. She was born August 30, 1853, in Middlefield, Otsego Co., N. Y. She came to this state the same year with her parents, residing at Tampico until Dec. 23, 1880, when she was married to Frank M. Elmendorf, our youngest son. She was of a quiet and loving disposition. None knew her but to love her. She was not a member of any church, but loved to attend when opportunity offered. She was called to her long home very suddenly, of congestive chills. She leaves a babe and loving husband, together with father, mother, brother and sisters, and many other relatives, to mourn her early departure. She is gone, I hope, to rest in Jesus. She died May 31, 1883, and was interred June 2, followed by a large circle of relatives and friends.

Yours in affliction,

CATHARINE ELMENDORF.

My dear husband, **William Cross**, departed this life August 3, 1883, aged 72 years, 4 months and 25 days. His disease was paralysis. He suffered much, but bore it patiently, and throughout all his sufferings not a murmur escaped his lips. He seemed to be calmly resigned to the will of the Lord, and to trust in him as he had always done before. He was always of a calm disposition. He was not a member of our church, but had been a Methodist for many years. Still he loved to read the SIGNS and go with me to Baptist preaching. He was a kind and loving husband and an affectionate father. He leaves myself and three sons to mourn his departure. We are very lonely, but feel assured that our loss is his eternal gain. The youngest son remains with me.

Yours in tribulation,

MARY CROSS.

EAST SALEM, Pa., Dec. 29, 1883.

AT the request of the grandparents, brother and sister Atchison, I send you the obituary of **Nellie May Atchison**, who died of scarlet fever after an illness of four days, being 5 years, 9 months and 12 days old. The subject of this notice was a child of uncommon intelligence for one of such tender years, and her loss was deeply felt by all who knew her; but the Lord in his wisdom was pleased to transfer the bud of promise from this sin-stained world to the shores of immortal bliss.

WM. B. MARTIN.

DAYTON, W. T., Dec. 24, 1883.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Wm C Edmonston 2, Eliza W Smith 2, Jno P Shitz 2, Wm B Martin 2, Wm T Plummer 2, David Pitmus 2, Mrs Uriah North 2, J R Crain 25c, Thos Ross 2, S P Ramey 2, Wm A Sallie 2, A L Day 2, A D Jones 2, F J Stone 14, L P Cole 2, Alfred S Cook 2, Mrs Jacob Masten 2, Jesse F Johnson 2, Dr H Moseley 2, S P Rogers 2, Stephen Burns 2, Dudley Williams 2, S Joblin 2, Eld E A Meaders 2.—Total \$58 25.

FOR "DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES."

Hon John Seitz 1, Mrs Rachel Ensor 1, Ivory Libbey 1, Mrs M T Anthony 1.—Total \$4 00.

CHURCH HISTORY NOTICE.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—From the liberal manner in which the subscribers have responded to my request, I am glad to be able to inform the brethren that, with the permission of providence, the publication of the Church History at no very distant date is now assured. Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, our oldest publishing house in the United States, have the contract to publish the book. I hope that all the remaining subscribers, who have not yet remitted the amount of the subscription (two dollars per copy), will at an early day send on the proper amount, in postal order or registered letter to the brethren Beebe, so that the latter may issue the whole edition of three thousand copies at one time.

Yours in love,
SYLVESTER HASSELL,
WILSON, N. C., Feb. 7, 1882.

"DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES."

OUR manuscript for the above titled book is in the hands of Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, who have the contract to print the same. We ask our brethren and friends who may desire the book to assist us in its publication, at the reduced price of one dollar per copy, sent by money order or registered letter direct to publishers, with the understanding that if the book fails to give satisfaction, as set forth in the published "Prospectus," that you return them to me or to the brethren Beebe in good condition and get your money. The above proposition will close April 1st, 1884, after which the book will be sold at \$1 50 to \$2 00 per copy, according to binding.

S. M. CARLTON, M. D.
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MISS E. H. BOGGS, Principal, or
Elder Wm. J. Purington, Pastor of the Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, Mercer Co., New Jersey.

SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

We have just issued a handsome pamphlet of the above title, for our brother, Eld. A. B. Brees, which will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of twenty-five cents per copy. Address
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POETRY.

JESUS, THE SAVIOR.

THOUGH I am poor, and weak in mind,
I have a rich almighty Friend;
Jesus, our Savior, is his name;
He freely loves us without end.

O what a glorious Lord is this!
Should we not freely in him trust?
He will remember Calvary,
Nor let his saints forgetful be.

Here let our hearts begin to melt,
And mourn our sinfulness and guilt,
Which pierced the Savior on the tree,
To save such worthless worms as we.

With cold affections who could see,
The scourge, the thorns, the nails, the tree?
He wept, he bled, he died, for you;
What more, ye saints, could Jesus do?

If I am bless'd through Jesus' blood,
Then I shall reign with him above;
Then will the joyful period come,
When I shall call sweet heaven my home.

SUSIE L. SHEPARD.

I SHALL BE SATISFIED.

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."—Psalm xvii. 15.

Not here! not here! not where the sparkling waters

Fade into mocking sands as we draw near;
Where in the wilderness each footstep falters;

I shall be satisfied, but O! not here.

Not here! where dreams of bliss deceive us,
Where the worn spirit never gains its goal;
Where, haunted ever by the thoughts that grieve us,

Across us floods of bitter memory roll.

There is a land where every pulse is thrilling

With rapture earth's sojourners may not know;

Where heaven's repose the weary heart is stilling,

And peacefully life's tempest-tossed currents flow.

Far out of sight, while yet the flesh infolds us,

Lies the fair country where our hearts abide;
And of its bliss is naught more wondrous told us

Than these few words, "I shall be satisfied."

Satisfied! Satisfied! The spirit's yearning
For sweet companionship with kindred minds;

The silent love that here meets no returning,
The inspiration which no language finds.

Shall they be satisfied? The soul's vague longings,

The aching void which nothing earthly fills?
O! what desires upon my soul are thronging,
As I look upward to the heavenly hills.

Thither my weak and weary steps are tending;

Savior and Lord! with thy frail child abide!
Guide me towards home, where all my wanderings ending;

I then shall see thee, and "be satisfied."

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND, AND THE THINGS WHICH ARE BEFORE.

(Philippians iii. 13.)

THE apostle Paul talked and wrote a great deal about his own experience, and the exercises and travel of his mind. And how comforting this is to the tried and afflicted children of God, who are often bewildered by the strange conflicts within them. How near it brings him to them. He does not seem in his writing and preaching as one apart from and higher than those to whom he speaks, but is with them in their weakness, in their fears, in their hatred of sin and their self-loathing on account of it, in their groanings under the bondage of corruption, and in their longings after heavenly things. In his deepest and most profound arguments, in his loftiest expressions concerning the infinite majesty and power and grace and love of God, he does not separate himself from us as a teacher of what he has searched out, but is still telling us his own experience, speaking of the wonderful revelations that have been made within him, and of the exceeding greatness of the power of God, "which worketh in him mightily." How often he speaks of himself, and how freely he opens his heart to the sympathetic view of his brethren. He does not stop with the relation of his first experience and the wonderful circumstances connected with it; but tells us of his daily travel of soul, of his grief because he cannot do the things that he would, of his wretchedness, which extorts from his soul the doleful cry, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" of his joy and thankfulness at the revelation of that glorious truth that it is through Jesus Christ our Lord, a revelation that is ever as new and sweet and wonderful to the inspired apostle as it is to the least and most timid child of God just rejoicing in his first view of Jesus. He talks about himself, as do the psalmist and all the inspired writers, about their sins and sorrow and weakness, and about their joys and triumphs in the Lord, when he becomes their strength and their salvation. These things are personal matters, and only as one speaks from his own experience, and of his own experience, can he be of true spiritual interest and profit and comfort to the people of God. It is not in the declaration of abstract truth from an infinite distance above us that even our dear Savior presents himself to his little ones, but in the experience and living power of that truth, as having

himself felt all the pains and sorrows of sin, and the joys and glory of salvation, and the tender gratitude and thankfulness to God for his goodness. He comes to them as the Truth itself, and is with them as their Brother, their Friend, their Companion; and nearer still, is in them the hope of glory. All who come to us in his dear name will come with a measure of this intimate and sacred nearness, this opening of the heart to us, this loving freedom in telling what they have felt of suffering, and what he has done for their souls. In this sweet intimacy into which an experience of grace brings the preacher and the hearer of the word, the man of great strength and wisdom and knowledge becomes as the weak, as the ignorant, as the little child. He may be in his natural disposition stern, tyrannical, overbearing, may even have the fierceness of the tiger; but in the precious gospel which he is prepared by grace to preach he comes in gentleness and meekness and tenderness and love. In the kingdom of God there is no distinction between doctrinal and experimental things. All are experimental. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."

In writing to the church at Philippi, how sweetly and frankly the apostle tells the desires and struggles of his soul. His whole inner life is opened to the view of those who themselves have divine life. He points back to what he was before he was apprehended of Christ Jesus, and shows what good cause he had for boasting, if any might boast in the flesh. His birth and standing among the Jews were of the best and proudest. He had most excellent learning, his zeal for God had been manifest by persecuting the church, which he verily thought he ought to do, and touching the righteousness which is in the law, he was blameless. But a great and wonderful change had taken place in him, for now, instead of looking upon all these things with complacency and comfort as gain to him, he counts them loss for Christ. This counting them as loss is not a work of his own, but an experience. If we could exercise control over our own minds and hearts so as to change hatred to love and love to hatred, if we could voluntarily despise to-day what we admired and delighted in yesterday, and meditate with pleasure and comfort to-morrow upon that which to-day fills us with abhorrence and dismay, then we might boast when sin awakens self-loathing within us, and when heavenly things command the desires and longings of our

souls. Those things that Saul of Tarsus had boasted in were lost to him when Jesus met him in the way to Damascus. From that hour their value in his eyes was gone never to be restored. And with those things that were esteemed of the utmost value to a Jew, Paul also includes all things which the natural man holds dear. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

The knowledge of Christ Jesus was not counted as excelling that which was now loss to Paul, as one kind of earthly knowledge may be esteemed more excellent than another, but as light excels darkness, as life excels death. In the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which he saw shining in the face of Jesus, all his own former knowledge was seen to be but foolishness and darkness and death, his own righteousness but filthy rags, and all worldly things but vanity and vexation of spirit. It is painful to suffer the loss of all things in the sense that the apostle had, but not as we would feel it painful to lose what we still value most highly and desire to have again. These things were lost in the sense of having become valueless and offensive. Yet while they are lost to us, their merit gone, they are still with us, belonging to the body of death, and cause sorrow and groaning. Paul in his spirit turns away from all these things of the law, of the world, desiring not to be held by them in any way; for only in complete separation from them is there the full experience of the knowledge of Christ, who is eternally separated from and above them all. Therefore the apostle speaks of them as given up that he may win Christ; presenting him under the figure of a prize, the chief desire of the soul, so far above all other things in value that they are esteemed but dung in comparison. The blind man whose eyes Jesus had opened was separated from the favor of the Jews, from the privileges and honors of the synagogue, and even from the care and protection of his own father and mother, before Jesus revealed himself to him as the Son of God, and the author of the wonderful work which had been wrought in him. So the saving power and grace and love of Jesus are often

experienced in great measure before we begin to know him understandingly as "the true God and eternal life." And when the soul enters into that wonderful field of knowledge, to what an infinite extent it is seen stretching out before us. The apostle had long ago entered this field, had long ago seen Jesus, as one born out of due time, had long ago felt the revelation of him in his own soul, and had ever since been preaching him among the Gentiles; and yet he says,

"That I may know him." This knowledge is eternal life; and to grow in this knowledge of Jesus Christ is to feel the power of eternal life working within us from day to day, causing this mortal life, with all that belongs to it, to grow less and less in our esteem. To know Jesus by a daily experience of his cleansing blood and sweet mercy and justifying righteousness; to know him as near to us in our weakness and helplessness and ignorance and sinfulness, as sufficient for us, as our "all and in all;" to know him as the conqueror of death, as having ascended up on high; to know him as the eternal Son of God, who is gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of the majesty on high, "angels and principalities and powers being made subject to him;" to know him as the "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace;" to know him thus experimentally from day to day in all his supreme excellency and glorious power, feeling his presence and his love in our hearts, and holding communion with him. O how sweet this is! Who can tell the excellency of that knowledge? This, and infinitely more than I can express or think, the apostle desired.

"And the power of his resurrection." He is risen above death, above sin, which is the sting of death, above the law, which is the strength of sin. To know him, then, is to know experimentally in the same degree the power of his resurrection. And if we know that power, we shall be engaged no more with the things which are below, but shall seek alone those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. We shall not be disturbed any more by the law or sin or death. This vile body will not any more control us, but will itself be entirely under the control of the Spirit. We shall seek no more for any righteousness but that which Jesus has provided, for that will sweetly clothe us all the time.

"And the fellowship of his sufferings." What! will there be suffering then? Yes, such suffering as no natural man knows; the suffering of a holy soul when brought in contact with sin and defilement, which are unspeakably offensive to it. While we are in the flesh we shall know the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings in that degree that we know him and the power of his resurrection; for in that degree we shall hate and loathe all evil, and abhor ourselves. But that is the most blessed state for a christian to be in. We are constantly liable to sit down; to try to get rest;

to fall asleep; to be seeking some self-improvement, that we may get free from this wearying self-abhorrence; to seek the friendship of the world, and our own favor. But the spiritual mind sees that in this fellowship of the Savior's sufferings is our only true safety and comfort. We cannot know him experimentally while we are at peace with ourselves, and in bonds of friendship with the world. There can be no compromise. We cannot love the world and Jesus at the same time. We cannot reign with him only as we suffer with him. This knowledge which the spiritual mind leads us to seek after is not possessed by the world, cannot be obtained by searching, is never enjoyed but through the crucifixion of the flesh with its affections and lusts. So the apostle expressed his and our true spiritual desire when he said,

"Being made conformable unto his death." Only as we bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, will the life also of Jesus be made manifest in our body.—2 Cor. iv. 10, 11. It is so contrary to nature to desire to suffer, and especially to suffer daily the pains of dying, that we may well question whether we even truly desire it. It must be through a sharp and clear and painful experience of the vanity of all earthly things, and of the depravity of our own hearts, and through a vivid and soul-enrapturing view of the excellence of heavenly things, that such a desire can come into our minds. And it is in proportion to the strength and vividness of this two-fold experience that we feel this daily dying, this being "always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake," this constant struggling of the soul against "the bars of the earth," this sorrow and groaning because of the earthward tendencies of the flesh, as under "a bondage of corruption," this holding on to heavenly things with the hands of faith and love the more strongly, the more we feel the backward pulling of our carnal nature toward earthly things. To be made conformable unto our Savior's death is to feel constantly whatever pain and grief attends a separation from what our mortal body inclines to, from "the desires of the flesh and of the mind," and to be so lifted in holy desires and in the power of spiritual life above them all, that not the clinging and drawing power of them, nor the pain of crucifying them, nor the abhorrence of the soul toward them, can hinder or control the sacred flow and holy power of that divine life; but on the contrary, they are all themselves held in perfect control by it, so that both in suffering and in obedience to the will of God, "the life of Jesus is made manifest in our mortal flesh."

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." That would seem to be almost a separation of the soul and body while we are still in the world. Then the wants, the sufferings, the lusts and the affections of the flesh would not affect or control the mind at all in its actions, but we would be in all things

led and controlled by the holy principle of divine life. Have we not felt our souls longing for such a condition, that we might walk, if it were only possible, free from sin in thought or word or deed, perfectly resigned to the will of God, obedient to all his commands in heart and life, patiently and contentedly waiting his own good time to release us from the bondage of corruption? It has appeared to us as though Paul must have attained to that state; but he says,

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." To apprehend is to lay hold of a thing with the understanding, and to have some true knowledge of it, though it may be that, as in this case, which we can never comprehend in this mortal state. For to comprehend means to know and understand all about a thing. Paul and all the saints are apprehended of Christ Jesus as chosen vessels of mercy, as heirs of eternal life, which was given them in him before the world began. It was for this eternal life that they were at first apprehended or arrested by Christ Jesus, called and brought to him in order that they might receive all spiritual blessings which were given them in him, and for those spiritual and eternal things they are now apprehended of him. So Paul, being enabled to see those spiritual things that are in Christ Jesus, follows after, desiring that he might lay hold of them, keep them before his mind; that he might regard himself as Jesus regards him, not as a poor, vile sinner, but as a member of the body of Christ; not as of the world, but as of God. What holy comfort and peace, even in the midst of tribulation, would be the result of such a state of mind as this, and what perfect conformity to the will of God in all things. But the apostle had to acknowledge that he came far short of his desires in all this.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Here we see the spiritual attitude of a child of God, an attitude which the worldly mind cannot see, but which is apparent only to the spiritual understanding. To the people of the world there appears no difference between the christian and other men, only that they see him, when he is spiritually minded, treating as dross that which they esteem most highly, and glorying in that which they hold in utmost contempt. But to the spiritual understanding what an infinite difference there is; for he is dead to that which is their life and glory, and is alive to that to which they are dead. And the infinite difference is that the things to which they are alive are corrupt, unsatisfying, and soon fade away; while those things to which he is alive are incorruptible, glorious and eternal. But the chris-

tian feels something of the power of both. That to which he is dead is with him, but behind, and its power is often felt tending to draw him backward into the region of darkness and death. That to which he is alive is with him, but before, and its tendency is to draw him forward into the realms of life; and under its sweet power he sometimes loses consciousness of the body. "The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." "If we live after the flesh we shall die; but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live." When grace reigns we are in the Spirit, and follow after the things of the Spirit; but when left to ourselves we are in the flesh, and live after the flesh, and experience death.

Here, then, stands the apostle Paul. Here is the attitude of the christian in whom grace reigns, the inhabitant of two worlds; in his flesh an inhabitant of the present evil world; in and through the Spirit an inhabitant of the world to come, the new heavens and the new earth. His back is turned to the region of death; his face is toward the realms of everlasting life. "Who is this that looketh forth as the morning?" It is the church, looking forth out of legal night to the gospel day. And so each child of God looks forth as the morning. Behind him is the night, before him the perfect day. Behind him are the law and sin and death, all his transgressions and backslidings and infirmities. Behind him are all his own righteousness, his zeal for God while under the law, his honor among men, his worldly religion and good works and learning and wisdom. Behind him are all the affections of the natural heart, all the tender ties of nature, all the friendship and honor of the world, yea, the world itself, with all that pertains to it. From all this he has been raised up together with Christ, and turned away by the power of spiritual life. Before him is eternal life, with all its infinite purity and power and blessedness. Before him is Jesus, with all his loveliness and glorious perfections and finished work and great salvation. Before him are the riches of his mercy and grace, and all the length and breadth and depth and height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. Before him are even his own experiences of that love and salvation. Though of the past in the order of time, these experiences are not behind us in this spiritual sense, but always before. Our failures, our slips and falls, our sighs and groans on account of them, are of the things which are behind; but the sweet mercy which was made known to us because of them, the grace that was manifested as sufficient for us when our sins and infirmities had brought us down into the depths, the tender loving-kindness that was displayed to our astonished souls in lifting us up and placing our feet upon the rock, the sweet tokens of his favor such as he bears unto his people, all these are ever before us. They belong to the light.

and to the day. It is forward, and not backward, in this spiritual sense, that the saint is looking when he desires that he might be "as in months past," as in the days when the light and favor of the Lord were with him, and made his mountain to stand strong. It is forward, and not backward, that he is led when he is made "to sing again as in the days of his youth." There are in this sense no incipient stages of experience, no first steps which are to be left behind and forgotten. How favored is the man who has been long in the way when the sweet feeling of his first love and thankfulness is again brought into his soul. He can never get beyond these things. All that belongs to Jesus, every manifestation of his love and salvation, is always of the things which are before.

But how could the apostle forget the things which are behind? We find ourselves unable to forget our afflictions, even when they are past. Yet he says, "Forgetting the things which are behind." Well, it must be in this way. What I have forgotten will no more influence my actions. If I forget a threat of injury or danger, I will not even be afraid on account of it, much less be moved out of my way because of it. If I forget a promise of a favor made to me, I will never seek for its fulfillment, nor be disappointed because it is not fulfilled. So the apostle speaks of forgetting the things which are behind. Not that they have literally gone out of his mind. Not that he has no remembrance of his former sins, of persecuting the church, of his righteousness which was of the law, of the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan that buffeted him, of the persecutions he had endured, and of the assurance that bonds and afflictions were to be his wherever he should go. But none of these things move him. In this sense they are forgotten. They do not influence his actions; they do not prevent him reaching forward; they do not rob him of hope and comfort. His worldly honors, his learning, his good works as he once esteemed them, the favor of the world, all are forgotten, counted but loss, and have no effect to turn his face for a moment from its steadfast looking forward toward heavenly things.

The child of God, then, is not only looking with longing eyes to the things which are before, but is reaching forth and pressing toward them. The apostle says to the saints at Colosse, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Now the things which are above and those which are before are the same. Where our life is, there all our interests are, and toward them we will be reaching forth. If one thing we desire of the Lord, that we will seek after. The mark which is before us, and the prize which inspires us to press toward that mark,

both are "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." What are all earthly prizes compared with this? But dross. What are all "the sufferings of this present time" when we think of this infinitely valuable prize? "Not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" when through the faithfulness of our God we shall have reached the mark and obtained the prize. The high calling of God in Christ Jesus, the perfection and honor and glory unto which we are called in him, a perfect conformity unto his glorious image, is indeed a prize that, when it is clearly in our view, fills the soul with unspeakable and all-controlling love and holy desire.

In all the doctrine of God that high calling appears, and therefore we seek to know that doctrine more and more by a vital experience of its power. In every promise it is seen, and so we desire to enter into the enjoyment of those "exceeding great and precious promises," which are all "yea and amen in Christ Jesus, to the glory of God by us." In love and joy and peace and meekness and faith, and every fruit of the Spirit, there are fragrant evidences and sweet tastes of that high and heavenly calling, and therefore we desire to have those graces of the Spirit in lively exercise within us, and fully manifested in our lives and conversation. In all the order of the church, in every ordinance of the gospel, in the fellowship and communion of saints, there are manifested the high calling of God, the perfection of his work, and the pleasures at his right hand; and therefore a perfect conformity to the order of the gospel is desired by the spiritual mind. The apostle reached forth with all his desires, and pressed with every holy energy of his soul, toward that perfection which is in Christ Jesus. And he says,

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Are we thus minded? How very many of us will have to answer sadly in the negative. I find myself so often engaged with the things that are behind, and all too little with those things that are before. Instead of forgetting, I find myself often looking back, like Lot's wife, and even turning back, to the things that are behind. The vanities of the world seem so much to engage my mind, which fills me with sorrow and anguish. I am often trying to clothe myself with some goodness of my own, and to kindle a fire in which to warm my cold heart; and then the law seems to stir as though it would come to life again and condemn me, and I lie down in sorrow. I sometimes tremble at the thought of death, and wonder what the end will be. Well the apostle continues, and says,

"And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Then it is a revelation of God, and not anything brought about by our own exertions. How wonderful and how good that is. Yes, God shall in his own time reveal to you that when you are mourning over your sins and weakness, you are

reaching forth to those things which are before as much as when the light and comfort of those heavenly things are resting upon your spirit. When you grieve that earthly things seem so much to engage your thoughts, and have to mournfully complain with the psalmist, "My soul cleaveth to the dust," and you can only abhor yourself, you are most surely pressing toward the mark. The one who runs a race spurns the ground with his foot at every leap. That pressure upon the ground backward causes him to press forward. So the opposition of our soul to our own backward inclinations, to the earthward tendencies of the flesh, and the grief that we feel on account of them, are but the spurning of the ground with our feet as we run in the race, and are sure evidences that we are indeed pressing toward the mark. God shall reveal unto us that both the things of the world, and the thoughts and affections that can be set upon them, are of the things that are behind. We cannot know our own true spiritual standing and attitude until they are revealed unto us. We cannot understand the nature and meaning of the strange exercises and conflicts within us until they are explained to us. But sometimes the revelation is made so plain that we have passed from death unto life, and things which are before come so clearly into our view in all their loveliness and beauty, that those things which are behind drop out of our thoughts as things utterly forgotten, and we experience the power of that love that passeth knowledge, and are "filled with all the fullness of God."

SILAS H. DURAND.

HERRICK, Bradford Co., Pa., Jan. 5, 1884.

STATE ROAD, Del., January, 1884.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—I have for some months had in contemplation to write a brief sketch of history for publication in the SIGNS. Perhaps I might properly assign about three reasons for the preparation and publication of such a paper at this time. One of these I would find in the subject itself. I would propose to present in a condensed form some of the most important events in the history of one of our oldest and most prominent Baptist Churches. A second reason I find in the importance to inquirers after truth, in the present day, to know the way in which the fathers walked, and whether the Baptist Churches of to-day still speak the same things and walk in the same old paths. As another reason, it would afford interesting and instructive variety to your readers.

The church of which I thought of writing is called Kingwood, and is one and was one of the constituent churches of the Delaware River Association. Its two places of public worship are situated in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. This church was constituted on the 31st of July, 1742. The constituent members numbered about twenty-two. They had mostly been connected with the Hopewell Church, some having gone there

for baptism and uniting there as the nearest church; and others coming from different places, but being Baptists before settling in that neighborhood. Among these was Thomas Curtis, who appears to have been a member of Hopewell Church, and from them obtained a letter of dismission at the constitution of Kingwood. He arranged a settlement for himself and family and others some miles to the northward of the present places of worship, and built a small meeting-house himself, and began preaching there and at the Kingwood meeting-house at Baptistown alternately. It is presumed that he was licensed by the Hopewell Church, though I am not informed as to that. The house erected by him was called the society meeting-house, and was used alternately with the other for many years, but is gone now. The distance of these members from Hopewell could not have been less than from eighteen to forty miles. The Hopewell preacher at that time frequently visited and preached for these distant members. The first one of these was Elder Joseph Eaton, and he was succeeded by Elder Thomas Davis. Others from different places also visited and preached for them until they were constituted, when they soon after took steps with a view to the ordination of Mr. Curtis. Although the call for this ordination was a solemn and unanimous act of the church, after much opportunity to hear and to judge, yet consultation was sought with the association, and an appointment was made at the session for Elders Nathaniel Jenkins and Jenkin Jones to meet with the church for the above purpose. I speak somewhat particularly of the constitution and first pastor to show the very fair start that this church had; all the preachers named in connection therewith, as well as the mother church, having continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. The ordination took place October 28th, 1745, and April 28th, 1749, he was removed by death. The next effort in regard to a pastor was the ordaining of one of their members, who, after some little time, was excluded for immoral conduct; and, although continuing to reside for many years in the neighborhood, was never restored. I do not find any very definite declarations of faith in the early history of this church. Election, baptism of believers only, and the final perseverance of the saints, are the principal points that I find set forth. Among the preachers of those early times was one Nicholas Cox, who was a native of New Castle County, Delaware, and was licensed to preach in or near Philadelphia, and came from the Great Valley Church, of Philadelphia Association, to answer a call from Kingwood, after having been ordained over twenty years. The call of this man and his settlement was in 1784, the church numbering at the time seventy-three. He continued about five years, and during that time baptized one hundred and twenty-five persons, the membership

being thereby raised to over one hundred and eighty. Although this was long before the Baptists had become familiar with the art of getting up revivals and making converts, yet the reader will be apt to suspect the soundness of a great deal of this work. He will, however, hardly be prepared for the announcement that follows. In the midst of all this prosperity Mr. Cox suddenly announced to the church that he was a Universalist, and endeavored to draw the church off with him. Although the officers were firm, and the church sustained the shock, and retained her property and her standing, yet one hundred members followed Mr. Cox. We cannot at this day know much more of the character of Mr. Cox's preaching and practice than what is shown by the fruits. *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?* You will be ready to inquire what became of Mr. Cox and his Universalist Church. Why, they went the way of the wood, hay and stubble. They went as went the herd of swine of old times in the land of the Gadarenes. Mr. C. could not make even a Universalist Church out of such material. He died some years after, a neglected inebriate, and all his followers came to naught. I do not know of a Universalist now in all that country. Although it is to the credit of the eighty surviving members that they endured such a shock and came out of it triumphant, yet I have understood that for awhile it was quite a doubtful case, as most of them were more or less contaminated. I think we have sufficient warrant to conclude that gospel doctrine was kept pretty much out of sight, and that if means was not preached, it was used, and that neither old members nor new members were established in anything. In this ordeal the church was undoubtedly taught a lesson. She was saved, yet so as by fire. Her work and that of her preacher for five years was all burned up. How fraught with mischief to all concerned, and how destitute of power for good to any, is all this work. Would it not have been far better for the church, and better for the world, if Kingwood had during all these years been without a pastor at all? It seemed to be quite a prevailing idea in former times that a man was useful as a pastor just according to the number baptized, and so it was said of several of the different pastors that their labors had been blessed, and that they had been a blessing to the church. There was quite plenty of this kind of blessing during many of the earlier years of this church's history, it being noticeable that baptisms were frequent and candidates numerous. But another thing is quite as noticeable, and what may justly be regarded as the legitimate fruit of excessive gatherings. Exclusions were almost as frequent as baptisms. Instead of church meetings of brethren and sisters meeting for worship in love and fellowship, almost incessantly we find them dealing with delinquent and disorderly members. Not only did many who

stood connected with the church neglect entirely the appointments and all their obligations, but complaints of the grossest immorality were frequent. There could, I think, be but little comfort in a church with more or less of the members under dealing, and these showing neither regard for the church nor for themselves. Some of these names continue prominently as dead weights and sources of trouble for years, sometimes suspended, and again restored; but eventually, as a general thing, excluded.

From the first organization of this church on for at least fifty years, I find account of officers who are styled Ruling Elders. They were set apart with the assistance of a visiting minister, being solemnly instructed and admonished with regard to the duties of their office, &c.; but what those duties were we are left pretty much to conjecture. There can be little doubt that for this office men of the first standing, men of gift, of age and experience, were selected, who had the confidence and would command the respect and esteem of all the brethren. Sometimes there appears to have been but one Elder, and sometimes a second was appointed as an assistant. They had also one, two or more deacons; and both Elders and deacons appear to have been set apart by what is called ordination. There is no person living now that remembers anything of these Ruling Elders. They probably had authority to preside in the meetings for worship, somewhat as a moderator, and preserve good order. This church appears in those early troublous times to have come together for worship on the first day of the week, whether they had a preacher or not; and this practice has been continued without much variation to the present time. They had their monthly meetings also, of which they seemed to make special account, requiring members to give account of themselves when absent from them. In 1796 a call was extended to Garner A. Hunt, and accepted by him; but I am unable to say about his previous standing. During the six years that they had been without a pastor they had been still further depleted in numbers. From eighty they had diminished to somewhat over fifty, and the baneful influence of that heresy that had swept over them like a pestilence is still abundantly manifest. Not only prominent members of the church, but among the leading citizens of the community, men and women of whom we would have been slow to believe such things, are named as victims of that strange infatuation. It was spoken of sometimes as universal salvation, but much more frequently as *hell redemption*.

Mr. Hunt continued with them about ten years, and there appears to be good evidence that he served the church faithfully, and labored earnestly to reclaim those who had wandered, and restore peace and fellowship among the scattered and demoralized flock. He was successful to some extent, and quiet and good order succeeded to discord and

strife. After about ten years continuance there Mr. Hunt, suddenly and without previous warning, left them and went to the Presbyterians. It was reported, although it does not appear in the official papers, that a higher salary was the convincing argument. As a keynote to this I might mention that on the church records appears a contract between Mr. Hunt and the Kingwood Church, by which they stipulated to pay him sixty pounds annually for his services for two-thirds of the Lord's days, the trustees becoming responsible by signing the contract. I will venture to say that neither before nor since has that church ever entered into another contract like that. I well remember the time when many years afterward Mr. Hunt came back to Kingwood to acknowledge his error, ask forgiveness, and restoration to his former place. Upon inquiry it appeared that he was no longer in good standing among the Presbyterians, and so the matter ended.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

(To be continued.)

NORTH BERWICK, Me., Nov. 8, 1883.

THE following letter was read in our last church meeting, and the church was so much edified in it that it was their wish that it should be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will now inform the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that on Sunday, the 4th of this month, I had the pleasure of baptizing her in the name of Christ. That morning it looked like it would be a stormy day, and as she lived seven or eight miles from the meeting house, it looked very doubtful about her being there that day. But she ventured to start, and by the time she arrived at the meeting house the clouds began to break, and by the time meeting was out the sun shone bright and warm, so that we had a pleasant time in going to the water and in administering that gospel ordinance. We felt to say that not only the natural sun, but the Sun of Righteousness did shine in its glory on us.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Me., Jan. 3, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I have sent you a letter that sister A. G. Clark wrote, telling us the travel of her mind before she was baptized, I now send one that she wrote two weeks after she was baptized, and I think that the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES would like to read this one. Yours as ever,

WM. QUINT.

SPRINGVALE, Me., Oct. 8, 1883.

ELDER WM. QUINT—RESPECTED FRIEND:—I dare not call you brother, because I know that I am not worthy. No doubt you will be surprised when you see the name of the author of this letter; but the desire to communicate with some one on the subject of religion must be my excuse. Please bear with me as patiently as you can, while I try to tell in my feeble way of the many and devious

ways through which I have wandered, like one blindfolded; but please do not make it too public, for I do not wish to thrust myself into notice, but would rather shrink out of sight. Of course I am willing you should speak of it to my sisters, Mrs. Staples and Mrs. Chadbourne, although we have never talked on the subject. To begin with my childhood, I suppose I was rather a wayward, peculiar tempered child; but from my earliest recollections, at times, I have had awful and serious thoughts of the future, death and eternity, and what would be my portion in a future state. When a very small girl, attending school, I had such overpowering feelings come over me on the subject, that to get rid of them I have got excused from the school-room and gone out to run and play for awhile; but I never told any one my feelings, and do not think they were suspected. At that time I did not have any realization or sense of being a sinner, only in a sort of general way, as I had been taught that we were all sinners. But I had a strong desire to be a christian. I remember once reading a little book for children, in which the Savior was represented as a shepherd carrying the lambs in his arms, and I had such yearning to be one of his lambs; but still I had no strong conviction of being a sinner more than others. The Old School Baptists used to visit at our house, and I would hear them talking, and would listen attentively to their conversation; still I think no one ever suspected me of being at all interested in what they were talking about. And sometimes I heard some good old saint give an exhortation in meeting, and relate some of their own experience, and tell of going away alone to pray; and I would think that if they were christians, (and I never for a moment doubted it), perhaps if I would go away by myself and pray, I, too, might become one. And I have wandered away to some secluded place for that purpose, when it would seem to me to be almost blasphemous, and I would not even dare to fall on my knees; and if I did get as far as that, I neither knew how to pray nor what to pray for. I remained in this frame of mind until about the time I was fourteen years of age, when I went to Great Falls to work in the mill, and for a time attended the New School Baptist meetings. I have no recollection of any serious impressions at that time, only after a time I began to reason like this, that the Baptist doctrine was selfish any way; that the Bible said, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;" and it seemed to me like chaining one who was starving, and placing food just out of reach, and saying, Help yourself. After awhile I began to attend the Methodist meetings, and they seemed to be decidedly more generous. Still, if I became a christian according to their creed, I must work for it, and must attend all the "means of grace," as they call it. And although I was fond of attending their meetings, I could not for many

years get up courage to rise in public for prayers, which is part of their form of worship; and as it is not agreeable to my nature to be an object of public attention, it was a great trial; but at last I gave in. I was then living at Lewiston. One evening, at a prayer meeting, the invitation being given to those wishing to become christians to rise, I struggled to my feet. A few days after, the pastor called on me, and in the course of our conversation I related to him the foregoing narrative in substance; and I think I need not tell you that I was very much disappointed and surprised when he said to me that I had told a good christian experience. I did not believe it then nor do I now. I had not had one ray of hope, nor a taste of the peace that passeth understanding; indeed I do not think I had a true sense of my real condition as a blind, miserable sinner. But he addressed me as sister ever after, and requested me to attend the class-meeting, where each one is called upon to relate their week's experience. There was one held in an upstairs tenement, in the house where I lived, and I had sometimes stealthily crept out on the stairs and listened to the praying and singing. So when they invited me to go in I did so; but when they called on me to tell of the dealings of the Lord with me during the past week, I rose to my feet, but my tongue refused to perform its office. The pastor himself chanced to be present, and came to the rescue by telling the class-leader, "The sister has just found the Savior," whereas I had not found him at all. I did not feel his blood applied to me to cleanse me from sin. Although I did not doubt its power for others, it did not seem to be for such as I to receive. I attended class-meeting but a few times, and left the town, and then could not say anything like what seemed to me to be christian experience; but they all spoke to me as if they thought I was a christian, whereas I did not feel one whit different than I had for years, only that I had let people know that I wanted to be a christian. Shortly after this I was called away for a short time. After my return the minister talked to me, and told me that they were to have a baptism, and he wished me to go forward. I objected, as I did not feel that I was a fit subject. They had had a church gathering, and the candidates had given in their experience. He said he could present my case to the church, and I need not be obliged to relate an experience. I did not feel right about it, as I did not feel a sense of sins forgiven; but he urged and advised until I thought perhaps if I went forward I might feel better; so I allowed myself to be overpersuaded, and was "smuggled" into the church by sprinkling, a mode of baptism I do not believe in, and without a clear idea of its sacredness. But it made no difference with my feelings. I very soon found that I could not keep my religion, nor my religion keep me. About that time I left Lewiston for good, and went to Great

Falls. They gave me a letter to the church there, and although urged to hand it in, I did not, and finally put it into the fire. Now comes the worst of this narrative. At that time there was a band of Spiritualists there, and I got hold of Spiritualism, or that got hold of me, and then for a few years I was a believer in that. Still I could not, as some of them did, ridicule the Bible or christians; yet I did say (and I tell it to my shame) that I thought that Christ lived our example, but did not die our sacrifice; and that has caused me more wretched hours than anything else. I said, too, that when I gave up Spiritualism I should not believe anything; but by strange circumstances I was released from that snare, and then truly for a long time I doubted everything, the Bible and christianity, and about everything good. Those were truly dark days. I had an awful sense of my guilt and condemnation all the time, with all my doubts. At length my belief in the Bible and the truth of christianity was restored, but my sins seemed ten times more heinous. I felt as if I had committed the unpardonable sin, and the fourth, fifth and six verses of the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews were all the time before me, and all that kept me from despair was the thought that although I had allowed myself to be drawn into the church, I had never "tasted of the heavenly gift." I cannot tell exactly how long I was in this frame of mind, but it was a long time. At length one day, two years ago last January, I was sitting and running a sewing machine, and thinking of my sinful condition, when I began to sing a hymn which the Methodists sing in connection with the invitation to go forward for prayers, commencing,

"Come, humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve."

When I had got to the last verse, which reads,

"Perhaps he will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish I will pray,
And perish only there,"

I felt that I could do nothing, and that Christ alone could save me. At once a calm came over my troubled spirit. I seemed to feel that my sins were forgiven. Still I hardly dared to hope in his mercy, for I felt myself to be the chief of sinners. Yet for weeks I did truly and for the first time enjoy that peace that passeth all understanding. One year ago last September it was ordered so that I attended the yearly meeting of the Primitive Baptists at Oakwoods, and it seemed to me that I never had heard preaching before; and this year I attended again, when I heard so much of my own feelings portrayed that I felt emboldened to pen this. I hardly know why, only that I wanted to. I have many doubts and fears, and hardly dare hope, for it seems almost impossible that there can be mercy for so vile a sinner as me. Yet I never have felt a return of that feeling of almost despair, since I first felt the calm I have spoken of. But O! I do not want to deceive, nor be deceived. If my hope is genuine, to God be all the praise, for nothing

but his almighty power has wrought the change. I might write more, but this perhaps is more than will be at all edifying; so I will close by subscribing myself a poor, blind, unworthy sinner.

ABBY G. CLARK.

P. S.—In looking this over I see I have omitted to speak of what I most wanted to: Sometimes I have had a strong desire to cast in my lot with the Oakwoods Church, but fear I am not worthy. My hope is so faint, yet I cannot give it up. I cling as a drowning man to a straw, yet I dare not ask the good men and women of the church to receive me as a sister, for I fear they would think it the height of presumption. Will you tell me candidly if you think my hope is well grounded? I know it will make no difference, but I feel so small and weak that I feel like calling for help.

A. G. C.

SHAW'S RIDGE, Me., Nov. 18, 1883.

ELDER QUINT—KIND FRIEND:—Two weeks have passed since I was led into the water by you in the ordinance of baptism. At that time my sister wished to know the state of my mind after coming out of the water. I told her I could hardly tell then, as I am not as impulsive as some in regard to my feelings. But I have since thought, perhaps it might be interesting to her, and others who so kindly gave consent to receive unworthy me as a sister in the church, to know something of the state of my feelings since that day. Of the day itself I can truly say it was peaceful. I felt that I was doing right. I had been led to suppose it must of necessity be a great cross. But it did not seem thus to me at that time. It was what I had an anxious desire to do; and as the way was opened, I went steadily forward with no thought of what this or that one might say, so long as the church saw fit to accept me. The following day was one of the best days I ever knew. And finally, ever since I have had more than an ordinary degree of peace. But O what if I am deceiving myself! Before I had obtained peace or hope in Christ, all enjoyment in the things of this life were torn from my grasp, and I was left quite or nearly in despair. I thought it was decreed that there was no good thing for me, either temporal or spiritual. Still I felt that God would be just in casting me off. I know we read that "God is love;" but how can he love me? It is my sincere prayer, in all humility, that I may never bring a reproach upon the church. But I have many fears at times that I may not be able to walk worthy of my profession; that I shall not be able to keep myself; forgetting for a time that it is impossible for me to do so, in and of myself. At such times the closing words of Jude have been very encouraging and soothing to my mind. Perhaps you may think it a strange passage to look to for help. But to one who has learned that they cannot keep themselves, are not the words comforting? "Him that is able to keep you from falling."

A. G. CLARK.

WINFIELD, Kansas, Dec. 23, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have often been requested to write my experience for publication; but feeling my inability, and not knowing whether I had a christian experience, I have been loth to write; but the burden from the Lord is upon me, to write what I hope the Lord has done for unworthy me. I have tried to resist this feeling for a long time, saying that I did not know what to write, and it would leave me, in a measure, for a while, but to return again with greater force than ever; so, with a fearful heart and a trembling hand, I will make the attempt, and I trust the Lord will take the lead of my mind and the guidance of my pen, that I may write nothing but the truth. The Lord knows my wicked heart, that it is prone to evil as the sparks fly upward; but through his grace I hope to write to his glory, and not from any fleshly motive of my own. I am weak, and without him I can do nothing. Yes, unto him I have to look for every breath I draw, and for every step I take.

I was born June 29, 1838, in Hocking Co., Ohio. My parents moved to Warren County when I was quite small, and settled east of Lebanon, where I was raised by pious parents. My father was the late Elder Joseph Parker, who has long since passed over on the golden shore. O how I miss that dear, kind father's voice, and his sweet admonitions. How my mind goes back to the home of my childhood, when with that dear father we gathered around the family altar in prayer. It was a sacred place to me, by far on earth most dear. How well I remember the first one that was taken away, and the youngest, and the first time we gathered around in prayer there was a vacant chair, and one little voice was silent that had always been heard above the rest. When quite young I had serious thoughts about religion. I wanted to be a christian, but I was young yet, and I thought there would be time enough when I got older. These thoughts would soon be banished, and I would go in company with my young associates and be as gay as they, not thinking of my future state until I was in my nineteenth year, when I was made to see myself a sinner before a holy and just God. I thought I was the greatest sinner on earth, and that everybody could be saved but me. I thought I had sinned away my day of grace, and there was no more mercy or rest for me. The first thing when I arose in the morning was the thought of that load of sin and guilt, and I would try to pray, but all in vain. I was too sinful for the Lord to hear my prayers. I would go to meeting, hoping to hear something that would give rest to my weary soul, when it seemed to me that all the preaching was directed to me; for the preacher could tell my feelings better than I could. I would wonder how he knew anything about my mind, for I had told no one my feelings. I thought they could see what a vile sinner I was. They looked to me so pure and

good in heart, and I thought if I could only be good like them, all would be well with me. Thus my mind was tossed to and fro from day to day. I had no peace of mind day nor night, on account of my sins. I felt that I was about to be cast out of God's presence forever, and had almost given up all hope of ever being forgiven; for I felt there was no mercy for me, and that I should sink to rise no more. I thought I would once more beg the Lord for mercy; but all I could say was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." My sins were such a burden to me that they seemed to be weighing me down. Life was a burden to me. My general health seemed to give way. I was so weak that I could scarcely walk, and my mind was in such a condition that I was not fit to attend to the household affairs. I said, I can do nothing.

"Here, Lord, I give myself away;
'Tis all that I can do."

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

Only let me beg of thee a place to pray. I felt as though even in hell I wanted to thank him for his goodness in watching over me all my past life, and keeping me from many sins I might have fallen into, had it not been for his watchcare. Just then something came over me. I had not been asleep. A voice said, "Look," and I looked, and beheld my Savior nailed to the rugged cross, and a crown of thorns woven upon his dear head, which pressed through his temples. O what a sad sight! It filled me with love and pity. He said to me, "Thy cruel sins helped to nail me here." I shall never forget how sorrowful he looked, and how sad his countenance. I have thought sometimes, if our sins bear us down so heavily, what must it have been to the holy Savior, when he bore the sins of all his people? Then he spoke again, and said, "Child, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven." There my burden all left me. It seemed to me that then and there the Savior showed me the whole plan of salvation, and said, "Before all worlds I loved thee. A little while ago you thought I did not love you. You fought hard against election and predestination. Do you hate me for it now?" Ah, no; it is the loveliest doctrine now, for it was the only way I could be saved. Then I turned my gaze from him, and he said again, "Behold thy Savior!" And I looked again, and beheld the Savior; but O how changed! He had on a beautiful white robe, not like anything earthly, or that can be made on earth. It was without a seam. And his face was radiant to behold. A light shone round about his head above the brightness of the sun, which dazzled me to look at. He took me up in his arms, and called me his little child. How sweetly I rested there! How I loved my Savior! How securely I felt with my Savior's arms underneath, to bear me up! I wanted to be with him always. When he told me that he had to go away, I could not bear the thought. I told him I could not live without him. He said,

"It is expedient that I go away; but I will send the Comforter, which shall take the things of mine and shew them unto you." Still I clung to him, and he said, "I have great trials for you to pass through, for my name's sake." I wanted to know what they were, but he said to me, "If I were to tell you now, you would not be able to bear them. But fear not; I will be with you, and bring you safe through every trial. Only a little while and I will come again, and take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." I cannot tell all that the dear Savior taught me there. It would take up too much space. Many passages were presented to my mind which I did not know until I read them in my Bible afterwards. "Go home to thy friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for you." I had a view of the church, and all the members seemed to be my brethren and sisters. I wondered why I had not known it before. They looked so pure and so much like Jesus. When the next church meeting came I could not go, I was so afraid I might do something wrong, that might bring a reproach upon the church, and I could not bear that; so I staid away from one meeting to another, until my burden came back almost as heavy as before. Baptism was ever on my mind. If I would open my Bible to read, I would almost every time turn to this passage, "Whosoever is ashamed to confess me before men, him will I be ashamed to confess before my Father which is in heaven." Thus I went from March until the Saturday before the third Sunday in August, when it seemed to me I could not live and stay away. The Lord enabled me to go forward to the church. Brother Hezekiah Stites was then pastor of the church, but was not able to administer baptism. Brother E. Stevens, from Kentucky, was called to fill his place. I was not at liberty to talk much when I came before the church. I said but few words. Old father Stites said he had seen enough to convince him, without a word. Brother Stevens spoke in the same way. They told the members to ask what questions they chose. When I looked up, tears were streaming down the cheeks of all the old, gray-headed members. I was surprised to think they received me. How I wished afterwards that they had questioned me closely, for I was afraid I had been deceived, and had deceived the church. I was baptized the next day by brother Stevens, and a happier person never came up out of the water. I thought I never would see any more trouble. Jesus did all things well. The plan of salvation appeared so plain, I thought I could show everybody the way. Thus the Lord in his goodness led me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. On March 23, 1865, I was married to R. J. Yeoman, by Elder Stephen C. Smith, and never shall I forget his kind and fatherly admonitions to me. My husband is not a member of the visible church, but is a lover of the

truth, and his walk is more upright than many professors; and he is always glad to meet with the brethren. I have passed through many changing scenes of trials and troubles, but through them all my kind and loving heavenly Father has brought me, and preserved my unprofitable life to the present time, for some wise purpose that I cannot see. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

"Nor eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard,
Nor sense nor reason known,
The things the Father hath prepared
For those that love his Son."

We now know only in part: we see as through a glass darkly: but then face to face. We shall then know as we are known; we shall see Jesus, our Husband, Maker and Friend, and be like him, for we shall see him as he is. We have a foretaste of the joys of heaven here in this world. The broad Jordan of death is between this terrestrial sphere and that land of rest, so that we can only see it by an eye of faith. And while that delightful and glorious country is obscured from the natural vision by that broad ocean of death between time and eternity, yet by an eye of faith we can even span this mighty ocean, and feel that we are almost there. And, dear child of God, we are almost there; only a thread, as it were, by which we are suspended, which, when cut, will launch us into eternity. But though this Jordan of death may seem so wide to our natural vision, it will be but a leap for the child of God, for Jesus will be sure to meet you on the bank. He will take you in his arms of love, and gently waft you to the blissful shore. Although the waters of that mighty stream may appear to you now as tempestuous and boisterous, when you come to approach its banks in death all will be calm and serene. Jesus will be there to say, "Peace, be still, till I waft the trophies of grace across the turbid waters." Then, dear child of God, when you are safely landed on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance from sin and corruption, you can look back and see what great things the Lord has done for you. All your sins, corruption, flesh and blood, carnal nature, and everything impure, will be left on this side of Jordan, while we will enter the portals of glory with a spotless robe of righteousness, an immortal, incorruptible body, like the glorious body of the Son of God. Death will then be swallowed up in life. We are now seeking a city which hath foundation, whose maker and builder is God. Here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come. We are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, having no certain abiding place. We are waiting and watching for the appearing of the great God, our Savior, trusting in that hope which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil, whither Jesus, the forerunner, is for us entered. For he who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we

might be made the righteousness of God in him.

"And lest the shadow of a spot
Should on my soul be found,
He took the robe the Savior wrought,
And cast it all around."

Then cheer up, weak and doubting child of God. Are you tempted? Jesus was also tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Are you persecuted? He was persecuted. Are you meek and lowly in heart? So was he. Do you mourn? Jesus also mourned. Do you weep? Jesus wept. Lastly, do you sometimes rejoice? "Jesus rejoiced in Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

"There is a land mine eye hath seen
In visions of enraptur'd thought;
So bright that all that spreads between
Is with its radiant beauty fraught."

"A land upon whose blissful shore
There rests no shadow, falls no stain;
There those who meet shall part no more,
And those long parted meet again."

"Its skies are not like earthly skies,
With varying hues of shade and light;
It hath no need of suns to rise,
To dissipate the gloom of night."

"There sweeps no desolating wind
Across that calm, serene abode;
The wanderer there a home shall find,
Within the paradise of God."

We moved from Ohio to southern Kansas a little over a year ago, my husband being at the time in very poor health. His health is much improved; also the health of the family is much better than when we left Ohio. There is an Old School Baptist Church in Sumner County, nearly twenty miles from us. Brother J. T. Sweeney preaches for us, and also stops and preaches for us on his way to the church. Brother Lovett and others visit us occasionally.

Now, my beloved brethren, I send you this, and if you deem it worthy a place in your esteemed paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes regularly to us, all will be right. If not, all will be right. May the Lord bless you, brethren editors, and guide you in all your pilgrimage; and may we all meet around the throne of God when time shall end our pilgrimage here on earth, is the prayer of your unworthy little sister, if one at all.

CALLIE H. YOEMAN.

"My kingdom is not of this world."—John xviii. 36.

These were among the last words spoken by our blessed Savior while veiled in the flesh, and like all other words spoken by him, are full of meaning and instruction to the subjects of his kingdom. By a careful observance of the record God has given of his will, we will see that the patriarchs, prophets and psalmist were enabled to look down through the long vista of time, and by the spirit of prophecy tell of the coming of the Messiah, of his kingdom, and of the glory that should follow. It is spoken of as "an everlasting kingdom;" and, by Christ and his apostles, as the "kingdom of heaven," the "kingdom of God," &c. Therefore it

is diverse from all other kingdoms. The kingdoms of this world, with all their subjects, may rise to the highest state of prosperity, yet are destined to crumble and fall. Being of the world, their subjects are also of the world, and creatures of time. Their laws, provisions, legislations and policies are of the world. Therefore they are unable, with all their combined powers, to aid or in any way advance the enduring kingdom of Christ. The words at the head of this epistle were spoken by the King of Zion while arraigned at the bar of Pilate; and it does seem that if there ever was a time when the Just One needed the help of all the powers against a fiendish mob and the powers of darkness, it was then; but in answer to Pilate he said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." Was it for want of power that the King of Zion must submit to the cruel mockings and scourgings of a fiendish mob? No. He told Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power against me, except it were given thee from above." And on another occasion he declared that he was able to call on his Father, who would instantly send him more than twelve legions of angels, a force sufficient to overwhelm all earthly powers engaged against him. But how then could the Scriptures be fulfilled? All that was written of him in the law, and the prophets, and psalms, must be fulfilled. It was written of him that he should "tread the winepress alone; and of the people there should be none with him; that his own arm should bring salvation, and his fury should uphold him." "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill Zion. I will declare the decree, The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."—Psalm ii. 1-7. They were fulfilling the Scriptures in condemning the King of Zion.—Acts iv. 25-28. All that was written of him in the law, the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled. He was the bright morning star, the head and embodiment of that spiritual kingdom. Then all the interests of that kingdom centered in him, and the destiny of his kingdom was at that moment hinged upon the result of the events at that time transpiring. Although he had sojourned in the flesh about thirty three years, had taught and preached his own gospel daily, in the temple, in the synagogues of the Jews, to the multitudes assembled near the seashore, and on the mount,

had chosen the twelve apostles, with the seventy, and sent them forth to testify of the near approach of his kingdom, had healed the sick, opened the blind eyes, caused the lame to walk, raised the dead, &c., yet none of the princes of the world knew him. Those who are endeavoring to teach their neighbor and their brother, saying, "Know the Lord," would do well to observe this truth. He had not revealed what he was even to them who sat empowered to deliver him to death. Neither had he in his ministry courted the favor or applause, or in any way labored to make himself familiar to the kings of earth; nor had he made any proposals of alliance or treaty of peace with them; for their kingdoms were so diverse the one to the other that such alliance could in no wise subserve the purpose or interest of either. Their origin, government, policy, provisions and destinies were entirely different. All those of earthly governments are of men, are changeable, and are destined to crumble and fall. But the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is a spiritual kingdom; its origin is heavenly; its government is in the hands of the King of Zion, who is the Lord from heaven. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" The King and kingdom being of heavenly origin, and spiritual, the subjects must of necessity be the same. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." The kingdoms of this world and of antichrist may be made up of all such as men in their greed for gain may huddle together, a vast heterogeneous mass of corruption, in the world and of the world. Not so with the children of this heavenly kingdom. Although they are in the world, they are not of the world. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," saith their King. "He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one." Then we see that they are all of the same parentage, are brethren, are a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," and by the same apostle are declared to be "built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Earthly governments, and that of antichrist, with their policies, are changeable; their laws and legislations are of men; their policies are changeable to suit the freaks of men, and every wind of

doctrine, with limited power. Not so the enduring kingdom of Christ. The King of Zion is sole arbiter and legislator in his kingdom, with all wisdom, power and might; and none dare trample the least of his laws. Neither can the combined powers of men, angels and devils induce him to change his policy; nor does he need the aid or counsel of men to establish or sustain his government. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Again, by type he is set forth. "And it shall come to pass in those days that I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah: and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open." Our glorious King himself hath said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Then we see the subjects of his kingdom are limited. The laws are fixed and unchangeable, by the great Lawgiver. All provisions are treasured in the King, the great Repository, from whom all blessings flow, and an ample supply for all the hungering and thirsting subjects of his kingdom, under every vicissitude of life, both for time and eternity. The modern disciples of Gamaliel, like the aliens at Jerusalem, may attempt the bringing in of burdens on the sabbath day, also the traffic in foreign provisions; (see Nehemiah xiii.), but the children of the kingdom have no relish for such; they are neither food nor raiment. They might as well attempt to feed and thrive on the murky mists of a winter's fog, or clothe themselves with the chilling blasts of winter's tempest. They will therefore testify against them. The perpetuity of Christ's kingdom is eternal. Then how vain and futile are the efforts of the subjects of antichrist to try to add to the number of this glorious kingdom, who themselves are but flesh, therefore are unable to see the kingdom of heaven. The modern Pharisees, like their ancient prototype, are endeavoring by every means, of suasion, force or fraud, to huddle together, of every cast of degenerate flesh, a motley crew, made up of the world, supported by men and money, desiring to put the government, legislation and control of Christ's kingdom (which kingdom the poor, deluded dupes know not-

ing of) into the hands of earthly potentates; ever persecuting the children of the kingdom, compassing land and sea to make proselytes, building their theological, infant and Sunday Schools, tract, Bible and temperance societies, whose members are made up of the world; and all this is blasphemously called the forwarding of Christ's kingdom. O the depravity of sinful flesh! O the debauchery of corrupt and sinful minds! But let us turn from this sickening scene of delusion, of Babel confusion, to a people whose God is the Lord, where there is but one language, ever giving praise, honor, glory, majesty and might to the King of kings and Lord of lords. "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, and serve him with one consent."—Zeph. iii. 9. None can know the things of this spiritual kingdom by worldly wisdom, study or research; for they are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." Nor can they be taught by the power or wisdom of men, but by the finger of God only. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they break, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord;" "for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more." And as a surety of these promises, he saith, "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for light by day, the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night; which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name: if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation forever. Thus saith the Lord, If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will cast off all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord." How sure, then, are all God's promises to all the heirs of his kingdom. While the subjects of earthly governments, pay tribute of their earthly substance, the Arminian world of antichrist pay tribute to their idol gods, like Cain, of the fruits of their labor. The children of this heavenly and spiritual kingdom pay to the Lord their God tribute of praise and thanksgiving, the fruit of the Spirit. They return to their King his own. As intimated above, the subjects of this heavenly kingdom are one

family, speaking but one language; not a restless, boisterous people, ever changing their bounds. "Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive, of a stammering tongue, thou canst not understand. Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down: not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us." Are the subjects of this heavenly kingdom peculiar to any one nation? "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." "And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," &c. And it is not left to the freaks of men nor fortuitous events, nor even to his ministering servants, to gather this people. "Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west: I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: even every one that is called by name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him," &c.—Isa. xlii. 5-7. Read the whole chapter; also Isaiah xlv. As in the vision of Ezekiel, bones came together, bone to his bone, so it is not left to the option of this people whether they will praise the Lord or not. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." Then how sure to the heirs of promise is this enduring kingdom. Its policy is unchanged and unchangeable, being founded upon the irrevocable decrees of Jehovah, its provisions are treasured in Zion's King, an inexhaustible supply, both for time and eternity; its law is a perfect law of liberty, written not on tablets of stone, but in the hearts of all his children, by the unerring hand of him who said, "Let there be light, and there was light." "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."

ALBERT DAVIS.

FOREST CITY, Mo.

TIFFIN, Ohio, Jan. 4, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As the new year, with its duties, its privileges, its responsibilities, is opening before the living, I am reminded that my subscription for the SIGNS ended

with the old year. God forbid that I should seek to flatter, or employ the language of flattery; but remembering that eternal life and every fruit of the Spirit are the gift of God, I may truly say that the SIGNS with its editorials and correspondence has been during the past year appreciated by the writer more than ever before. We may indeed become interested with a graphic or eloquent description of events or places we never saw; how much deeper our interest when with power and beauty our own experiences of grief and joy, of hope and fear, of deepest gloom and most radiant, most glorious light, of life and death, are vividly and faithfully portrayed by gifted fellow-travelers. With heart and voice we respond "Amen" to the burden of the communications you publish. O for more grace and wisdom to serve and glorify our Father in heaven. O for more of love and gratitude to him who suffered beyond human conception and died on the cruel cross for my sake. O for light and strength to keep in subjection the evil propensities that like a thorn in the flesh are the chief cause of all our sorrow. O for the charity and meekness which, when reviled, revileth not again; which believeth all things, beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things as a loving, faithful follower of the Prince of peace. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness, but finding nothing but hungry emptiness in ourselves. Remembering Christ as he appeared to us at the end of the law for (my) righteousness, the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely; and yet my love to him so cold and faint. Remembering our loving welcome into the household of faith, how like angel greetings at the gate of heaven they bid us enter in and partake with them of the joys of our Lord; and yet how oft they seem far away, and cold suspicion whispers, "Since they know you better they love you less." Anon we have a feast of good things from the Master's table, and we wonder why any of the dear children should greet as "brother" such a limping, sickly creature as we. But we are comforted, and find new strength to journey onward. We long continually for brighter evidences of our acceptance and relationship with the Savior of sinners; but experience and the Scriptures declare that we walk by faith, and not by sight. The writer, who for thirty years was demanding a sign that should leave no room for doubt, was as he trusts in God's own time made to exclaim, "Lord, it is enough," without the sign so long waited for. Instead of it a cloud of witnesses passed before him with messages such as Jesus the Savior sent to John the Baptist in prison. John truly had baptized Christ, feeling no personal fitness for so sacred, so high, so holy a commission, and shrinking from the thought. He tries to excuse himself by saying, "Not so, Lord; I have need to be baptized of thee." But Christ ever like a King secures obedience to every personal command. He is baptized

of John, and the approving voice of God responds from the eternal throne, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." John heard the voice and saw the angel. And so sure was he of the character and identity of Zion's King, that on two occasions in his presence he exclaims, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." But again we find John in prison, and to him a "doubting castle." He hears of the wonderful works of Christ, but doubting, sends two of his disciples, and said unto him, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" O blessed answer! sent by the immaculate Lamb of God. Not the direct yes or no which John may have expected. And why not? Because the veriest impostor could have answered thus. Jesus sends John the proofs of his ministry: "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Jesus declares of this same John, "Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet" is he. "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." All this passed in review before me as I lay upon my pillow in the still watches of the night. Nay, more than this. I was enabled to see how, for thirty years, this mighty physician of souls had wrought all these wonderful works (reported to John) in and for poor, sinful, ungrateful, unworthy me. O! if this "more than prophet" in the purpose of God was shut up in prison, and from thence impleaded the Savior to give more assurance of his Messiahship, is it any wonder that a poor cripple like me should have felt the breath of his Spirit quicken my dry bones, dividing asunder between the joints and marrow, soul and spirit, and discerning the thoughts and intents of my wicked, deceitful heart; try my righteousness as a cure, an offering unto God, and find it only filthy rags; at the end of the law to find Christ, to hear his words of comfort to the poorest of the poor preached to me, lifting up my spirit as on the wings of an eagle, up, up above the earth, with all its vain desires, hopes and ambitions; walk and talk with Jesus, feel my soul burn within me then, and yet have my eyes holden, that I should not know him; to take a back seat in the assemblies of his people, find myself unconsciously appropriating some of the good things falling from the Master's table, and then as often reproaching myself for unlawfully taking the children's bread; find myself melting to tears at the solemn communion service or at the sight of baptism, regarding them as happy, royal privileges, but not for unworthy me; find myself feasting upon the doctrine of God's free grace, and finding nothing but husks in the "do and live" of popular religion; feeling like one alone, because unlike every one else? I verily thought to wrap my-

self in my own individuality, and live a sort of spiritual hermit; but at last, after thirty years of wandering in the wilderness, I was enabled to see God's hand leading me all the way. I could say, like David, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." No wonder that once a condemned sinner, I should seek to escape from a God of justice as he thunders from Sinai, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." But having beheld the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, we pray fervently, "Hide not thy face from me," but "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Give me a pure heart and a right mind. O keep me from sin, though there be no future for me. Having seen and felt the hateful nature of sin, we cannot live in this element, but suffer in it all the pangs of death.

But I fear your patience is being overtaxed with this rambling letter. May "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon" be wielded still to the pulling down the strongholds of error, and the little ones warned against wolves in sheep's clothing. May brotherly love continue between all who know the truth and love it, too, is my wish and prayer, for God's glory and Zion's welfare. Farewell.

Yours in hope,

JOHN SEITZ.

HOLDEN, Mo., Dec. 4, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The accompanying letter from sister Everson explains itself. I baptized her at Shiloh on the first Saturday in November. Although she is deaf, she still has the power of speech, and talks distinctly. I have her consent to send her letter to you for publication if you see proper to publish it.

I wish also to say to the readers of the SIGNS that I have moved temporarily from my home in Indiana to Johnson Co., Mo. Those wishing to write to me may direct to Holden, Johnson Co., Mo. And should any Baptist within reach of me see this, I would be glad to hear from them, as the Baptists are scarce here.

W. N. THARP.

SUGAR CREEK, Ind., Aug. 25, 1883.

ELDER W. N. THARP:—As you so kindly asked me, I will in my poor, weak and humble way tell you some of the Lord's dealings, as I hope, with a poor sinner, as I feel myself to be. O if I could only write like some others; for they all have so much to tell, while I feel that I have very little. It is with much fear and trembling that I write, hoping to be guided by the Spirit of our heavenly Father, and write nothing but the truth. The Lord knows that I love him, and that I want to love and praise him more. I never remember-

having many thoughts about death until about twelve years old, when one of my sister's children died at our home. That was the first death I ever witnessed, and I thought it was very terrible. The funeral was conducted by a Methodist preacher. I had often attended meeting, but that was the first preaching I ever heard or listened to with attention. He pictured death as one riding a pale horse, taking one here, and another there, where least expected. He used the words, "The Lord will come when thou art not thinking." Child that I was, these words made a great impression on my mind. I well remember laying awake a long while that night, thinking it all over. The next day I was stricken with spotted fever. As I grew worse, I thought I was surely going to die, and I was not ready. O how I prayed to the Lord to let me live! I wanted the Bible read to me all the time, and to ask the Lord to bless me. In this way I was taken delirious, and knew not how time passed, except during a few rational moments, in which I was always striving for the victory over death. And here is what has troubled me in these several years; for in this delirious time the Lord gave peace to my troubled soul. When all was fear and doubt, then all became peace and gladness. Then I wanted to die, and was both willing and ready, and prayed the Lord to let me go if it was his will. I talked to all at my bedside of my heavenly home, and what the Lord had done to save a poor, unworthy sinner like I felt myself to be. I greatly desired to be baptized after I fully recovered, as the Lord saw fit that I should. I have always been afraid that I was deceived, but always something within me sends my mind back to that delirious time. I am deprived of all preaching, and the Lord saw fit to wholly deprive me of the sense of hearing when in that delirious fever. This troubled me greatly at first. I daily prayed to the good Father to restore my hearing; but I found that I was doing very wrong in thus wishing for what I could not have. Was this not for some wise purpose of his own? for what I am here for, or why I am here at all, is more than I can tell. I feel that I would be glad to go through that fever again, could I be sure just where that trouble left me. I greatly enjoy reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Some who write for it can tell my thoughts better than I can. A great many times when I have been to meeting at Shiloh, I have thought to myself, If only I were one of these, just the least of the very least, I would ask no more. But I often wonder, Am I a child of God or not? If saved at all, it is through the grace of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for I can do nothing.

Write to me at your leisure, if you think this worthy your notice; if not then do as you think best, and all will be well. I shall cling to that hope, however small it is, to the last.

Your unworthy friend,

JOANNA EVERSON.

NEAR ROSALIA, W. T., Dec. 23, 1883.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN—G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I am now seventy-three years old, have been trying to preach the gospel of my beloved Master forty-three years, and have been a subscriber and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since 1841. By reason of age and much use I have become tottering, so to speak, both in body and mind, and I am made sensible that it is late in the evening of this my natural life. I feel that I can say I have no desire to pass the time appointed for this poor old creature's deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I am here of necessity, not of choice. I have not seen an Old School Baptist since I left Oregon, two years ago. I feel very lonely indeed, deprived of all the privileges of the church of Christ. I have not heard the gospel preached for two years, unless this poor old man Gregg does preach it. When he does try to preach, he has no evidence that any one believes anything he says, except himself, and this does not look much like feeding the Master's sheep and lambs. Therefore I preach but seldom. And now, my dear brethren, I wish to say, once for all, I want the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as long as I live and can pay for it. I feel that I cannot do without it in this wilderness country, for it and my Bible are all the religious companions that I enjoy. I can say, if not a poor, old, deceived man, that I indorse with all my heart, the precious matter the paper contains. It has the same old, joyful sound, and I do believe it is the best medium of religious correspondence in the world. I send you six dollars in a registered letter, which pays my dues, up to December, 1884. I have done all I can to obtain subscribers for our precious paper, the SIGNS, but have failed as yet, but still hope that I shall yet be able to send on some, as I have the promise of some. Now may the good Lord abundantly bless you, and make you a great blessing to his dear children, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

ANDREW GREGG.

BURDETT, N. Y., Jan. 6, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I am at home alone to-day, and you will see by the date that it is what is called the holy sabbath day. I feel that I have entered into that sabbath of rest, as I hope God has for Christ's sake forgiven my sins, and I feel a drawing to the people of God. I call to mind this morning many dear brethren and sisters with whom I have had sweet communion and fellowship. Some of those dear ones have gone to their rest. Yet there are a few who have not bowed the knee to Baal; and as there are but few, we are told to speak often one to another, to admonish one another, to love one another as Christ has loved us. I have never expressed to my own satisfaction the love and fellowship I have for the people of God, and have thought sometimes I never would try again; but that fountain of love keeps springing up, and I try

it again, only hoping that my brethren will bear a little longer with me, and pray for me that I may not bring a reproach upon the cause.

Dear brethren and sisters that write for the SIGNS, if you only knew the comfort and edification I receive in reading your communications, you would not hesitate to write again. I am so glad there is a medium of correspondence, so that even if we are many miles apart our hearts run together. And why should they not? It shows plainly that it is not natural love. It is an eternal love. It is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. As God has chosen us in Christ before the world began, we are loved of God; and we love him, for we are in him, and he in us. Let us therefore strive to keep the unity of the Spirit.

Dear editor, and all who were at my house and the association last June, I would say that I loved your company, and how unworthy I felt that you should show me so much respect. I wish to continue in love and fellowship with you and all the people of God. I know it is not natural love, for my own self often revolts against it. But all my goods have been spoiled, and a stronger than I has entered my house and cast out the goods which I had accumulated.

Dear brethren, I shall have to close this without expressing what I desire so much. Continue to send me the SIGNS, for which you will find inclosed the money for another year.

Love to you and all the dear brethren and sisters, for Christ's sake.

HIRAM B. ELLIOTT.

PATERSON, N. J., Jan. 6, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—May I, though so unworthy, so unstable as to lend a listening ear to those who cannot bring a "Thus saith the Lord" to sustain what they teach, may I again be heard through the columns of our family paper? The past year has been one of more than ordinary trials for me, but the Lord has kept me. Although my feet had well nigh slipped, he prevented me. He kept me from the evil, and I have, I trust, been enabled to cast my care upon him. I trust our dear Elders Stipp and Purington may be graciously sustained as bold champions for the truth. O how my spirit was stirred within me as I read what seemed to me such conclusive scriptural evidence of what is meant by the sabbath. As Elder Stipp says, the prejudice of education is strong, and I felt that I must carefully feel my way, there was so much to be untaught; but when light breaks in upon the soul, and we see that beautiful harmony, that exaltation of Jehovah, that establishing of the new covenant that he may abolish the first, I am constrained to cry out, "O my soul, magnify the Lord." O how refreshing, in this degenerate day, when so many handle the word of God deceitfully, that we find he still has witnesses for the truth, who dare not add to nor take from. Arm of the Lord, awake!

M. HELLINGS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

BAPTISM.

"THEREFORE we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Romans vi. 4.

Like all the acts enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus, the true spirit of this solemn ordinance is infinitely deeper than the outward form. Mere immersion in water is not the whole of this act of obedience, any more than the literal eating of bread and drinking of wine is the observance of the Lord's supper. As it is the remembrance of the death of Christ in the supper which constitutes that ceremony an act of obedience to his command, so, in the burial in the water there must be that faith by which we really follow him, in order that our act may be truly obedience to his commandment, and acceptable in his sight. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—Hebrews xi. 6. Then, since "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," it is evident that the mere ceremony of immersion without faith cannot be baptism in obedience to the law of the King who reigns in Zion. Even the sincere design of the candidate will not answer as a substitute for this necessary qualification.

There is another point on which many dear children of God are bewildered. Having received that faith which is the gift of God, they have been immersed by those who claimed to be ministers of Christ, but who were not in the fellowship of the church at the time. The candidates being themselves sincere, supposed they were obeying the Lord in their immersion, and perhaps felt a joy in the act; but on finding that they have been deceived, they are troubled with the suggestion that they have been baptized, and yet they know that they have no fellowship with the people among whom they find themselves. Many in this condition are robbed of their privileges in the church, and cannot see how they can enter into those joys. Have they been baptized in obedience to the command of our Lord? They have been immersed, but not in the fellowship of the church of Christ. That cannot be christian baptism, for the same reason that the church cannot accept the immersion administered by Mormons; that is, because it was not authorized by our Lord, nor done in obedience to his word. Those who are at home among the various orders outside of the church of Christ, are not such as are here referred to. But to those who long for the fellowship of the saints, yet feel themselves imprisoned in those antichristian organizations, it is important to ascertain

whether their immersion was really baptism. In order to make this matter clear, let us present an illustration. When the Lord commanded his disciples to baptize believers, if unbelieving Jews had voluntarily gone about performing the ceremony of immersion, would their work have been valid baptism? Certainly not; because not being in the fellowship of the saints themselves, they could not be competent to discern that Spirit of Christ in others which is the only source of genuine faith and repentance. Again, being without the authority of the Lord, it would have been mere mockery for them to use his name in the ceremony of baptism. Now, for the same reason, none but those in the fellowship of the church are authorized to administer the ordinance of baptism in this age; and when any others presume to do so, it is no more in obedience to the word of the Lord than the unauthorized offerings of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, whom the earth swallowed up, just as the earth now swallows up them who treat with contempt the law of the Lord in this ordinance, by imitating its form while denying its substance by "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Such professors may be highly esteemed by the world, but they are never "approved unto God." The church of Christ cannot consistently recognize the action of any but those who act by the authority of her Lord in administering his ordinances. Consequently she must hold the immersion which is performed by those who are not appointed to that work by his command as being no baptism at all. To constitute baptism there must be a believing candidate and an authorized administrator. Of the mode it is not our purpose now to write more than that it must be a burial and raising up again, according to the pattern given by our Lord in Jordan.—Matt. iii. 13-17. No argument can make the mode plainer than it is described in the inspired record. Failure to observe any of these particulars destroys the validity of the ordinance; for it can only be administered "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," when it is done, teaching the observance of all things whatsoever the Lord Jesus has commanded his chosen disciples.—Matthew xxviii. 19, 20.

We have dwelt upon the requisite particulars constituting gospel baptism in compliance with many special requests from believers who have been snared in the net of antichristian organizations, who desire to be identified with the church of Christ, but cannot see the necessity of being baptized, as they have once been immersed, as they thought in baptism, by those who were not in the fellowship of the church. We now come to consider the text.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." In the preceding verse the fact is cited that as many as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. This is the reason for our burial in

baptism. But in what sense are we thus identified in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ? Certainly not that we were literally nailed to the cross with him. The argument is in support of the fact that we are "dead to sin," as stated verse two. In this sense all the church whom he redeemed were crucified with him. So Paul says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."—2 Cor. v. 14, 15. This "baptism into death" is confessed in the literal obedience of those who are buried in baptism in water in his name.—See Acts ii. 38. This burial declares its subjects to be "dead to the law by the body of Christ."—Rom. vii. 4. They no longer labor to secure acceptance with God by that law which cannot give life. Their burial signifies this death to legal hope, and consequently their deliverance from the dominion of that law of sin and death. As it is written in this connection, "For he that is dead is freed from sin." This comforting assurance being expressed by the act of obedience to their Lord in water baptism, it is as declared by Peter, "the answer of a good conscience toward God." Therefore they who have hope of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus are robbed of invaluable comfort when they are beguiled to disobey the command of their Lord which enjoins upon them the duty and privilege to be baptized in his name.

"That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." The pattern here presented is not merely a restoration to that natural life which was subject to the law, and consequently under sentence of death. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."—Gal. iii. 10. If that were all of the resurrection, the Lord Jesus would not have been "the first fruits of them that slept," since Lazarus and others had been so restored to natural life before our Lord was raised. But the resurrection of Christ was in the power of that glorious life and immortality which is "the glory of the Father," and which had not previously been brought to light.—See 2 Tim. i. 10. In the flesh he was put to death, bearing all the sins of his redeemed people in his own body on the tree; but in the immortal glory of the Father he lives above the law and higher than the heavens. It is important to observe the fact that this resurrection of Christ is "by the glory of the Father," in distinction from the restoration to natural life which had been effected in previous cases by the miraculous power of God. In those cases no immortality was displayed, but in the raising up of Christ is the manifestation of "the power of an endless life."—Heb. vii. 16. This is the peculiar "glory of the Father," which demonstrates the truth of the unity of our Lord with the eternal God, as he says, "I and

my Father are one."—John x. 30. This is the manner in which he was raised up from the dead; and it is a display of that life which is superior to death and above all law. Therefore, he cannot die again, but is alive forevermore, Amen; and has the keys of hell and of death.—Rev. i. 18.

"Even so we also should walk in newness of life." The example presented is accurately exact. It is "even so" that we also should walk. As he was raised up from under the law, just so are all the members of his body in him exalted above that system of legal bondage; and as he can no more come into condemnation, so are we forever free from that law which was fulfilled by him. Walking in newness of life, we are not to seek justification by the works of the law; but resting alone in the perfect righteousness of Christ, we should walk in his commandments and follow in his footsteps. In that old life the bondage of perpetual servitude required continually perfect obedience, which was more than we were able to render; yet the first failure involved us in condemnation and death. In this newness of life we are called to glorious liberty. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. All the requirement of this law of liberty is freely given us in the unspeakable gift of God, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Obedience to this perfect law of liberty is the highest privilege of those who are led by the Spirit of God. This obedience is the fulfilling of all the injunctions, admonitions and exhortations in the law of our precious Lord and King. Walking in newness of life, we have the witness of the Spirit confirming our hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus; and in every act of obedience to this perfect law of liberty there is the answer of a good conscience toward God, whereby we have assurance that our walk is indeed in newness of life. While subject to vanity in the body of this death, the saints will not fail to find another law in their members warring against this law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members; but while they feel that warfare within, they have the evidence that the Spirit of Christ is leading them; and when they walk in obedience to that Spirit they manifestly walk in newness of life.

By precept and example our Lord has enjoined the ordinance of baptism as the open confession of allegiance to his government; and no service is in order in his kingdom until this requirement is fulfilled in obedience to his direction. In this the humble believer acknowledges his faith and hope to be alone in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and expresses that he is dead to the law by the body of Christ. It is the first act of obedience to the law of the Redeemer, by which self is denied and Christ is confessed before men. In it is included the putting on of the whole law of our King, which is, as he has

said, an easy yoke. It is indeed easy to them who are led by his Spirit to love it, and to desire above all things to follow the Redeemer; but it requires that self be denied and crucified, that Christ alone may be all our trust. This can be done only by the power of the Spirit of God leading us, and working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Thus walking in newness of life, we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's. Those who hope in Jesus for salvation are commanded to follow him in this ordinance. Obedience will bring them into the manifest fellowship of the church of Christ. Any ceremony which fails to do this cannot be baptism. Certainly the church cannot regard any act as orderly which is not done in her fellowship and by the authority of her King; and he has never given to any but his own disciples the right to administer this ordinance. Therefore, they who have been immersed out of the fellowship of the church cannot be regarded as having been baptized at all in obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus.

ERRONEOUS CHARGES.

In the *Gospel Standard* for December, 1883, under the caption "Inquiry and Answer," is published an article so full of false accusations against the Old School Baptists of America, that it is doubtful whether it is more charitable to ascribe them to ignorance or malice. The *Standard* was formerly edited by the late Elder William Gadsby, and more recently by J. C. Philpot, and under their control it was the ablest periodical in England devoted to the publication of gospel truth. The present editor is unknown, and but for the high estimation in which the late editors were held, the misrepresentations now published would be allowed to pass unnoticed. The inquiry signed "J. H." is dated New York, and states erroneously the practice of the Old School Baptists in regard to baptism. As those who know the truth in this matter will see at once the falsehood of his charges, we will only state that our churches do not require rebaptism of those who have been once baptized in the fellowship of the church of Christ. Many members now in our churches were baptized in the Particular Baptist Churches in England. Only within the last month one was so received by the church in this place. But we do not recognize Mormon immersion, or that of any others out of the fellowship of the church of Christ, as any baptism at all. We require that the candidate believe with all his heart; that the administrator be at the time a duly authorized servant of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that the mode be according to the example given by our Lord in Jordan. The subsequent departure of the administrator from the faith or fellowship of the church, does not affect the validity of the ordinance. Our authority for our practice is all in the New Testament.—See Acts viii. 36, 37; x. 47, 48; and the whole inspired law of the

new dispensation. "J. H." speaks of Protestant and Roman Catholic Baptists. We know nothing of either sort. The church of Christ never owed allegiance to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and therefore never was under the necessity of protesting or coming out from them. On the subject of baptism, the editor quotes from Philpot and McKenzie, both of whom perfectly agree with the practice of the Old School Baptists of America on this point.

The editor takes occasion to admonish the Old School Baptists of America on "their free but to us unseemly use of the word 'Reverend.'" This is news to those whom he admonishes. He will confer a favor if he can find *one instance* in the fifty-two years' publication of the SIGNS where the word is used as he charges. Also, the antichristian terms "clergy and laity" have been continually condemned by the Old School Baptists of America since long before the first copy of the *Gospel Standard* was issued. Except the charge that Old School Baptists use these terms, he might have copied his protest against them from the old issues of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

In conclusion, we would suggest to the unknown editor that he would be more likely to learn the sentiments of Old School Baptists from themselves than from their enemies; and the proprietor of the *Standard* would better serve the cause of Christ by returning to the custom of his honored father, and publishing the truth, than by circulating malicious calumny against the brethren, whose chief offense is that they prefer the authority of inspiration before the decision of an antichristian council established by the sword of a Roman Emperor, and stained with the blood of martyred saints.

EXTRACTS.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Jan. 7, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am pleased with the articles of Elders Purington and Stipp upon the sabbath question. They have said the truth, and said it well. I think they stand upon gospel ground—upon Paul's ground. I would not make a difference upon this a test of fellowship; but nevertheless, like Paul, *insist* that we are free from days and times, &c.

As ever, your brother in hope,
F. A. CHICK.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Although I lost two weeks last month from work on the History, on account of sickness, I still hope, if the Lord will, to send you the manuscript in January, 1884.

Yours in love,
SYLVESTER HASSELL.
WILSON, N. C., Dec. 5, 1883.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

We have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

MARRIAGES.

ON Dec. 20, 1883, at the residence of the bride's father, by Eld. J. L. Staton, Mr. David J. Murphy, of New Castle County, Del., and Miss Mary E. Crawford, of Chester County, Pa.

ON January 12, 1884, by Elder William J. Purington, at his residence, Mr. William Lucas, of Trenton, and Miss Jennie Snook, of Hopewell, both of New Jersey.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her son-in-law's, Wm. Shockley, in Worcester Co., Md., December 20, 1883, Elizabeth M. Sirmon, the oldest daughter of Elder Warner Staton, and wife of Deacon John P. Sirmon, also sister of Elder Joseph L. Staton, aged 52 years, 11 months and 15 days. Sister Sirmon was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Nassaongo, in June, 1853. Perhaps there are very few who have visited Nassaongo Church but will remember our dear sister. She has been a faithful member of the church. Her seat was seldom vacant at meeting until a year or two before her death, and that was caused by affliction. She was much afflicted for two or three years, but was as patient as finite mortals can well be. I tried to make it a point to visit her once a month after she got so that she could not attend meeting, and would sometimes try to preach for her benefit. I always found her more or less interested for the welfare of the church. She frequently told me that she was only waiting the Lord's time to take her from all her anxieties, and to be clothed upon with her house which is from above. She was a good talker, and well established in the doctrine of the Bible. She lived to see all her children married. Not being able to attend to her house affairs, she and brother Sirmon thought it best to sell or rent their place, and go and live with their only daughter. She was confined to her bed about two weeks, but died very unexpectedly. I was told that she was conscious almost to the last, and seemed to be perfectly reconciled to the will of her Master. The writer feels that he has lost a friend, for she had a great deal of thought for the welfare of her pastor, and administered to his needs to the extent of her ability, and also to all the financial affairs of the church, endeavoring to show her faith by her works in every particular. But she is now gone, and we miss her; but we feel to hope that our loss is her gain. She leaves to mourn an aged companion, three sons, two of them members of the same church, and one daughter, not a member, but a good friend; also four brothers and one sister, all members of the visible church except two. May God sanctify this to our good and his glory. The writer read and made some remarks at the grave, as she requested. Her remains were laid in the old graveyard with the sleeping dust of her parents, to wait the morn of the resurrection. Dear brother Sirmon has our sympathy and our prayers, and also all the family.

T. M. POULSON.

DIED—In Alexandria, Va., July 20, 1882, Mrs. Annie E. Whitbeck, aged 50 years. The deceased had been in failing health for several years, and an invalid about two years preceding her death. She was called upon to experience a great amount of suffering and pain during this sickness, which she bore with great fortitude. The deceased had never made a public profession of religion, but her mind had been exercised upon these great and wonderful things. I conversed with her during her sickness upon the evidence graciously given her of her own personal interest in the Redeemer. Death was to her, I am confident, a sweet relief, breaking the chains that held her in a world of suffering and sin. I was absent from home at the time of the funeral, and Elder F. A. Chick was called upon, who preached to the comfort of the bereaved family and friends upon the occasion. The deceased leaves her husband and a brother and sister to mourn their loss. May the God of heaven bless the bereavement to their good, causing them to bow in humble resignation to his divine will. This world is a wilderness of toil and woe.

There is no abiding city upon its changing shores. In the blessed hope of immortality beyond, we press on to that boundless and unseen land where the sorrow, conflicts and distresses of time are banished forever in the brightness of eternal noon.

W. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Jan. 10, 1884.

It has become my painful duty to record the death of my dear father, A. Thompson, which occurred on Wednesday afternoon, Dec. 5, 1883, aged 73 years. He was an old subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He was as well as usual in the morning. I went with him to bring a load of wood, and while on our return home there came up a shower of rain, and he got off the wagon to walk a short distance. He walked behind the wagon, and I walked at the side and drove the team. I had gone about a hundred yards when I missed him and called to him, but received no answer. I walked back in search for him, and I cannot describe my feelings as I found him lying in the middle of the road, and dead. I was not absent from him more than ten minutes. It was a sudden death, but I think there is no doubt that he was prepared. He had lived a christian life, and seemed to receive much comfort from reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In my mind I can see him now as he looked when I would hand him the paper, as I always brought it to him from the office. His eyes would brighten, and he would receive it as though it was some long wished for present. In his death I have lost a kind and loving father.

Respectfully yours,

G. F. THOMPSON.

INDEPENDENCE, Kansas.

It is with deep sorrow that I write for publication the obituary of my aged mother, Rebecca Hagans, who was born Dec. 30, 1811, and died Dec. 14, 1883. She was a native of Georgia, and the daughter of David Cook, a Baptist preacher. She was married to John S. Hagans about the beginning of the year 1830, in the state of Mississippi, and in that year moved to the state of Illinois, where, before my recollection, she joined the Regular Baptist Church, probably in 1832, since which time she has been a lover of the true gospel, and in much weakness and a sense of unworthiness has trusted alone in the merits of the crucified Savior for life and immortality beyond the grave, hoping for a better resurrection by the power of an endless life. She leaves myself, (her only child), with my wife and our seven children, to mourn our loss, together with the church called Harmony, in Columbia Co., W. T. But we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we believe that our loss is her eternal gain. Having lived to a ripe old age, through much affliction of body as well as mind, she is at rest in peace. May it be our happy lot to pass through the valley and fear no evil, as we believe she has done.

A. H. HAGANS.

REFORM, Garfield Co., W. T.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It becomes my sorrowful duty to prepare and send to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a short sketch of the life and death of our aged brother, Deacon T. M. Patrick, of Scott Co., Miss. He departed this life Friday evening, at 5 o'clock, January 11, 1884, aged 83 years, 8 months and 1 day. Brother Patrick was born in Colleton District, South Carolina, May 10, 1800, and was raised by a poor, widowed mother; hence his educational advantages were limited. He was married September 27, 1822, to Miss Ann Thomas, daughter of Martin and Catharine Thomas. He united with what was called the St. Georges Baptist Church, in 1833, and after brother Patrick moved to this state, and on the 15th of July, 1836, he and his wife presented their letters to Antioch Church, were received, and remained in said church officiating as deacon of the church the remainder of his days upon earth. The writer of this united with the same church in 1841, and from 1850 until the present time has served the church as her pastor, and can witness that our dear departed brother was a deacon in the true acceptation of that term, filling

the scriptural measure, and thereby purchasing to himself "a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." By his industry, energy and perseverance, coupled with an excellent judgment, he had accumulated a sufficiency of this world's goods to enable him to minister to the wants and necessities of the poor and indigent of the church. He was both gifted and blessed as a peacemaker in the church. But the Lord has called him from the church militant to the church triumphant, his final home, and we must be still and know that the Lord he is God. His aged and afflicted companion survives him, to mourn her irreparable loss; not, however, as those without hope. They never had any children, but cared for and raised a goodly number for others, as the writer can witness, who has solemnized the rites of matrimony for as many as four couples under their hospitable roof.

Yours in love,

J. G. CRECELIUS.

FOREST, Miss., Jan. 20, 1884.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please record the death of Mrs. Duke, relict of Robert Duke, who lived near Harper's Ferry, W. Va. Mrs. Duke was born Feb. 9, 1828, and died Jan. 2, 1884. She was the daughter of George A. and Sallie C. Moler. Her sickness, which was congestion of the lungs, lasted nine days. She leaves to mourn, (as they write me, and I know it to be true, as none can mourn as they who have lost such a good mother), two sons, one daughter and two daughters-in-law. This is one of the remarkable families of this earth. They loved, confided in and honored each other. Since my short acquaintance with them, four of the older and one of the younger members have died. Truly sorrow has gathered fast and thick around this household; yet the hearts of the spared ones are kept strong by Israel's God. In Mrs. Duke the Baptists have lost a warm friend. Freely and cheerfully did she administer unto the necessities of the saints, thereby leaving an evidence of her christianity, which Jesus attested to, and rendered a work which he said should not lose its reward. Many friends gathered on the occasion of her funeral, to whom I tried to preach from these words, "Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."—Psalm lxi. 1, 2.

May the Lord cause the children to realize their absolute dependence upon him, wean them from every other refuge, and make them, if it is his holy will, to openly confess him, who has so mercifully shed abroad his love in their hearts.

Yours in hope,

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va.

DECEMBER 22, 1883, at the family residence in Sugar Loaf, Orange Co., N. Y., Mrs. Sarah A. Sutton fell asleep in Jesus, after lingering several months from the effects of paralysis, aged 79 years, 6 months and 19 days. Her husband, the late Deacon Minard Sutton, was called to everlasting rest about fifteen years since, and she awaited with great resignation the word of her Lord permitting her to depart. Sister Sutton was baptized in the fellowship of the Warwick Old School Baptist Church, July 4, 1841, since which time the power of divine grace manifested in her a clean example of the meekness of Christ. She left two daughters, Mrs. Wm. Knapp and Mrs. John N. Knapp, the latter, with the two surviving sisters of the deceased, being members of the same church which is called to mourn her departure. Although everything which love could suggest was unsparingly ministered to her comfort, the bright smile resting on her inanimate face whose eyes were forever closed, gave unquestionable assurance that the Lord had fulfilled his promise to come again, and receive her to himself. Her funeral on the 26th was largely attended, and words of comfort to the bereaved family were spoken by Elder Wm. L. Beebe, from 2 Cor. v. 1, after which her body was laid in the village cemetery, beside the grave of her husband.

WARWICK, N. Y., Jan. 15, 1884.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Elder H D Conner 2, Jane F Davis 2, Wm Martin 2, John S Corn 2, Jackson Stout 2, Benj Spittler 2, Mrs S R Cooper 2, L L New 2, W G H Morgan 2, L A Dawson 2, John D Staples 2, Dr B F McCarty 2, Abbie Dodge 2, F W Keene 2, H B Gott 2.—Total \$30 00.

FOR "DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES."

J S Burns 1, W D Wood 1, Mrs M E Murphree 1, C L Waldrip 1, Benj Harvey 1, Wm Williams 1, Ivory H Ford 1, Elizabeth Johnson 1, A Winters 1, Abbie Dodge 1, Wm S Gott 1, J F Napier 1, G H Houchins 1.—Total \$13 00.

CHURCH HISTORY NOTICE.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—From the liberal manner in which the subscribers have responded to my request, I am glad to be able to inform the brethren that, with the permission of providence, the publication of the Church History at no very distant date is now assured. Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, our oldest publishing house in the United States, have the contract to publish the book. I hope that all the remaining subscribers, who have not yet remitted the amount of the subscription (two dollars per copy), will at an early day send on the proper amount, in postal order or registered letter to the brethren Beebe, so that the latter may issue the whole edition of three thousand copies at one time.

Yours in love, SYLVESTER HASSELL, WILSON, N. C., Feb. 7, 1882.

"DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES."

OUR manuscript for the above titled book is in the hands of Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, who have the contract to print the same. We ask our brethren and friends who may desire the book to assist us in its publication, at the reduced price of one dollar per copy, sent by money order or registered letter direct to publishers, with the understanding that if the book fails to give satisfaction, as set forth in the published "Prospectus," that you return them to me or to the brethren Beebe in good condition and get your money. The above proposition will close April 1st, 1884, after which the book will be sold at \$1 50 to \$2 00 per copy, according to binding.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1884. NO. 4.

POETRY.

STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

GOD of love and great compassion,
Reigning on thy throne above,
Look, O! look in tender mercy
On an object of thy love.

In the dust, O Lord, behold me;
Hear me while I cry to thee;
Spread thy robe of mercy o'er me;
Break my chain and set me free.

In the desert thou didst find me,
And didst draw me close to thee;
But my weary feet have wandered
In the mazes, far from thee.

Now the bleak and wintry desert
Spreads its gloomy shape afar,
And I turn my eyes to heaven,
Searching for the Morning Star,

For the bright and glorious shining
Of the Star of Bethlehem;
All my hopes around it twining,
Shine, sweet Star of Bethlehem.

Light my way with beams of mercy,
In the darkness shine for me;
Soothe my heart to meek submission,
Then with joy I'll follow thee.

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Jan. 12, 1884.

FAITH, HOPE, PATIENCE.

SAYS Faith, Look yonder; see the crown
Laid up in heaven above.
Says Hope, anon, It shall be mine,
I long to wear it, says Love.

Desire saith, What! is there my crown?
Then to that place I'll flee;
I cannot bear a longer stay;
My rest I fain would see.

But stay, says Patience; wait awhile;
That crown's for those that fight;
That prize for those that run the race,
By faith, and not by sight.

Thus Faith doth take a pleasing view;
Hope waits; Love sits and sings;
Desire, she flutters to be gone;
But patience clips her wings.

H.

SUPPLICATION.

Compassionate Bridegroom, my Shepherd
and Friend,

Thy child from the fury of Satan defend;
Thy presence continue, thy blessings convey,
And grant me a spirit to praise and to pray.

Prevent and assist me, and so shall I run;
And further within me the work thou'st begun;

And then let the world me reject or despise,
Thy grace for my wants, shall ever suffice.

Still go thou before me, and guide me aright;
Thy peace be my comfort, thyself my delight;

Thy will be my pleasure, thy honor my aim;
And this be my glory, the blood of the Lamb.

This, this be my portion, thy beauty my song;

Thy name and thy praises shall dwell on my tongue;

Direct by thy Spirit my actions and ways,
So shall I inherit thy blessing always.

M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(Concluded from page 28.)

AMONG the first events under the ministry of Mr. Hunt was the discontinuance, by a vote of the church, of the office of Ruling Elder. No reason is given. His efforts appear to have been largely directed to gathering together and building again the scattered fragments of the former church from among the debris of the wreck and ruin that he found to deal with. There is no reason to doubt that there was sound material there. But no more important work ever devolved upon a pastor than this discerning and selecting, and collecting together in love and church fellowship, whatever of precious there was to be found among the mass of vile and refuse. Considering all the circumstances, he appears to have been eminently successful. The church came forth out of this ordeal of trial purified, and not without profit from bitter experience. During Mr. Hunt's stay the membership gradually increased from about sixty to one hundred and fifteen. I stated before that he abruptly, and without warning, left the church and went to the Presbyterians. He however left them united and in peace, making no attempt to divide or to distract them. It seems sad to me now, as I remember the noble looking, venerable man, at the age of nearly four score years, the victim of his own weakness, and after having long preached to others, himself a kind of castaway. After this, Elder James McLaughlin served them as pastor at two different times, about a year, or not much more, each. About the beginning of the year 1813 Elder John Ellis was called, and served about four years. In 1818 Elder David Bateman was called, and continued until his death in 1832. All these preachers were regarded as sound in the doctrine of the gospel, and able and faithful ministers of the New Testament. At no time could any man have been called to the pastorate of this church who was not believed to be firm and established in the doctrine of salvation by grace. But while we say this, we do well to remember that judgment has been brought to the line somewhat more definitely since those days. The Baptist name and influence was then in the ascendant throughout a large extent of country. The membership and congregation extended over a stretch of country some forty miles in length, by fifteen or twenty in breadth; and over all this territory there was little opposition for either preacher or people to contend with,

in comparison of what there has been of late years. Since then that church has been surrounded and walled in with denominations, with two or three set up almost in her midst. While baptisms were frequent, exclusions were not at all unfrequent; and the fact that the Methodists, as they organized around them, made inroads, and that it was not an uncommon event for members to leave them to join with the Methodists, does not argue very favorably for the ministry of the time. The doors were opened wider than they should have been. But these events were the exceptions. The church was uniformly recognized as one of the soundest and best established churches in the Baptist connection. I have in these criticisms intended to include Mr. Bateman and his ministry, of which I will now speak more particularly. Of the society meeting-house, in Bethlehem, we have heard nothing for some years. The tendency of the membership is southward. So among the first events after the settlement of Elder Bateman was an arrangement to build a new and much larger house of worship, four miles southward, being more central in the congregation. This was accomplished in 1819, since which time the meetings have almost uniformly alternated between Baptistown and this new or lower house. Very soon after Mr. Bateman's settlement and the commencement of his labors, there seemed to be evidence of a gracious work going on in the congregation, and directly numbers were flocking to the church. In this day of artificial excitements, when men are revivalists by profession, and revivals are the result of efforts, and gotten up to order, there are no doubt many people who have forgotten, or lost sight of the fact, that it is the Lord who builds up Zion, and that he sometimes comes with strong hand, displays his great power in gathering in his redeemed, and appears in his glory. When he works he works like himself, and his work bears witness of him. He brings unto Zion sons and daughters, and they dwell with delight in his holy mount. The fruit of the work of God's Spirit, when once seen, is ever after easily distinguishable from the results of fleshly efforts. Even those who have been deceived and imposed upon now of long time by vain appearances, need not be deluded any more. Such gracious displays do not come every year. But when they do come, and the year comes round, they bring a harvest of their own kind.

There are those yet living who

were witnesses of the gracious work I speak of at Kingwood, when it was a common thing to see numbers of both young and middle aged weeping throughout the congregation. In the course of three or four years more than one hundred were added to the church by baptism; and for several years even after Mr. Bateman's death the gathering in continued, though not in such numbers as during the years above named. I have spoken particularly of this ingathering, and of my confidence in those who were the subjects of it, because they have constituted the bulk of what has been known as the church in later years, and through a diversified experience. I not only knew many of them personally, but for a number of years was united with them in the strongest bonds of church relationship, and knew them to be spiritually minded, and deeply rooted in an experimental knowledge of the truth. The next move in regard to a pastor was the calling of Elder William Curtis, with whose preaching there appeared to be great satisfaction, and whose soundness in doctrine was never called in question by anybody. He continued about one year. As we approach the period of a general division in the Baptist denomination, some events that transpire will require special notice. About this time, that is, the fall of 1834, the church had become so much dissatisfied with what they considered innovations in the doctrine and practice of the Baptists, that they declined to send either letter or messengers to the Philadelphia Association. The next year they wrote to that body, withdrawing from them and from further correspondence with them, assigning as a reason, "That there is a wide difference between you and us both in faith and practice." While the objectionable innovations and disorders prevailed in a majority of the churches, and controlled the action of the association, yet several churches had still kept free from disorder. After dissolving her connection with the Philadelphia Association, the next step was to send invitations to such churches of the Philadelphia and also of the Central New Jersey Associations as continued to walk in the truth and in gospel order, to meet at Kingwood by letter and messengers for the purpose of forming a new association. The Second Baptist of Philadelphia, the Southampton, the Montgomery, of Philadelphia Association, and First and Second Hope-well, of New Jersey Association, were those invited. The pastors were Elders Thomas J. Kilts, Thomas T.

Roberson, James B. Bowen, John Boggs and C. Srydam. The character of these men and of their ministry, and the straightforward and consistent course of the churches named, have come down to us so fully as to require no eulogy here. This movement was with a view to peace and comfort, such churches only associating as could walk together in love. There was no declaration of non-fellowship. There was no adoption of a different or distinguishing name. It may not have been then believed that it would come to that. Two of the churches invited did not see fit to unite with the new association, although their pastors were present and participated in the proceedings with lively interest. It is now known that division came, and with it came nonfellowship. The elements of this separation had been developing a long time, and I have been incidentally tracing them to their culmination. The entire Delaware River Association, as then constituted, was found in the division that followed identified with what has been known as Old School Baptist. Another pastor succeeded Mr. Curtis, named James W. Wigg. At the time he was called, all the questions involved in the division were floating abroad, and strangers were regarded with suspicion. Mr. Wigg was made to understand perfectly the ground occupied by the church, and he took an active part in forming the new association. He professed to be in full accord with the church in this action, and in all other respects; and as he had been baptized by Elder Kilts, and was for a time a member of that church, and being recommended by others who were well known and in whom the church had confidence, he was accepted and settled as pastor. He recommended and sold a work among the brethren entitled "A defense of particular redemption," a work which had been written to refute the published sentiments of Andrew Fuller. I mention this circumstance because it was the sentiments of Andrew Fuller that were diffusing themselves like an epidemic among the Baptist Churches. I presume no one who knows anything of the facts will presume to deny this understanding between Mr. Wigg and the Kingwood Church, and that he came among them professing to be in perfect accord with them. Not long after, it became known that he had purchased and was reading the works of Andrew Fuller, and that he was rapidly drifting into the Fullerite sentiment. Dissatisfaction of course developed; but there were some that appeared to be led along by the preacher, either not discerning the change, or else not objecting to it. A growing disaffection with the general tone and character of the preaching made it evident that unless some important change was brought about with one party or the other, Mr. Wigg could not remain. The reader may find some reasons in what I have said why a protracted meeting should have been devised and undertaken. Such a meeting, if it could

be commenced and maintained long enough, might win over some members and bring in some recruits from the world. But how can a meeting of that kind be got under way? I was there present, and saw it all; and I do not believe to-day that if a proposition had been made in open church meeting, even with all the pastor's influence, five votes could have been obtained for it. Yet a protracted meeting (I suppose your readers all know what they are) was actually commenced in the Kingwood meeting-house. And did the church indeed be persuaded into it? No, not a bit of it; they were not even asked anything about it, or informed that such a meeting was contemplated. A man, of whom the church knew nothing, but who had become known in some quarters as an adept in getting up revivals, was engaged, and a meeting commenced. Not only was this done without an act of the church, without the subject ever having been before them at all, but in utter disregard of their will and defiance of their authority. The regular church meeting was published adjourned, and the keys of the house taken possession of, which I believe to this day have never been given up. It took some several days before the church could assert her authority. Meantime the excitement went on. Instead, however, of bringing any into the church, the meeting resulted in taking about sixty away, who, together with the new converts, organized under another name, and built in another place. I deem it due to these members who were drawn off, and to the cause of truth, to say that I doubt whether one-fourth of them would have ever voluntarily went away. They were captivated. A strong delusion, a sweeping current of error, was sent among them, and there were some unstable souls there. They succeeded in some instances in capturing parents by first capturing their children. I say captured, because the church had been in peace, but discord was sown among them. About one hundred and twenty names remained steadfast.

Religious excitements of the character of this one that I have referred to were until about that time entirely unknown among the Baptists. I have since known of some few similar meetings, both among New School Baptists and Methodists, but at that time I had never read or heard tell of such proceedings. As nearly as could be embraced in a single sentence, the doctrine maintained was about this: "General provision." "An indefinite atonement; not for sinners, but for sin, sufficient and intended for all who would use the means and avail themselves of it." "The Lord works by means, and blesses the means used; consequently ministers and churches will be held to answer at the last day for sinners that are lost." That this ever had been recognized as Baptist doctrine, no one in his senses will pretend to say. So far from any such pretensions, the doctrine and former practice of that church were made the

subjects of ridicule and contempt. There was no demoralization resulted from this as from a former ordeal. It was indeed a fiery ordeal, but the sons of Levi were made manifest. They came forth as silver refined in the furnace. There was cause of sorrow for some who had been led away from the simplicity of the truth, but as a whole there seemed to be a salutary and sanctifying influence upon the church. The members were endeared to each other. They were brought nearer together. They were united in love and confidence. They entered more fully into that fellowship which is in the Spirit; and they learned as they had not so well known before the sweetness of the joyful sound. The battle was fought and the victory won. Some valued names were, however, lost in the struggle. But the victors were made pillars in the temple, to go no more out. Upon them was laid no further burden. They held fast till he came. It was my privilege for many years to be a highly favored child among those fathers and mothers in Israel. Under the ministry of Elder Conklin and several others there has been almost uninterrupted harmony and peace for some forty-five years. In the course of half a century a few domestic troubles have arisen, but I think not one instance of a departure from the doctrine, or of dealing with any single member on that account. After the lapse of over one hundred and forty years, there that church stands on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, where she has ever stood. She has never introduced a line or sentence of different faith or different practice. She has never mingled with the world in the formation of societies for any purpose whatever. Espoused to one Husband, she has honored him, and his word has ever been the law of the house. Her doors have always been closed against everything that defileth and worketh abomination. This long experience has not been without its lessons. Purity in doctrine has brought about purity in worship and perfection in fellowship, while in some instances some sowing to the flesh has brought a harvest of corruption.

I regret having run to so great length, yet many important things I have had to pass unnoticed.

Yours to serve in the truth,
E. RITTENHOUSE.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, Jan. 17, 1884.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—
DEAR BRETHREN:—I received the December number of the *Gospel Standard* a few days ago, and in perusing its pages I find the following base slander on the Old School Baptists of America: "Having been called upon to notice several of the practices of the Old School Baptists of America, we take advantage of this opportunity to draw their attention to their free but, to us, unseemly use of the word 'Reverend.' As Strict Baptists we have always been opposed to its being used before the names of men, believing it forms one link to the chain of those distinctive

but unscriptural marks between minister and people, whereby some superiority of the one over the other is understood," &c. In reply I will say to the Mr. Editor that he must be hard up for an accusation against the Old School Baptists of America, that he has to resort to downright lying in order to find wherewith to accuse them to his Strict Baptist brethren of England, who know nothing concerning our order or practice except what they learn from his slanderous pen. I will here take occasion to ask Mr. Editor if he knows how a guilty conscience feels. If his conscience is not seared, I should think he would feel such a gnawing sensation that would constrain him to take back every word of that slanderous accusation against the Old School or Primitive Baptists. Now, Mr. Editor, did you not know when you were publishing that slanderous report that there was not a word of truth in it? Most assuredly you did. You were doubtless reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in diligent search (not for edification, but) for something by which to accuse the Old School Baptists. I ask, Did you there find the word "Reverend" prefixed to the names of any of the Old School Baptist ministers? I know you did not. Did you find it in any of the Old School Baptist periodicals? I know you did not. Then I ask, From whence did you receive the authority to publish such a notorious falsehood? It is too plain a case to be a mere oversight. I would fain think it was an oversight if I could; but I fear it was the premeditated product of a carnal mind for a specific purpose. I cannot perceive how it could be possible for it to be an oversight, for I see in each number of the *Gospel Standard*, under the head of "Publications Received," that you are receiving monthly several Old School or Primitive Baptist periodicals, and you must see that we do not use that word. I am sure you never saw it used in relation to an Old School Baptist in any of our writings. My father and mother were both members of a Baptist Church before I was born, I being the youngest of nine children. My father, Frederic Stipp, was a deacon of the Mill Creek Church of Regular Baptists under the pastorate of Elder (not Reverend) John Hutchinson, who was the pastor of said church, in Berkeley County, Virginia, upwards of forty years. And I have been acquainted with Baptist usage from childhood up till now, the seventy-eighth year of my age, and I have never known the word "Reverend" prefixed to the name of any Baptist minister of our communion by any Baptist in fellowship with us. We as a body of christians have always detested the appellations of Reverend, clergy, clergyman or clerical being applied to man, neither have we fellowship with those who do. Now, be it distinctly understood by our brethren and sisters everywhere, in all places and countries, who may read these lines, that we, the Old School or Primitive Baptists of America, do not make use of the

word "Reverend," as we are slanderously represented or reported in the *Gospel Standard*, London, England; but that we invariably use the scriptural word "Elder" by which to designate our ministers, in preference to their unscriptural word "Mister," or "Master." Christ said to his disciples, "Be not ye called Rabbi," (which signifies Master, which is equivalent to the word Reverend): "for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."—Matthew xxiii. 8. But says Peter, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."—1 Peter iv. 14. Now this is the sum total of the whole matter. The *Gospel Standard* has an extensive circulation. It finds its way into nearly, if not quite every, nation under heaven. Consequently this slanderous report concerning the Old School Baptists of America is being published throughout the whole inhabited world, upon what would be considered good authority. Now this I say, if you have the Spirit of Christ, you surely will be willing to publish a refutation as extensively as you have published the report.

Dear brethren Beebe, in the same number of the *Gospel Standard* there is an article the heading of which is "Inquiry and Answer," of which the following is a quotation of but a small part of the inquiry: "Dear Sir—The rebaptizing of believers, as practiced by that order of Baptists in America called Old School Baptists, is a matter about which many believers are seeking scriptural instruction. It is not sufficient that a man was a believer when he was first baptized, or that the mode of baptism was scriptural, that is, by immersion, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, or that the administrator was duly authorized by the Baptist Church of which he was a member in good standing and official position as pastor, or of whatever other order of Baptists he might be. To become a member with them he must be baptized again. The authority to rebaptize a believer, or where the Lord requireth it of him, or where the precept for it is, or the example stating it to have been done, seemeth not to be found in the Scriptures. To be a Protestant Baptist Church it must be upon the ground that the Scriptures alone are a sufficient rule of faith and practice. To be a Roman Catholic Baptist Church is to believe that the teachings of the church are of equal authority with the word of God. By one lately rebaptized it was said, though a believer when first baptized, he did not understand then the scriptural meaning of baptism as well as he does now; and that the man who baptized him was not a man of truth, although duly authorized, and his standing in the church was good. His late baptism into the Old School Baptist Church was by a man who denies the trinity of persons in the God of the Bible, saying it is a trinity of offices,"

&c. I cannot have paper to continue this quotation further, although not more than one-third way through with it. I will quote his closing remark: "What is further to be regretted is that some who have been members of Particular Baptist Churches in England should be in union with these churches, and approving of such sentiments and practice. May the Lord enable you through the *Gospel Standard*, which we so much love, to show unto us and all humble inquirers after truth the most excellent way. Yours by grace divine in hope of eternal life, J. H." The editor, in his reply or answer, starts out thus: "We fully agree with the decision our correspondent has carefully adduced from the Scriptures, that there is no authority for the practice of rebaptism," &c. Now, seeing you are so fond of the appellation of "Mr.," I will thus address you. Mr. Editor, your correspondent speaks of two Baptist Churches, a Protestant Baptist Church and a Roman Catholic Baptist Church. Well, these two churches are very nearly allied to each other. The only difference is this: the one is represented by Mystery, Babylon, the Mother of Harlots, and the other by her Protestant harlot daughters; that is all. But happily for us, we as Old School or Primitive Baptists are identified with neither. Our identity is long anterior to the rise of Protestantism, at least upwards of one thousand five hundred years, and three hundred years prior to the rise of Catholicism. The Old School Baptist Church is identical with the apostolic church. Consequently we cannot receive the ordinances from either the Protestant Baptist Church or the Roman Catholic Baptist Church, even provided there are such churches in existence; but they are misnomers. Paul saith, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things."—1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. In like manner, though there be lords many, faiths many, and baptisms many, but to us there is but "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," &c.—Eph. iv. 5. Gospel faith and gospel baptism are inseparably connected; consequently we cannot (in conscience) receive baptism administered by a legalist, he not being of the faith of God's elect, there being no union, harmony or fellowship between the two. That is, there is no union or fellowship between legal baptism and gospel faith, or (if you please) a gospel church. According to history, there were many baptisms of the Jews. The following is recorded in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, "From the gospel history we learn that at that time ceremonial washings had been greatly multiplied by traditions of the doctors and elders, (see Mark vii. 3, 4,) and the testimony of the evangelist is fully borne out by later Jewish writers. The most important and probably one of the earliest of these traditional customs was the baptizing of proselytes.

There is a universal agreement by later Jewish writers that all the Israelites were brought into covenant with God by circumcision, baptism and sacrifice, and that the same ceremonies were necessary in admitting proselytes," &c.—Page 95. Now, Mr. Editor, do you suppose that the apostles received men thus baptized, although they were born again at the time of such baptism, into the apostolic church upon their Jewish baptism? Does not reason itself teach you that they would not? The Scriptures speak of "one baptism," but you have quite a variety of baptisms. You can have Campbellite baptism, Methodist baptism, Presbyterian baptism, Congregational baptism, and a host of other baptisms too numerous to mention; for in America they all will immerse rather than lose a subject. Now, if these are valid baptisms, there was no need for John the Baptist being ordained by the Lord, and "sent to baptize, and make ready a people prepared for the Lord;" for according to your idea, the baptism, if administered by Caiaphas the high priest, would have answered as well. You are receiving the baptisms of Judaizing teachers, who are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.—Matt. xv. 9. Hear what an apostle saith, "Who-soever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."—2 John 9-11. Now, if we receive either the faith or the works or the persons of those who come unto us and bring not the doctrine the apostle taught us, we transgress and abide not in the doctrine of Christ, and bid them God speed, and consequently are partakers of their evil deeds. Again, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would (no doubt) have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."—1 John ii. 18, 19. Now, my dear sir, are you not receiving baptism from just such antichristians as those? Most assuredly you are. Do you believe the apostle would have received their baptism administered after they went out from them? Far be it from him to do so. He would not even suffer them to come into his house, much less receive their baptism. Now hear another witness: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again,

If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."—Galatians i. 6-9. But says the editor of the *Gospel Standard*, "We will receive their baptism." O, my friend, beware! lest the awful curse denounced by the Holy Ghost through his servant the apostle against those Judaizing teachers come upon you, seeing you bid them God speed by affiliating with them in receiving their baptism. "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."—2 Thess. ii. 3. That falling away has come, and the man of sin is revealed. This man of sin is now revealed, and he has one body, but many members, which embraces "Mystery, Babylon," with all her harlot daughters. Now, we as Old School Baptists cannot receive their baptism, for in so doing we would receive their fellowship, which we in conscience cannot do; and if we are reproached, it is for Christ's sake. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."—2 Thess. iii. 6. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, [Do you hear that, Mr. Editor? If you do, why do you not heed it?] and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 14-18. Now, have you not disobeyed the command of the Lord? You have not separated yourselves from them, neither have you come out from among them; but you are continuing with them by receiving an ordinance of those who are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, and who were never authorized to baptize by an orderly gospel church. Consequently such baptism is not gospel baptism at all. It amounts to nothing more than a kind of linsey-woolsey, Babylonish baptism. But hear another witness: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of

you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."—2 Peter ii. 1-3. These are our "ensamples, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come;" to the intent that we should not follow their pernicious ways, and thereby cause the way of truth, as held by the Old School Baptists, to be evil spoken of. Israel as a temporal people was typical of Israel as a spiritual people, and the type must correspond with the antitype with great precision. Now, did the Lord's prophets of old take any part in the religious worship of the false prophets? Did Elijah, the prophet of the Lord, affiliate or participate in any way whatever with the prophets of Baal? Most assuredly they did not. Neither should we with false teachers; for Peter classes ancient false prophets and modern false teachers in one row together. Hear also another witness: "But these [false teachers] speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core," or Korah. (Read Numbers xvi.) "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."—Jude 10-13. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. xviii. 4. A host of other Scriptures might be quoted, but these already quoted are amply sufficient to show with what abhorrence the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ looked upon these deceivers and false teachers, and also how they warned us against affiliating or participating with them in any of their religious performances. Now, a few words in relation to the inconsistency of that people in England known as Strict Baptists. If I understand them, they practice strict or close communion, and open baptism. Now, there is no consistency in this. These are both ordinances of the gospel church, of equal solemnity and of equal validity, both representing the same things, which are the tremendous sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. His baptism by John in Jordan was but an emblem of his awful and tremendous suffering in the garden of Gethsemane and upon the cross of Calvary, when the Father poured out his unmitigated wrath upon the head of his Son! when he was overwhelmed in sorrow and suffering, and thus proclaimed the day of vengeance of our God. He was looking forward to that dreadful time of suffering when he said, "I

am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"—Luke xii. 49, 50. Now, why those people over the water calling themselves Strict Baptists should receive baptism from an Arminian church with an Arminian pastor, and not the bread and wine, I cannot perceive. If I could receive baptism by an administrator who is not of the faith of God's elect, though he may be of good standing in a church not of that faith, I surely could receive the communion supper also. For it appears to me that baptism is the more essential point of order; for a person is not admissible to the ordinance of the communion supper unless he is baptized into the fellowship of the same church.

Dear brethren Beebe, I wrote this letter more especially for the benefit of our brethren who are in Babylon, and will not come out on account of being (as they call it) rebaptized. There are several of that class in this town, and the *Gospel Standard* is encouraging them in their disobedience. Yours in affliction,

JOHN STIPP.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 15, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been a reader of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, since July, 1856, and being comforted many times in reading the experiences of the children of God, and the glorious doctrine of the Son of God set forth by the correspondents, who are of our Father's family, I have many times shed tears of joy, and thought I would like to cast in my mite; but my ignorance and unworthiness have kept me from doing so until now. I was born in Fairfield County, Ohio, January 31, 1821. My parents were members of the Old School Baptist Church before I was born. They raised fifteen children, of whom I was the eighth. I think they never took me to meeting with them after they thought it was safe to leave me with the rest. I realized that I was a sinner when I was not more than five years old. The circumstances I will relate. It came into my mind that the object of the meeting was for people to come together and watch for the worst boy that came there, and to take him and put him to death. I felt sure in my mind that if I was seen there they would all know at once I was the boy, and they would take my life. Thus I was troubled at times until I was twelve years old, when the Sciota Association was held near my father's house, and there was preaching at our house in the evening. The preacher took for his text, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."—Psalm cxxv. 3. Some of the congregation were much affected, and after preaching one woman told her experience, and I thought it very strange that there was a sinner besides me. After that I was not afraid to go to meeting. I will relate a dream which I had when about twelve years old.

I dreamed I was in my father's house with two of my brothers, making sport for them to laugh at. While thus engaged, suddenly I heard footsteps out of doors. Instantly I thought, It is Jesus Christ, and he has come to avenge himself for my wickedness. As he opened the door and came in, I was sure that was his mission. I was sitting on the floor, and as he approached me I thought my brother understood his mission, and said, "He shall be blest." But the Savior put his hand upon my head, and said, "He shall be a teacher," and then vanished out of sight. His size, form, complexion and solemn features remain with me to this day. Thus time passed on, and I went to Baptist meetings quite frequently, and became somewhat interested, as the minister would tell some of my feelings sometimes. But he would soon go into doctrine which I could not understand. Thus time passed until I was about eighteen years old, when I had another dream or vision. I saw the church of God in her glorified state, surrounding the throne of God. It was an innumerable company. They were all dressed in white, and there was neither male nor female. They were all of one size, and equal in praise and glory. I can never describe the beauty and grandeur of the view I had. It appeared to be one grand circle, and all tending to the center. While I am writing this it still remains as clear as ever, although it has been about forty-five years since. But this view was only the beginning of more trouble. I soon discovered that I was only permitted to see the church in her glorified state at a distance, but I was left out. Soon after this I left my father's house to work for a man, one and a half miles away. The family were of the "United Brethren" persuasion. The old lady, I believe, was one of God's chosen family. She used to talk to me, but we could not always agree. After I had lived with them three years I had learned the cabinet and fanning-mill manufacturing business. I then went to live with John Fry, an Old School Baptist. This was in the fall of 1842. He had two daughters, one of which became my wife. One evening in the fall of 1844, while we were talking on different subjects, we finally came to that of christianity. Sudden as thought I was shown my depraved and sinful situation. I wept aloud for some time. I tried with all the power I had to suppress my feelings. I was miserable indeed. The next day was a lonely day to me. I got it into my mind that if I would go west from the house, over the hill, and there pray to God, he would forgive my sins. For fear some one would see me I waited until dark, and then started, but could not find the place to kneel; nor dared I attempt to, for fear God would never let me rise again. Thus my hope was all blasted. I returned to the house with a heavy heart, saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." The next day was dark and gloomy. Thus time passed on slowly. In this

time I was attending Baptist meetings at Pleasant Run. The preacher used to tell my feelings until he came to deliverance, and then he would leave me. O how I desired to understand this deliverance! I think I prayed for it. But the Lord's time had not come yet. I was still working at the law. On January 30, 1845, I was married to Mary Fry. We lived with her father and mother until the fall of 1847, when we moved to Sandusky Co., Ohio, where we commenced clearing up a farm. We heard no gospel preaching, but frequently went to hear different orders preach; but there was nothing in it for me. I had tried my strength, and it all failed. Time passed on until January, 1856, when there was quite a stir among the people in our vicinity. My wife went to meeting with some neighbors, and I staid at home. I was glad she went, as I wanted to read the Testament, and did not want her to know it, as I thought she might see I was in trouble. While I was alone I read the epistle to the Romans, and part of the first epistle to the Corinthians. I saw many promises to the children of God, but me it condemned. The future looked dark. My troubles became so great that I could not hide them from my wife. One Monday evening, after retiring, she asked me what the matter was. I told her nothing was the matter; but she urged so hard to know that I could restrain my feelings no longer. I told her I was a poor, lost sinner; that I had never done anything but rebel against God. I wept aloud for several hours. In the morning when I arose and went out of doors I saw the gloomiest sight I ever saw. Everything appeared to be dressed in mourning. The sun appeared to refuse to give her natural light, and all because of my sins. I went to my barn and tried to pray, but could not form words that God would hear. I went to the house for breakfast, but had no appetite for food. I opened the Bible, desiring to see something to comfort me, but all condemned me. I tried to work, but could not. On Wednesday the darkness still covered the earth. Time after time I took my Bible on my knees and prayed the Lord that it might open to some portion that I might draw comfort from; but it all condemned me. I went to my barn often to try to pray, but my words would fall to the ground, and I would ask God to forgive me for another sin I had committed. I thought it was a sin for me to use his holy name, for I had sinned away my day of grace. On Thursday, O how I desired that all christians might know my situation and pray for me. I thought perhaps God would hear them in my behalf; but me he never would hear. I was reading the twelfth chapter of Hebrews and sixth verse, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." I shed tears, and thought perhaps the Lord was chastening me. I told my wife, and we both wept. Just then a person knocked at the

door, and I told him to come in, and he saw us both weeping. I thought, What shall I say to this man? He was one of my near neighbors, and a class-leader in the "United Brethren" Church. He will think there is trouble between us. So I commenced telling him that I was a lost sinner, and told him much of my trouble. When he was about to leave I asked him to pray for us. He took the book and read, and then prayed, and went away. My tears dried up, and I had no more tender feelings. I thought I was lost, and felt that it was just and right. God was just in my condemnation, and I said Amen to it. On Friday morning as I was going to the barn the thought rushed into my mind that perhaps I was not as wicked as I had thought. I stood still, and my mind ran to the most wicked young man I knew of. He would get drunk, and swear, and go into the worst kind of company. I began to compare myself with him, and the matter was decided in a moment. He was honest. Nobody was deceived in him. But my sins were all hid in my bosom. But God knows the secrets of the heart, and my sins were enough to sink a world. I thought I was going to die soon, and the proof was there; for we read, "Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." I was nearly thirty-five years old; and surely if a good man lives to be seventy he is quite old. On Friday evening some of my kind friends came to my house to have a prayer meeting, to which I had no objection; but they did me no good. My heart was hard and beyond feeling, and the darkness I never can describe. One of the old sisters asked me after meeting how I felt. I told her every thing was dark. She remarked, "The darkest hour is just before day." But I could not understand how God could be just and save me. I often thought about the Savior's language, "I will bring the blind by a way they know not: I will lead them in paths they have not known." But I thought I had seen all the ways, and if I was ever brought it must be in some way I had seen. On Saturday the darkness still continued. Sunday came, and it was darker than ever, if possible. My kind neighbors had a prayer meeting about three-fourths of a mile from my house, and I took a notion to go. I went through some woods, and it appeared so dark, I think I tried to grasp the darkness with my hand. When I got near the house I stopped, and wondered whether that was the place of the meeting. It looked very strange, although I had been there many times. I went into the house, and soon the meeting commenced. They sang hymns and prayed, and after some time it was changed to a speaking meeting. Several times I thought I was sinking, and would find myself holding fast to the seat on which I was sitting. All of a sudden I commenced talking of the goodness of God. It was so sudden that I could not tell when nor how my trouble went. The joy and peace

I felt I never could describe while in the flesh. Everything had changed. The trees in the forest were praising God, I thought. There was no more darkness, but all was peace and joy. God was my Friend, and I had no enemy on earth. This was on January 26, 1856, about midday. That evening I retired to bed with a heart full of thankfulness to God, and soon fell asleep; and I think I had the sweetest sleep I ever had had in this world, or ever will have. In the morning when I awoke it still seemed as though I was in a new world. All was peace and joy. Thus I continued for several days. Then the enemy was permitted to tempt me; but it was of short duration. I then went to meeting regularly, and would talk of the goodness of God wherever I went. I thought I could make everybody understand how God saves sinners. I soon wanted to be baptized, and to unite with the "United Brethren" Church. Immersion being the only baptism I read of in the Bible, I could not be sprinkled; yet they had had members in their church for years that had not been baptized nor sprinkled. Yet I loved those people and desired to unite with them. But something began to ask me whether sprinkling was right. I would answer, No. Then I would ask the Lord to direct me to my home. I would attend class meeting, and some would say that they were determined to make heaven their home. I dared not say that, because I had learned that it was in and through the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that the poor sinner is saved. I still attended meetings, and my desire was that God would direct me. But that still, small voice which the prophet speaks of was still with me. He says his speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender plant. I soon found that there were only three or four out of twenty or upwards that could give a reason of their hope. The rest were all determined to make heaven their home. There was a preacher in that order that I thought I would have baptize me. In April there was held what was called a quarterly meeting. I went, and this same preacher that I thought should baptize me sprinkled a woman and child, and called it baptism. O how my feelings were hurt, because that man made light of the order of God's house; and he said afterwards that we must try and please the people. I began to fear that his god was not the God I professed to love. Shortly after that I went to hear another man, of a different order; but there was nothing in his preaching that did me any good. While returning home I heard a voice above my head, which said, "You are disobedient." I spake right out, "O Lord, where is my home?" But there was no answer at that time. Soon afterwards something said, "You must go to Honey Creek, (which was twenty miles south) and be baptized." I said, "There is plenty of water near by; why go so far?" Soon after this one of the members of the "United Brethren" Church asked

me why I did not go with them. I answered that I did not know. Something said I must go to Honey Creek and be baptized, and I did not know what it meant. Still I tried with all the powers of my mind to join the "United Brethren" Church. But questions came up in my mind like these: Is it right to receive members and not baptize them? No. Is it right to commune with the world? No. Is it right to have members that cannot give a reason of their hope in Christ? No. Then I would still pray the Lord to direct me to my home. I had it all this time in my mind that the Baptists were wrong. I had heard them many times, and I thought I understood them. The Sandusky Association was to be held twenty-two miles southeast from where I lived, in June. My father, mother, brother, and some of my sisters, lived in that vicinity, so I thought I would attend the association and make them a visit, and prove to the Baptists generally that they were wrong. Accordingly on Friday before the second Sunday in June my wife and I went. I was very eager to hear the position the preachers would take. The man to preach the introductory sermon was Elder Carpenter, of Lancaster, Fairfield Co., Ohio, whom I had heard often. He took for his subject Titus ii. 11-13. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." He handled his subject in a grand and glorious manner, especially when he came to the words, "Looking for that blessed hope." I felt that I had a blessed hope, and was interested, and was looking for the glorious appearing of Jesus. I began to wonder whether that people had always preached in that way, or whether the change had been in me. I heard eleven discourses, and all were grand and glorious. It was just what I had been trying to advocate. I returned home on Saturday afternoon, rejoicing in the truth I had heard. But where is my home? was still my inquiry. On Wednesday I was in the field at work, and meditating on the truth I had heard, and I said again, "But, O Lord, where is my home?" As sudden as thought I was shown where my home was. I saw it as plainly as I ever saw the sun with my natural eyes. I had to give vent to my feelings in praising God aloud. O how I wanted to go to the church and tell them what the Lord had done for poor me. After a few minutes I grieved that it was so long until the next meeting. I thought it was one month. In less than an hour one of my brothers was at my house, and told me that the meeting would be on the next Saturday. He came twenty-two miles to tell me. Here I have to say, what a wonder-working God. Watts must have understood it when he wrote that grand poetry,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

On the next Saturday I went to the church and told them a part of what is here written, and was received as a candidate for baptism, with two others, and was baptized on the next day, at the very place I had been told of some six weeks before. Elder Lewis Seitz was the administrator, who is still with us. His physical powers are nearly gone, but his mind is still strong in the Lord. When we arrived at the water for baptism, the water looked so beautiful that I thought the smiles of my Beloved were on the face of the water. If I had then possessed the power I would have called the nations of the earth to witness the beauty of the order of God's house.

I must stop, though the half is not told. May the God of all comfort and grace guide us all to his praise while we live, and afterwards receive us to glory. Brethren Beebe, if you feel like correcting this poor scribble, and publishing it, you can do so; if not, put it where it belongs.

Your unworthy brother, as I humbly hope and trust,

BENJAMIN SPITLER.

DECEMBER 22, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I lately received the inclosed letters through our dear, afflicted sister, Mary Parker, and believing that they properly belong to the whole family, I submit them to you for publication, though the writers evidently did not at the time of writing them think of their being read by so many as no doubt will be pleased in their perusal. I have obtained the consent of our dear sister Loofbourrow, and trust that sister Lyon will not be offended, though I have never seen her.

Yours in hope,

THOMAS COLE;

FREDERICKTOWN, Ohio.

MY DEAR SISTER IN THE BOND OF LOVE:—My earliest recollections are memories of the tenderest guardian care. The loving affection, careful example, watchful, restraining hands of parents and grandparents, make up the pleasant memories of childhood, girlhood and womanhood. My mind goes back and sees a little, curly-headed, restless child, standing at the knee of a tender-faced, gray-headed grandfather, whose sweet voice could quiet the uneasy child, while he, in the pleasant and interesting way peculiar to him, told of the sweet child that was born in Bethlehem's manger, of his life to be patterned after, and what he had accomplished by his death. But he taught me, sister, as he believed, that Christ had died for the whole human race, and therefore all would be saved; those who had sinned willfully, "so as by fire;" and each according to their sins. Mother did

not like the doctrine he taught us, but preferred that we should read the Bible under careful moral training, and await the day of God's power with us; yet she opposed the idea of endless punishment. So I gradually grew to understand their doctrine. I wanted to be a christian, and a very good one, better than many I saw around me. I wanted to be like grandpa, father and mother. I think these three were my standard, as there seemed to be so much in them that was Christ-like. You will not wonder that I loved them so much. I thought them so wise and good that it has been (and is yet, many times) hard to turn my back upon their teachings. But I must do so. My last term of school was under a teacher who was a professed Universalist. He took great pains to teach me their doctrine, urged me to unite with the church, and invited a great number of their preachers to visit me and to preach in the neighborhood. But I was kept by the power of God, I believe, from doing what I wished to do and what I was urged to do. About this time a new interest came into my life. I met Willet, now my husband, and was married. We moved some distance away, among a people I had never even heard of—the Old Baptists. I first heard Elder T. Pence preach, and next Elders Lampton and Williams. I did not like their preaching, for I thought they taught things that were hard to receive, and each time I felt more and more rebellious. I thought each time that I would never go again, or if I did that I would not listen. One day, about fourteen years ago, I went, feeling rebellious, yet wanting to go for the appearance and to please the rest of the family. We then lived with father and mother Lyon. Soon after being seated, there seemed to rise before me a cross, and one nailed thereon, so that I could not see Elder Lampton, who was in the stand. I had but a feeling of wonder that day. The feeling grew upon me the next day, for there it appeared again that my sins had nailed him there. The feeling of horror grew upon me at each time of meeting, for here it was ever before me. I cannot say that there was ever the fear of future punishment connected with it, but O the horror of the thing which I had done I could not tell any one, for who would believe me? The others who were sitting there did not see it, and they would only think me superstitious. I felt that I was a murderer. But the horrible thing fascinated me, and each meeting day I felt that I must go and see that bleeding form, with bowed head, and face so convulsed with terrible agony. I said to Willet shortly after our marriage, "Do you ever pray?" He said he did not know how. This seemed strange to me, for I had been taught from my childhood to lay my wants before the pitying Savior, and to thank him for all things, and I surely thought I did pray. But during my trouble Willet asked me to pray aloud, so that he might hear. I told

him that I could not. I was in such trouble before God that I could say nothing but "Be merciful." But Willet seemed so anxious for me to say something that I tried to repeat a form that I had learned; but O! it seemed as though I would never be able to finish it, I felt so condemned for daring to speak aloud. I cannot tell how long a period passed in this way; but one night, when alone, (I do not know whether I had slept or not), suddenly the scene was changed, and I had a view of the resurrection. It was, as near as I can describe it, as though a great light was shining on my closed eyelids, while this scene in all its grandeur was revealed. On opening my eyes, nothing was to be seen. I lay and pondered on this matter for a time, when the desire to tell some one of my joy, that Christ, my victim, had risen from the dead, came so forcibly that I arose and dressed myself, and started to awake father and mother Lyon. When I had nearly reached their room the thought came, They will think you are crazy. They have always known this, of course, and in your ignorance you have been borrowing trouble over it. I could not sleep, so I took my Bible and asked for guidance, and read Matthew x. 38. What was my cross? I closed the book, and opened it again, and read Acts viii. 38, the account of the baptism of the eunuch by Philip. I then closed the book and opened it again, and read of the baptism of Jesus himself. I had no idea that baptism by immersion was the only and right way. I had been taught that the baptism necessary for us in this day was of the Holy Ghost alone. You will see how pointedly I was led, and not by man. When Willet came home I told him of my wish to be baptized, but I said nothing to any other person. One Friday, I do not know how long after this, quite a number of persons came to our house to visit, and among the number was Elder Lampton. On Saturday Willet asked me if I was going to the church that day. I told him I was not; that I must learn to control myself more, and I thought I would consult my parents. I told mother Lyon that I would stay at home and get dinner; but after she had gone I put on my bonnet and went to meeting too. When the church sung,

"If you wait until you're better,
You will never come at all,"

I went forward; but why, I know not, after saying what I had. This has caused me much trouble, thinking that probably had I waited Willet would have gone with me. I went to the water in much distress of mind, fearing I should not live a life becoming one professing to be led by such a spirit. I felt very calm as I came up from the water, with no fear or dread. But when Willet took my hand at the water's edge, and said, "O, Mary, there is such a gulf between us—you are bound for heaven, and I for hell," I thought I should sink with trouble. Gradually this wore off, and the desire to tell others of my love took the place of every

other feeling, and caused me to write and talk to many. But my efforts all fell back on my own head, until I grew to feel that there was none other in the world like me. I tried to put it all aside, and did so, as far as speaking or writing was concerned. In fact, I did not write a letter for years; for when I tried to write, the desire to write on this subject alone was distressing. About two years after my baptism we moved about nine miles from the place of the meeting, and in nearly eight years I was with the church but twice. I was in poor health most of the time. The brethren paid very little attention to me, and I grew to feel that they were glad to have me drop out from among them. O what depths I passed through during those years! But I can rejoice in it now, feeling that it has been the hand of God in my life. I feel that I have been made to yield many points that man could never have made me yield. I feel that my life has been in the power of one stronger than myself, and I have a precious hope that it is God who has held me. But O! I have rebelled and fought open-handed. Why is it, sister, O why is it, if I really love him, if I really am his child? Why do I not yield my will to his, and learn my lessons calmly? You speak kindly in your letter of my expressed love for the saints. Many times I am troubled to know whether it is the right kind of love, as I have so much to love them for. They are all so kind to me, and none are my enemies. "For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them." I know of no way but to ask the Father to make me love right, for I feel sure that I cannot do even this in the right way without him.

I feel that this is a very imperfect scribble to send to you, but if you find aught in it to encourage you to feel that I am what I have professed to be, I will come and see you as your sister; but if you see no proof of a higher life in it, do not hesitate to tell me so plainly, for it would be a terrible thing to deceive others, or be deceived myself.

MARY LYON.

Mt. Sterling, Ohio, April 12, 1868.

MR. PARKER—DEAR SIR:—I wish to say a few words relating to a subject of which I know so little that I almost fear in attempting it that it will add another crime to the many that are already recorded against me. I sincerely hope if you can do nothing more for me, that you will extend to me your forgiveness for attempting to address you. I will try to tell you of my desire, and also of my doubts and fears. Then I wish you to tell me whether you still think me a fit subject for baptism. I am a convicted, lost and helpless sinner, seeking shelter in the fold of God; yet what am I, that I should dare petition at the throne of the Most High for the remission of sins? What am I, that I should be called a child of God? Notwithstanding all my guilt and unworthiness, I have a desire to be

numbered with his people. My soul does hunger and thirst after righteousness. I am sick of the world and sin, yet I cannot free myself from it as I would. I love God's people; they are the only people I wish to live like and with; but I shall never be worthy. I am all guilt and wretchedness, sunk by sin into the lowest depths of misery and woe. I have felt many times during the last six months that I must lay the heavy burden of my heart before the church, to be received or forever rejected; but I could say nothing good of myself, and I thought they would think worse of me than I did of myself, if I told all my wicked thoughts and deeds. So I have kept it all to myself until now; but something has prompted me to tell you all. I can only be rejected, and that is no worse than a load of guilt and conviction. I cannot act as I would, nor even think a good thought. At times there seems a ray of sunshine, and I hope that I am not to forever remain in the abode of darkness, doubt and distress. Yet the harder I strive, and the more ardently I wish for a light to guide my wandering footsteps, the deeper I sink, and the darker seems the way. I sometimes think it is better to remain as I am, than to run the risk of being cast off by the church and hated by all for presuming to present myself for membership, when I feel too unworthy to remain in their presence. Mr. Parker, I would rather talk with you than write to you, but I cannot converse with any satisfaction on a subject that causes me so much emotion, for the want of sufficient power to command my feelings. This, I hope, may afford me some satisfaction, and undeceive you; for I think I have deceived you in some way, to cause you to think I should be baptized. My feelings have been for the last six months different from any I ever before experienced. I have tried in vain to free myself from any further thought; but I cannot do anything as I would; I cannot even mourn in consequence of my condition, as I would and should.

"Tis a point I long to know,
Of it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

To be a christian is my greatest earthly desire. I wish you to tell me if I have given you any cause to bid me hope. What would I not give for an assurance that I have an interest in the blood of the Savior? How precious must be the assurance of the blood-bought throng that the hand of God is ever near to lead them safely through life's stormy billows, and at the close of the journey of life receive them unto himself, to live forever in the full enjoyment of the saints' everlasting rest! I hope, but I cannot tell why I should, except it be through the promises of God; yet they seem to have been made to the christian, and not to such as I am. I sometimes feel a consolation in reading portions of his precious promises. Christ said, "That whosoever believed in him should not perish, but

have everlasting life." Also, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And again, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." None of his promises will ever be broken. But here is the question which invariably arises, Am I one of the characters addressed in these promises? None go to the Father except through the blood of his holy Son Jesus. But O! was it for me he suffered, bled and died? I have tried to call upon him in the language of the following verse:

"May the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side that flowed,
Be of sin the perfect cure:
Save me, Lord, and make me pure."

Another one which I love to sing I will also quote:

"Though from kings I had descended,
And could boast of noblest birth;
Though my brilliant fame extended
Far and wide o'er all the earth;
Though the utmost stores of learning
All were treasured in my mind;
From the whole with gladness turning,
All my joy in Christ I'd find."

My mind was deeply impressed by a sermon preached by Mr. Williams, three or four years ago. I seemed to feel for the first time in my life that I was very wicked; but in a short time it was almost forgotten. I have had similar feelings many times when listening to your words of warning. I have tried to do better, and have even thought that I was improving myself, but soon was sunk still deeper. I can never forget nor describe the feelings that came over me the day uncle Hall and Vine related to the church their experience and need of the Savior. I felt so strongly convicted that it seemed to me that I was sinking to rise no more. Uncle Hall took my hand and invited me to go with him, and not be ashamed to own the Lord. I replied that it was not that, but I feared he would be ashamed to own me. O what joy it would have been to me to have felt worthy to walk in the holy ordinance of baptism. If I am left in doubt and sin forever, I can only say that it is merited and just in the sight of God. Of myself I can do nothing. I mourn because I cannot mourn. I have tried to pray, but could only say, "Lord, have mercy." If I could feel it to be my duty under so much guilt to take up the cross and follow the meek and lowly Jesus, I would not delay another opportunity. What is the world and all its fleeting pleasures compared with the salvation of my soul? I love things I once disliked, and dislike things I once loved. I shall never be worthy the name of christian, nor ever be able to live as I think a christian should live; and yet I feel that I shall never be satisfied nor at rest while I remain as I am. Christ is the only way, the truth and the life. To him I look for salvation, though unworthy. If I am ever saved, it will not be for any good I have done, for there is nothing good in me. I often wonder that I have been permitted to live and violate his holy law as I have done.

If my heart has not deceived me, I have related to you my true state of feelings. Please do not say anything of this to any one until I have heard from you. I shall expect a letter from you before the May meeting. Tell me if you think now as you once said, and whether there is any hope for me. May God bless you, his cause, and his people. If my case is hopeless, do not forget me in your prayers. Yours respectfully,

LORETTE LOOFBOURROW.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Dec. 2, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEARLY BELOVED BRETHERN:—With all that in every place trust in Israel's God, both theirs and yours, and, as I humbly hope, ours together, as the one body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whether past, present, or to come. With your permission I desire again to write a little, although there may be a sameness in what I write, as there will be with all writers or speakers, especially if they speak or talk like themselves, even if they do not have self in view. All the gifts given for the edifying of the body of Christ are tempered by the Lord himself, and are limited to the ability that God has given them. Hence the necessity of studying to show themselves workmen that need not be ashamed, to be approved of the Lord and of such as delight in his law. And to them all Scripture is given as the word of the Lord, for reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, to show forth the power and glory of their Teacher and furnisher of word and work. I have thought much of late about the nature of the writings in the SIGNS, as well as the nature of the preaching which I have been privileged with hearing. So far as I have been able to understand, for twenty-four years, all the offense of any importance that has been given by those who have spoken or written, has been when it has affected or disturbed the "old man," causing strife to arise; or when it has found Zion's children straying from the path of rectitude, and has stirred up their minds to a remembrance of their vows; in which latter case the truth of God's word is verified, who has not only said that he will send by whom he will send, but that he will send pastors and teachers after his own heart, who shall teach his people, and feed them with knowledge and understanding. And this is the main feature—"understanding." When one has strayed away, or taken a wrong course, there is nothing so effectual as truth to restore him. There is no other one thing that does so fully search the heart of the offender, or so humble the one offended, in the real gospel sense of offenses. It is not after the manner of slavish fear, as of natural children to their parents when they have done amiss and flee from the wrath of cruel parents; nor after the manner of those who have been lords over the heritage of God, rather than ensamples to the flock. For Paul knew that to speak of the faults of his brethren, or to correct and ad-

monish them, and at the same time instruct them, the same spirit must accompany both him and them; thus affecting a filial fear, not of Paul as a man, but as a servant of the Lord, whose bidding he must do. Like the devoted and loving parent, whose only object is the good of the child and the household at large, it is not done in anger. I speak from experience in training two earthly children, (though I do not boast), that in all their correction neither hatred nor variance was caused; and I believe that to-day, wherever they may be, they think well of plain and honest dealing. So with the church of God. I am bound to believe, from Scripture testimony, that whether the number of church members be few or many, the enforcement of all the laws of the church as the King has given them through his apostles, and the observance of these things only, may be expected to profit, and to the assurance of the Lord being with them always. So I have humbly hoped that the effect of my own ministry, though it be ever so little to profit of a "godly sort," might be as I have desired always since my profession, free from any attempt to domineer over my brethren. Yet may every one be assured that while I have ever held myself open to conviction, it must be shown that the object of those who may differ with me is higher and more noble than to promote self or selfish objects, of which the world is full. We, brethren, wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places, and are sure there can be no higher place than the earthly court or organization of Old Baptists, as the saints of the living God, assembled for the public worship of our God, who always has and ever will gather them when gathered. And may you, dear saints, be humbled under his hand, which is mighty. And if any shall think me plain, I plead guilty, and confess that I desire whatsoever I speak or write may have a tendency to stir up the pure minds of the saints, that we may prove our own selves whether we be in the faith or not.

Yours in tribulation,

J. D. HUBBELL.

HIRAMSBURG, Ohio, Jan. 22, 1884.

DEAR BRETHERN BEEBE:—Looking over nature, how many witnesses we find bearing testimony to the indisputable fact that there is a great creative Power who works all things in harmony and in silence. Ages have been used to make changes and to bring about certain results. Mankind takes more or less delight in nature's work. They are blessed notwithstanding their ignorance of the true God. They may consider all things within their grasp, and then come to conclusions concerning Jehovah, but all their knowledge is of the head. Man, with all he possesses, can never enter into a knowledge of God as a Spirit. We are told that "the world by wisdom knew not God." And again, that "the wisdom of the world is fool-

ishness with God." Further, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him." How strange that with such an array of testimony any one of the lost sons of Adam should openly assert the power of man, that he has the ability to receive the gospel, accept Christ as his Savior, and be saved. You cannot make them believe anything else. If you would, you must first prove a change in God's method since Paul's time. He knew the truth, being taught it by revelation. He knew that God's foolishness is wiser than man, and that his weakness is stronger than man. Between God's wisdom and that of man exists a gulf of sin, degradation, rebellion and death. Since the building of Babel there have been many inventions to surmount this great barrier. But Jesus, the end of the law, says, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "I am the way, the truth and the life." "I am the door" into the sheep-fold. There is no other name under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. All who attempt to enter in any other way are thieves and robbers. Yes, they lay hold of what belongs to God alone, and rob God of his glory in salvation. The way sought out by man, to the natural mind seems just and right; but inspiration declares the end of this to be the ways of death. This is that broad way which ends in destruction. But the narrow way is Christ, and few there be that find it. If any come unto Christ, it is because God gave them to him; and they shall never perish. The way is plain to fools, who are made wise in the ways of God; but none of earth's wise can find the way. Dear brethren, if we have evidence that we are in the way, let us walk as children of the light.

GEORGE A. BRETZ.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan., 1884.

DEAR BRETHERN BEEBE:—Please allow me to say, through the SIGNS, to the many dear brethren, sisters and friends, (as I cannot write to them all personally), that in the providence of God I was permitted, according to former appointment, to meet with the church at 154 West 36th St., New York, on the fifth Sunday in December, when and where we enjoyed together the presence and favor of the Lord; at which time I was in my usual health; but on Sunday evening, as I went to Brooklyn to stay over night with brother George B. Hooton and family, I was taken violently ill, which proved to be typhoid pneumonia, from which I suffered much for several weeks, and was brought apparently near the door of death; but through sovereign mercy I was so far restored as to return to my family on the twenty-third of the present month. This, I hope, will explain to my brethren and friends among whom I have labored, why my regular appointments have not been filled as formerly. I feel also constrained to say,

to the honor of our good and faithful God, that my unreserved and unfeigned thanks are his due for providing for me so richly and bountifully at the house of our dear brother Hooton, where every tender care that kind and loving hearts and faithful hands could bestow on a poor, afflicted mortal, was cheerfully and readily ministered to me. And also be it said, to the credit and commendation of that body, or church, and its society and friends, that their kindness and liberality during my whole stay there has put me under the deepest obligations to them, and I can only desire that the good Lord, who alone can grant that blessing which maketh rich, may abundantly reward them by his grace, and give them of his fullness to receive, and grace for grace. Dear brethren, as it is seldom I write for our family paper, I wish to be expressly understood that it is not because of any lack of appreciation of its great worth in these days of darkness and error, which I believe to be very prevalent; for I do solemnly and truthfully believe and know that the blessed truth that its communications and editorials declare will live and bloom, while falsehood and the doctrines of men and devils wither and die. O may grace keep and preserve from every snare and trap this dear people, and finally glorify them in his presence.

Yours affectionately,
B. BUNDY.

SHREVEPORT, La., Jan. 8, 1884.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is truly with a degree of fear and trembling that I once more attempt to write to you and the dear family of our Father's household. The last time I wrote, which is not quite a year ago, I thought in all probability it would be my last effort; but thanks be unto the God and Father of all our blessings, I am not only spared, but greatly improved in health, far beyond my expectations, for which I desire to thank and praise his adorable name. When I look at my sinful nature, and see that I cannot perform one good act in and of myself, I feel ashamed to try to write to the dear saints scattered abroad. Knowing as I do that there are so many able writers who are capable of instructing, comforting and building up the dear children, I would not attempt to write in my weakness; but I feel such a desire to communicate with them once more, if, when you look at it, you deem it worthy its room. But you will know what to do with it.

If it is not love that causes me to write, I do not know what it is; for I do hope that I love the brethren. Sometimes, when under clouds, in darkness and gloom, this word, that has been a comfort to so many, has often cheered me; but unbelief, which appears to be the besetting sin of our nature, with Satan's suggestions, often tries to take that away from us, lest we should take courage, saying, Do we love them for Christ's sake? If we see one in error or going astray, will we go to him, admonish him in

love and meekness, pray with him and for him, before it should become public, and perhaps get into the church? I fear we are too remiss many times in this respect. But "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." Dear brethren and sisters, where did he find each one of us but in this wilderness of sin and wretchedness? And if he had not found us, we should never have found him. But his people are his purchased possession; for "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Nothing but love caused the ever-blessed Redeemer to bear the awfully dreadful agonies of Calvary and Gethsemane, when he poured out his soul unto death, causing the bloody sweat, and extorting the awful cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" A poet has said, "The sufferings of his soul were the soul of his sufferings." O that we could love him more, and prove our love by our obedience. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Now we know that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. He demands nothing of us but what he will enable us to perform, and gives such positive promises. "It shall be done unto him." And again, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." What an encouragement is here given us to pray! It is an exalted privilege and an imperative duty. We have the example of so many of God's beloved people in all ages of christianity, as well as the Old Testament saints; and our dear Redeemer prayed much, rising before day to pray sometimes, and one time we find that he prayed all night. And he so often admonished his disciples to pray. Sometimes we think that our prayers are not regarded, because we do not see it; but our Father knows what is best for us. Paul's thorn was not removed, but grace sufficient was given him. Moses did not go over into the land of Canaan, but God took him up into the better country. I have thought that our Father deals with his people as a mother does with her little ones. When they want something that is not good for them, she gives something else better; and if they have anything in their hands which is not safe for them, it is taken away, and something else put in the place thereof. No doubt but some of us have experienced something of this kindness of our Lord, for he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. Therefore we should "trust in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

"The Lord will ordain peace for us; he hath wrought all our works in us." Dear children of the kingdom, we may not expect to enjoy so much of the comfortable influences of the blessed Spirit while we live in disobedience; but when we have done all, we can only say, "We have only done what was our duty to do," for God worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

My age and infirmity admonish me that I am drawing near the brink of the river, and am only waiting the summons to depart; "for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." He does not say, If you will I will; for we are saved and called with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in him before the world began. May the Lord our God be with you all now and forever, to bless, sustain and guide you while here, and take you to himself at last, is the prayer of the unworthy writer.
MAHALA SPURGIN.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Jan. 18, 1884.

DEAR BROTHER KERCHEVAL:—I have just received the SIGNS for January 15th, 1884, and have read your kindly strictures upon my article "Immanuel," in the SIGNS for December 1st, 1883. Perhaps I was not as clear and definite as I should have been in the thing which you mention.

1st. The words, "This life is one life. In it is unity. It is also eternal life," &c., at the beginning of paragraph "8th" in the article, refer back to the words at the head of paragraph "7th," commencing, "Jesus is the eternal, spiritual life of his people." And I refer to "this life" again in the beginning of paragraph "8th." Looking up the article, you will see the connection. Furthermore, "This spiritual, eternal life was never demanded and was not laid down as the price of sin." Only the life that Adam possessed when he sinned could have been demanded or laid down. He had no other to lay down. And to lay down this, doomed him to eternal death. Pontius Pilate, Caiaphas and Roman soldiers could not take from Jesus his divine, spiritual life; but the nail and spear did take from Jesus his mortal life which he had assumed. Thus Jesus paid the price demanded of men on account of sin for his elect ones. That debt was paid on Calvary. His perfect union with his people in the flesh was fully manifested there. Now he arises a conqueror of death and every foe, and comes and lives in us with a new, eternal life; and this life is one. Here is our union with him and with each other in him in the Spirit. Perhaps we do not always see clearly the meaning of the word life. Reduced to its simplest meaning, it means to exist in such a way as to possess innate power to act. Trees, animals, men, angels, live. But eternal life means more than mere existence. It means holiness, conformity to the

will of God and all that is pure and heavenly. Holy things are eternal; unholy things are temporal. Holiness endures; unholiness perishes. Jesus gives his people eternal life; that is, he gives them holiness, perfectness. He is their righteousness, and therefore their life.

I know there are many mysteries in all divine things. At best we only see in part, and stammer out imperfectly what we see. May God give us light and a pure mind. You have not offended me, my brother. Why should I be? It is my brother who has written.

As ever, your brother in hope of life eternal,

F. A. CHICK.

DANSVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 20, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed please find post-office money-order for amount of my subscription to the SIGNS.

The reading of brother B. F. Hamilton's letter, in the SIGNS of the fifteenth instant, prompts me to write of the incident he refers to, of riding from Wayland depot to South Dansville in a lumber wagon to attend the Western New York Conference. I recollect the occasion very well, for I was at brother Patterson's when the load arrived. I arrived there an hour or two earlier, and found brother and sister Patterson in a very uncomfortable condition of doubt and uncertainty as to whether any brethren or ministers would come from abroad; and I was about to go on to the next brother's house to ascertain if any had arrived, when a visiting brother came in there on the same errand, with the news that none had arrived where he stopped. It was now dark, and things looked truly discouraging. Sister Patterson almost wept in disappointment, and we all sat bemoaning the condition of things, and trying to make the best we could out of the circumstances, until nearly nine o'clock, when we heard loud talking, and immediately a rap at the door, which was opened, exposing the glad countenance of Elder Durand, (if I have not forgotten,) followed by as happy a company as they found inside. The holders of the fort capitulated at once, for the besieging party outnumbered us four or five to one. Sister Patterson's heart was now as full of joy as it had been of grief, and her house was as full of happiness as it had been of foreboding disappointment. The Old School Baptists, I believe, are not noted for their strict observance of popular etiquette, and I fear the code was ignominiously ignored on that joyous occasion. Utter strangers were instantly transformed into brethren and sisters of like precious faith, recognizing the same gospel shibboleth.

That occasion lingers in my memory as one of the bright spots in my wanderings through life; and I have wondered many times whether it is not possible that this joy and happiness may after all be a fleshly production, ministering to our fleshly enjoyment. I had the pleasure of a visit from brother and sister Patterson while on

their tour in this state, and was much interested in their experience among the brethren in the far west.

Unworthily yours in gospel bonds and fellowship,

P. WEST.

I WILL state, brethren, that the SIGNS OF THE TIMES comes regularly to us, and is indeed a welcome visitor, and throughout the bounds of our association [South Louisiana,] the doctrine and faith set forth in the editorials, and also by the numerous contributors to its columns, are firmly maintained and advocated by our people.

W. M. PERKINS.

NOTICES.

1735 NORTH 7TH ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., }
Feb. 5, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The Salem Old School Baptist Church in Philadelphia hold their meetings at the northeast corner of Ninth and Spring Garden Streets, over the drug store, in the third story, entrance from Ninth Street. Elder Joseph L. Staton, now our pastor, preaches for us on the fifth Sunday of each month when they occur; and we expect to have preaching on the fourth Sunday of every intervening month after February. We also wish that if any of our ministering brethren are passing through and are going to remain over night in the city, they would let us know as long before their coming as they can, so that we may have meeting in the evening, if we can procure the room.

W. L. CRAVEN.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

I SHOULD like to have Elder W. J. Purington give his views on Revelation xi. 1, 2, if he has any light on the subject. The Jewish temple had its altar, and those who worshiped therein; but the outer court was given to the Gentiles. In this the outer court is given to the Gentiles, and the holy city is trodden under foot forty and two months.

Love to all the household of faith.

B. BRADBURY.

ABINGDON, Ill., Feb. 1, 1884.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

CORRESPONDENTS will please address me during the month of February and until the first Sunday in March, care of Wm. S. Montgomery, Social Circle, Georgia.

WM. M. SMOOT.

"THE EDITORIALS."
FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

We still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars, see advertisement on last page.

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We have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

AN APPEAL.

THERE has not been a time in several years when at the opening of a new volume there has been such a general tardiness of our subscribers in sending in their remittances. We know that the late severe weather, to some extent, is the cause of the delay; but now that it has become more settled, we entreat our patrons to make an especial effort to forward their subscriptions, as we have unusually large obligations to meet in a short time.

MAY TRUE CHRISTIANS BE FINALLY
LOST?

"G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I am a reader of your excellent paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I would like to have your views on Matthew xii. 31, 32, Hebrews vi. 4-6, and 1 John v. 16. I am no Methodist, but was raised by Predestinarian Baptist parents; but if these Scriptures do not prove a possibility of the true christian falling away and finally being lost in perdition, then I do not understand the English language. All the promises of God are on conditions of obedience. We are not rewarded for our obedience, but in the act of obedience. Now, I want light on the above perplexing subject. I surely believe that God knew all things from before the beginning of time. So, brethren, please explain.

From one saved by grace, if saved at all,
J. H. C.

LA PLATA Co., Colorado."

REPLY.

It is a pleasant duty to explain anything which may bewilder one who seeks for truth in regard to the grace of God as revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ; but we cannot claim to be able by our own skill to remove the stumbling-blocks which the adversary has placed in the path of any christian. Our inquiring friend is careful to disclaim the Methodist name, but that does not matter. The principle of truth involved in his query is that which concerns us in complying with his request. Other readers may be perplexed as he is; and it is our desire to write for their consideration as well as for his. Above all things it is important to know what is the real import of the passages cited, even though it should be manifest that the wisdom of all men is foolishness with God, as well as that the inquirer has failed to "understand the English language." With his view of the meaning of these passages, it is no wonder that the subject is perplexing to him, for his deductions from them would overthrow the whole testimony of the inspired Scriptures, and result in the conclusion that no sinner can be saved; and consequently that our Lord Jesus has failed to verify the prophecy of the angel of the Lord who announced his name to Joseph, "for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. If they are saved only in their own "act of obedience," then it is not "from their sins" at all. But Paul says, "This

is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—1 Timothy i. 15. The Lord says, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Matthew ix. 13. These passages will suffice to show that sinners are the subjects of divine grace, instead of the obedient, if any such were found among the children of men. Therefore our friend must be mistaken on this point. And as the whole revealed Scripture is given by inspiration of God, it must all witness the same truth. If our understanding fails to see its perfect harmony, the fault is not in the Scripture, but in our own blindness. Even if some expressions could be found to oppose the great truth of salvation by grace alone, instead of proving anything against that truth, it would impeach the testimony of the whole Bible, and leave us no hope of any salvation at all for sinners.

Having shown that neither these nor any other portions of Scripture can be correctly understood to conflict with the truth that all sinners who are saved by grace "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time," (1 Peter i. 5,) and that "none of them is lost," (John xvii. 12,) we will now briefly examine the passages on which our views are requested. To treat them at length, each passage would require more space than can be occupied now by this article.

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." The Lord Jesus here expressly declares that "all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." This is explained in the subsequent declaration as including all blasphemy against the Son of man. Of whatever form this may be, it shall be forgiven; but there is no forgiveness for him who speaks against the Holy Ghost. It is evident that this passage cannot teach that those who are cleansed from all sin by the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John i. 7) may yet be finally lost in consequence of speaking against the Holy Ghost. Such a possibility would destroy the comfort of every conscious sinner who feels that his only hope is in the sufficiency of that one offering of our Lord Jesus by which he has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.—Hebrews ix. 26. But in this perfect atonement all the sins of all his people were laid upon Jesus; and as he paid the awful penalty, it seems to us clear that in this sense all they whose sins he bore in his own body on the tree were perfectly healed by his stripes.—1 Peter ii. 24. Then, as the iniquity of all his sheep was laid on him, all their sin was against the Son of man as

their Shepherd. As he paid the dreadful debt due to infinite justice when he "gave himself for our sins," the sins of those for whom he died are against him as their Surety. All these sins and blasphemies are forgiven by his amazing grace. He has not only put away sin by his perfect sacrifice, but "Christ hath redeemed us [all for whom he died] from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."—Gal. iii. 13. Hence, those whom he redeemed are not under the law, but under grace.—Rom. vi. 14. This grace is manifest in the forgiveness of sins, which Christ is exalted to give to his own ransomed people. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."—Romans viii. 1, 2. The sin which was atoned for by the Son of man will never be laid to the charge of God's elect. He has buried it in the Red Sea of his precious blood, and freely forgives them for whom he died. All sin and blasphemy is against the Holy Ghost which is not covered by that atonement which is completed by Jesus Christ, the Son of man. There is no forgiveness for such sin or blasphemy, as "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," but the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.—1 Tim. ii. 5. As the Mediator he bore the sins of all his people in his own body when he died for our offenses; in that sense, therefore, all their sins were against him as their Surety. His blood cleanses them from all sin and blasphemy. The Son of man is the only Daysman, who is one with his people and one with God. No other advocate is accepted with the Father, who always hears him. We know of no other sense in which any sin can be against the Son of man in distinction from the Holy Ghost.

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."—Heb. vi. 4-6. This portion of the inspired record has been repeatedly discussed through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES both by the late editor and by many able correspondents. We shall therefore but briefly express the view of it which seems plain to our mind. In writing to those Hebrew saints who were familiar with the ritual of Judaism, the priesthood of Christ is presented in contrast with the typical priesthood of Aaron in the preceding chapters; and after the digression in this chapter the same subject is continued. Hence we understand this chapter as expressing evident truth, rather than the statement of new premises for argument. In the whole record of the gospel it

is clearly taught that the salvation revealed in Jesus is complete, and its subjects shall never perish. This is presented as a conclusive refutation of the theory that the saints may fall away, since the impossibility of their being renewed again to repentance would necessarily prove that they were then hopelessly lost, notwithstanding their redemption by the precious blood of Christ. This would contradict his own words as recorded John x. 28, 29, where he says, "They shall never perish." Indeed, such a possibility would destroy the whole truth of the gospel, and represent the sacrifice of Jesus as of no real value, and all his work of redemption as a stupendous failure. This is too monstrously absurd for argument; therefore it is not pursued by the inspired writer, who presents it as conclusive demonstration of the perfection of the atonement made by our great High Priest, in contrast with the ceremonial offerings under the law, which could not make the comers thereunto perfect.—Hebrews x. 1-18. That it was not designed to intimate that the saints might be finally lost, is clear from the subsequent expression. Under the legal dispensation, whose provisions were familiar to those Hebrew saints, there were perpetual sacrifices from time to time; but our High Priest has by one offering "perfected forever them that are sanctified." This finished salvation can never need to be repeated, for it is the work of God, and is therefore perfect. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him."—Ecc. iii. 14.

"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it." In this expression John was addressing those who believe on the name of the Son of God, "that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." Both the "any man" referred to, and his brother whom he sees "sin a sin not unto death," are included in the address cited in verse thirteen. The subject is practical instruction to these believers in regard to their mutual care for each other. As they are by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made free from the law of sin and death, he is not referring either to sin against that law or to the death which results from it. But those who are redeemed from the dominion and curse of that law are "not without law to God, but under the law to Christ;" and in that new law there is provision for the chastening of the disobedient by the rod of righteous judgment which he has ordained. In his law there is a distinction between such transgression as requires that the offender shall die, that is, that he shall be cut off from the fellowship of the church, and such transgressions as shall be the subject of labor and

prayer for the restoration of the sinning one. A brother may err from the truth, and yet he may be a proper subject for conversion from the error of his way, and when so converted he is saved from death. Not that he is saved from perishing in everlasting death by that conversion, but he is saved from that death to the fellowship of the saints which would have resulted from his continuing in his sinful course. Let it be observed that it is one of the brethren who errs, and is converted. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."—James v. 19, 20. This is a "sin not unto death." It is not some particular unrighteousness which constitutes this sin, but all manner of sins may be included in this instruction. Whatever the offense may be, when the Spirit of Christ gives the prayer for the offender, the assurance is that the Lord shall give in answer to that prayer "life for them that sin not unto death." If the spirit of prayer for a sinning brother is given to the church, there will be joy in the privilege of retaining him among the living in Jerusalem, that is, in the fellowship of the saints. Hence Paul writes, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."—Galatians vi. 1, 2. These burdens are the common trials of all the afflicted and poor people of God; and when one of them is overcome by the power of temptation, or drawn aside by the lusts of the flesh, they "which are spiritual" will feel to pray and labor for such a brother's restoration, in the spirit of meekness. If any brother feels to exult in the fault of another, and has no desire for him to be restored to life in the fellowship and love of the church, such a feeling indicates that he is himself not spiritual, but carnal. In that case he has need to ask for the Holy Spirit for himself, before he can be qualified to deal with the sinning brother.

The expression in the text should be carefully noted. It is not said that the sinning brother shall have life given to him, but "he shall give him [that is, *him that asks*] life for them that sin not unto death." This promise confirms the view presented of the text. The life (or standing in fellowship) of the sinning brother is given not to himself, but to them who ask in spiritual love and faith "for them that sin not unto death." Here is displayed that fervent charity which never faileth, and which "shall cover the multitude of sins."—1 Cor. xiii.; 1 Peter iv. 8. When the praying brother has received this gift of "life for them that sin not unto death," it will not be a grievous task to bear with such, but there will be a joy unknown before in the experience of forbearing love and pity for the

frailty of them that fall by the way; and instead of judging the erring one severely, he will look upon his sin with that charity which sees him as a suffering brother,

"Heir of the self-same heritage,
Child of the self-same God,
Who hath but stumbled in the path
He hath in weakness trod."

"There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it." Of this sin unto death, it will be inferred from the foregoing that we do not understand it to refer to the death which was visited upon the transgressor of that law under which all our race are condemned by the infinite justice of God. In that sense, every one that fails to fulfill in the least is guilty of the whole law, so that all men are condemned sinners before God. But under the law of Christ "there is a sin unto death." Presumptuous disregard for the commandments of our King in willful defiance of the law of his kingdom, manifests no love to his ordinances or to his church. For such as thus despise his authority there is no living union experienced by those saints who love the order of the church of Christ; and there can be no real prayer for the forgiveness of such sin against his law, whose fulfillment is love. The text does not enjoin when a man sees a brother (in profession) guilty of this sin, that he shall pray for it. Such sinners sin unto death. They are to be put away from the visible organization of the church, and no prayer can be indited by the Spirit of Christ for such sin. It is not required of the saints that they shall say formal prayers for the retention in their professed fellowship of those who give no evidence of love to the church and to her King. It may be that even a subject of the grace of God may so live after the flesh that he dies in this sense, there is no real fellowship felt for the church of Christ, and such do not "let brotherly love continue" to flow to them. The sin of such is unto death. The saints are not moved by the Spirit to pray for this sin. Such sinners should be put away from among the saints. With the question whether they are subjects of divine grace, the church has nothing to do. All that the saints can do is to judge their conduct. He who seeth in secret, alone can judge their hearts. If they are included among his redeemed they cannot be finally lost; but their works being burned, they shall be saved, yet so as by fire.—1 Cor. iii. 15. They are dead to the fellowship of the church and to all spiritual enjoyment and comfort; and the saints cannot pray for them in their sin, as they can and do pray for those who love the righteous law of the Lord Jesus, yet mourn the weakness of their own endeavors to walk in its precepts.

With deference to the understanding of our inquiring friend, this brief statement of our view of the texts cited is submitted, with the desire that the truth may be profitable to him and to every reader, and that nothing may be received as truth but that which is sustained by the record

of the inspired Scriptures. That testimony will endure when all error shall perish. May the Lord grant us all to know the truth, and thereby to be made free. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."—1 Tim. i. 17.

CAUTION.

THERE has of late sprung up throughout the country a new scheme for robbing publishers, under the head of "NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION AGENCIES," and we hereby caution our subscribers from paying any remittances to them for this paper. We have been much annoyed of late by their prowling among our subscribers collecting subscriptions, and after appropriating twenty-five per cent., forwarding us the balance. It would be better in remitting for this paper to either send the money direct to us, or pay it to some of our published agents. See third column of last page.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Numerous interruptions, unforeseen and unavoidable, still somewhat delay my completion of the Church History. I shall be obliged to have a few more weeks for the work. For many reasons, no one else can be so desirous as myself that the book should be finished. I believe that, unless hindered by unforeseen providences, I can send you the manuscript by the last of February.

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., Jan. 30, 1884.

WE are receiving numerous letters daily inquiring about the Church History, and censuring us for the delay in its publication. To all such we wish to say that we are as powerless to hurry the matter as they are, until we receive the manuscript. We have from time to time published the letters of brother Hassell, giving the reasons for the delay; and if there are any to whom they are not satisfactory, they must hold brother Hassell responsible, and not us. After we announce the work in press, it will take about three or four months to complete the book.—ED.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

We would call the attention of brethren throughout the country to the fact that we are prepared to print and distribute the Minutes of meetings as cheap and in as good style as any office in the United States. We frequently receive copies of Minutes printed by parties who do not belong to our order, and therefore have no idea of what is meant by the writers, and consequently frequent serious blunders are made. It costs but a trifle to forward the manuscript or return the printed Minutes by mail from any part of the country, and we therefore solicit our brethren to send us their Minutes for printing. We are but few, and our patronage should be kept within our own borders.

MARRIAGES.

At North Berwick, Maine, January 8, 1884, by Elder Wm. Quint, Mr. Herbert E. Staples, of North Berwick, and Miss Annie L. Winn, of York, Maine.

At North Berwick, Maine, January 21, 1884, by the same, Mr. Samuel B. Staples, and Miss Ida M. Ford, both of North Berwick, Maine.

At Black Rock Baptist meeting house, by Elder F. A. Chick, on Thursday, January 31, 1884, Mr. Wm. H. Kelly and Miss Annie T. Brooks, both of Baltimore Co., Md.

At the same time and place, by the same, Mr. Frank Brooks and Miss Bettie Bond, both of Baltimore Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In compliance with the request of the bereaved children, I now forward you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of our dear and beloved sister, **Elizabeth McClellen**, who departed this life October 4, 1883, aged 82 years, 11 months and 29 days. Our dear sister was baptized by Elder John Hutchinson, in the year 1827, in the fellowship of Providence Church, where she remained a worthy and consistent member until her death. She was truly one of the meek of the earth. Her life and general deportment, of peaceful and peaceable habits, together with her sincere love for the cause of truth, and her unflinching faith in the Lord, made her a bright light in the church, a worthy example of piety, and, in short, a pattern of godliness. She leaves behind her to mourn their loss, six children, who feel that they have lost a dear and loving mother, two of whom are partakers of the same grace. May the Lord sustain the sorrowing family, and may they be cheered and comforted in the sweet assurance that they mourn not as those who have no hope. And may the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich, be bestowed upon the church of which our dear sister was a member; and while he is so often pleased to call away our worthy and loved pillars, may he also give us grace to trust him in all our afflictions. She selected hymns 821 and 1205 (Beebe's Collection) to be read at her funeral; also the twenty-third Psalm to be used as the foundation on the occasion, from which the writer tried to speak, to a large assemblage of relatives and friends. The following hymn is requested to be published with this, on account of being expressive of the high esteem of their mother and friend.

"Mother, thou wast mild and lovely,
Gentle as the summer breeze,
Pleasant as the air of evening,
As it floats among the trees.

"Dearest mother, thou hast left us,
And our loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God that hath bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal.

"Peaceful be thy silent slumber,
Peaceful in the grave so low;
Thou no more wilt join our number,
Thou no more wilt sorrow know.

"Yet again we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is fled;
There in heaven with joy to greet thee,
Where no farewell tear is shed."

ALSO,

DIED—At her residence in Charlesville, Bedford Co., Pa., sister **Rebecca E. Hunt**, whose maiden name was McClellen. She was born November 1, 1830, and was, at the time of her death, aged 53 years, 1 month and 2 days. She was a worthy member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Providence for 23 years. She had a good experience, and left a comfortable evidence of being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. She was good to her neighbors, and always ready to lend a helping hand in time of need. She leaves a bereaved husband and two children to mourn their loss; but we trust they sorrow not as those who have no hope. May God bless the bereaved family and all her relatives, that they may say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The writer tried to talk upon the oc-

casional to a large and attentive congregation, after which her remains were laid in the tomb to await the resurrection morn.

The time is swiftly rolling on
When I must faint and die;
My body to the dust return,
And there forgotten lie.

Let persecutions rage around,
And antichrist appear;
My silent dust's beneath the ground,
There's no disturbance there.

My little children near my heart,
Which nature seems to bind,
It grieves me sorely to depart
And leave you here behind.

My loving husband, do not grieve,
Neither lament nor mourn;
For I shall with my Jesus be,
When you are left alone.

I cannot come to you again;
Let this not grieve your heart;
But shortly you shall come to me,
And never, never part.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,
A. CANFIELD.
RAINSBURG, Pa.

DIED—At her home near Marion, Iowa, December 8, 1883, sister **Dora Vandyke**, in the 23d year of her age. She was the daughter of Theodore and Sarah Vandyke. Her mother died in June, 1879, since which time she has been her father's sole housekeeper. Being very old and feeble, he required and received particular attention. Although she had been in very poor health for several years, her disease being consumption, yet she was confined to her bed only about three months before she died. She professed a hope in Christ and joined the Missionaries in Marion, and soon became dissatisfied with the doctrine they advocated. In January, 1880, she came before the Green's Grove Church, related her experience, was received by the church, and baptized by Elder J. M. True, who was then our pastor. She remained a faithful member of said church until her death. I never saw any one more attached to their meeting than was sister Dora. She had several miles to travel to get to meeting, and I know that she came many times to meeting when, had it not been for the grace of the heavenly Father, she could not have held her head off the pillow; but her faith was strong, and the weaker she grew in body, the brighter her faith loomed up. She was never tired of telling of the great goodness of God, and his mercy to her. I saw her and talked with her just two days before her death, and she said, if her heavenly Father saw fit to call her to him, what a happy release it would be for her. But she prayed for strength to bear her sufferings patiently until the Lord's appointed time. Before I left her she told who she wished to preach her funeral, and asked me to sing for her the 1247th and the 1014th hymns of Beebe's Collection, and then gave me her hymn books for the use of the church. The day she died she was very bad all day, and did not talk much. The last words she said, were, "O blessed Jesus!" and in a moment was gone without a struggle. O how sweet she looked in death; more sweet than in life, if that could be. As she fell asleep in Jesus she closed her eyes and mouth, and O what a sweet smile was on her face, as if she saw the gates of the New Jerusalem open to receive her spirit. It seems to me as if I could write all night, and then not tell half I wish to. She was one of my dearest friends. No one knows how much I miss her, and in the church is a vacancy that will not soon be filled. But the Lord called her, and she had to obey the summons. We wish to be resigned to his will; who doeth all things well, and after the counsel of his own will. Her funeral was preached at our December meeting by E. H. Gillett, assisted by Elder S. L. Dark, both of Illinois, and Elder T. Gill, of Fayette Co., Iowa.

MARTHA GOTT.

MARION, Iowa, Jan. 29, 1884.

WITH a sad heart I am called upon to announce the death of our dear sister, **Frances K. Darnall**, who died on the 26 of last May, at Hutchison, Kansas. The following is

clipped from the Fairburg, Illinois, *Independent Blade*, in the issue following that date:

"The death of Mrs. Darnall resulted from an operation performed for the removal of an ovarian tumor, which had been growing for ten years. About six weeks ago, she, in company with her husband, went to Hutchison, Kansas, where they have been stopping with the lady's sister, Mrs. Dr. Robertson, formerly of this city. She realized that sooner or later her affliction must result in death, if allowed to progress, and at her solicitation a consultation was held in Hutchison by a dozen or so of physicians, among whom were Dr. Borck, the noted St. Louis specialist, Dr. S. M. Barnes of this city, and Dr. Robertson of Hutchison, and it was decided to perform the operation. The tumor was removed, and the patient rapidly recovered for about twenty-four hours, when she began sinking, and finally breathed her last. Her remains, accompanied by her bereaved husband, Dr. Robertson and wife, and Mrs. Fowler, arrived in this city Tuesday morning, and the funeral took place, with appropriate ceremonies, from her late residence at two o'clock of the same day, a large number of people being in attendance.

"Mrs. Frances K. Darnall was born in Bourbon Co., Ky., March 22, 1819, making her age at the time of her death a little over 64 years. At ten years of age her parents moved to Boone Co., where she resided until her marriage with Lewis Cummins, of Bourbon Co., in 1848. His death occurred in 1851. She returned to the parental roof, and having lost her father in 1850 she at once became the main prop to her mother in her declining years, which position she occupied at the time of her death. In 1856 she removed to this state with her mother, and after a widowhood of twenty-eight years married V. M. Darnall, less than four years ago. She joined the Old School Baptist Church at Sardinia, Boone Co., Ky., in early life, and was an earnest and consistent member at the time of her death, embracing a period of nearly forty years."

N. E. SMITH.

ELLSWORTH, Illinois.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—With much sorrow I send you the obituary of my dear child for publication in the SIGNS. My only daughter, **Sallie N. Taylor**, wife of Mahlon R. Taylor, of Loudoun Co., Va., was taken sick April 5, and died April 11, 1883. She had been in poor health for several years, but kept about most of the time. She took a heavy cold, and the doctor pronounced her disease inflammation of the stomach. Her funeral was preached by our much beloved pastor, Elder J. N. Badger, on the fourth Sunday in April, at Mt. Zion meeting house, where she was buried. She has left a husband and two children, (a son and daughter), at the age they most need a mother's care. She was the daughter of Basal Cole and Rebecca C. Lynn, and granddaughter of Joseph R. Lynn, deceased. His name will be remembered by many Old Baptists. His wife was Sarah A. Nelson. His house was a home for the Old Baptists in Prince Wm. Co., Va., his birthplace. My dear child was born June 6, 1843, and died April 11, 1883. She was married Nov. 18, 1868. She has left six brothers and six sisters-in-law, with many near and dear relatives to mourn her untimely end. When asked if she was willing to die, she said she was afraid she was not fit, but if it was the Lord's will she must go. She loved the Old Baptists, and I hope she is gone to rest. I feel the loss greatly. I am in my seventy-first year, and cannot remain long here.

Dearest Sallie, thou hast left us,
And our loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God that has bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal.

Yet again we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is fled,
Then in heaven we hope to greet thee,
Where no farewell tear is shed.

R. C. COLE.

NEAR MOUNTVILLE, Loudoun Co., Va.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—BELOVED BRETHREN:—With a very lonely feeling I take my pen to write a notice of the death of **Mrs. Catharine Miller**, my sister in the flesh, and, I hope, in

Spirit. She departed this life November 29, 1883, at 4 o'clock a. m. She was born August 20, 1807, in the state of Virginia, and was raised in Cumberland Co., Ky. In her youthful days it pleased the Lord to make his love known to her in the pardon of her sins, and she was baptized by Elder George Mainard, in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ. I do not remember the name or date, as I did not live in that state. She ever adorned the profession she had made. She was a good wife, a kind mother and a good and kind neighbor. I have often thought that she opened her mouth with wisdom, and her tongue was the law of kindness. She and her husband were very feeble, so that they were not able to keep house, but lived with J. B. Dawson, Colfax Co., New Mexico. All that could be done for her was done by him and his wife, Lavina Dawson. She leaves her aged husband, (with whom she lived fifty-eight years), two sons, (one in Texas and one in Colorado), one sister, and myself to mourn; but we believe it is her eternal gain, and I feel to say with Eli, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." She only lived six days after being confined to her bed. I pray the Lord that my end may be as well as I believe hers was.
LUANN DAWSON.

Margaret Louvenla Stricklin, wife of W. G. Stricklin, departed this life January 3, 1884, after a short illness. Her friends and relatives, after waiting upon her until they thought she was better, retired for about fifteen minutes to partake of refreshments, and on their return were surprised to find her in the icy hand of death. Her age was 24 years, 7 months and 21 days. She had been a member of the Methodists, Presbyterians and Missionary Baptists. After hearing the first Primitive Baptist sermon preached in her hearing, she said to her husband, "They are my people. I have heard preached to-day what I have ever believed." On the first opportunity after this she related her christian experience, and became a member of the Primitive or Old School Baptist Church, and endeavored to live and walk in obedience to the commands of our Lord and Savior. She leaves a husband, one little babe, and many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope; for we believe our loss is her eternal gain. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." The writer attended the funeral, and tried to make a few remarks from Job xiv. 14.

WM. A. STRICKLIN.

YAZOO CITY, Miss.

OUR esteemed and highly beloved brother, **Deacon Benjamin Lewis**, of Lucas Co., Iowa, departed this life January 22, 1884, aged 53 years. His disease was paralysis. He had been a member of the Otter Creek Church of Old School Baptists for seventeen years, and for the last ten years served the church as deacon. His wife was a daughter of Elder John Parker, of Ohio. His funeral was preached at his late residence by the writer, to a large congregation, after which his remains were interred in the cemetery at Last Chance, Lucas Co., Iowa. It can be truthfully said that he died in the full triumph of faith. We pray God to bless the bereaved family with every needed grace, as well as the church of which he was a member. He was a kind husband and tender father, and was beloved by all who knew him. Truly a great man in Israel is fallen.

Yours in love,

WM. MORPHEW.

WOODBURN, Clark Co., Iowa.

BROTHER **Richard Peters** died Nov. 9, 1883, aged 67 years, 3 months and 16 days. He had been troubled with asthma for more than forty years. He professed a hope in Christ when young, and united with the Baptist Church in Harpersfield, Delaware Co., N. Y., and was baptized by Elder Manning Howard. He was a strong advocate of the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. He was born in Harpersfield, July 20, 1816.

A. MCLEAN.

PENFIELD, Ohio.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1884.

NO. 5.

POETRY.

THE LOWLY WAY.

CHOOSE thou the quiet, lowly way,
Which the Redeemer trod;
Where, sheltered from the glare of day,
The humble walk with God.

While terror stalks along the way,
In every awful storm,
The christian lifts his trusting eye
To him who rules the storm.

The hand that curbs the tempest's rage,
That calms the swelling sea,
His Father's hand, from age to age,
The christian's trust shall be.

SUPPLICATION.

LORD, send thy smiling beams of grace
Into my wearied soul,
That I may have thy glorious peace,
My heart to thee unfold.

Long have I seemed to wander, Lord,
Far from thy lovely way;
In Satan's dark, benighted road,
To wander and to stray.

Ofttimes I'm filled with doubts and fears;
Ofttimes I'm made to mourn;
Mine eyes are often filled with tears,
When my dear Savior's gone.

I mourn thine absence, dearest Lord;
O! when wilt thou return,
That I may feast upon thy word,
Thy love within me burn?

Come thou! O dearest Jesus, come!
And fill my soul with light,
That I may here no longer roam
In Satan's dreadful night.

A. B. AMASON.

SHONGELO, Miss., Oct. 25, 1883.

A SONG OF PRAISE.

'Tis sweet to sing and praise
The Lamb who once was slain;
With rapturous joy our song we raise,
With those who're born again.

'Tis sweet for those who are
The subjects of his grace
To sing sweet praises from the heart,
And see his smiling face.

'Tis sweet to sit and hear
His glorious word proclaimed
To those who have a heart to fear,
To those who are redeemed.

'Tis sweet to know he comes
By his almighty power,
And comforts all the little ones
In every trying hour.

'Tis sweet to hear his voice
When Satan binds us low;
It makes the inner man rejoice,
And lets the captive go.

'Tis sweet to know and love
Our Father's holy name,
That we may look with joy above,
And follow in his train.

'Tis sweet to have his grace
When times of trouble come,
And look to him alone for peace,
For he is God alone.

'Tis sweet to hope and wait;
'Tis sweet to love and fear;
'Tis sweet to know the way is strait;
'Tis sweet to have it here.

A. B. AMASON.

SHONGELO, Miss., Oct. 25, 1883.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DENYING THE LORD.

(Matthew x. 32; Luke xii. 8, 9.)

DEAR BRETHREN:—A short time since, in a letter, a sister asked me a question concerning these words, and since then they have rested almost continuously upon my mind, with a sense of solemn admonition and warning. The same language is recorded by both the evangelists, Matthew and Luke, as referred to above; and in the record made by both, to deny the Savior is put in opposition to confessing him before men. If, therefore, we can know what it is to confess him, we shall also know what it is to deny him. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, the Ruler of heaven and earth, the Savior and the Example. To confess him meant to acknowledge these claims of his, and to bow to him and do him reverence. And this was not only a lip confession, but such an acknowledgment of him as would proceed out of hearts fully and graciously convinced that he was all that he claimed to be. And according to the Savior's words, this confession of him was not only to be of the heart and in the heart, but a public outspoken one before men. "Whosoever shall confess me before men." Christians are to be a "city set upon a hill." Their light is not to be hidden under a bushel. They are not to shut themselves up in cells, like monks and nuns, but are to show their colors everywhere. This is to confess the Lord. On the opposite side, to deny the Lord is to fail to confess him. To do this it is not essential to be an avowed infidel or Jew, or to even say, like Peter, "I know him not." We deny the Lord when we are silent concerning him. Suppose a man were on trial, (and Jesus Christ is always on trial before Roman officer and high priest,) and the judge should say, "If any man know any cause why he should not be condemned, or if any man has received benefit at his hands, or if any man know any good of him, let him speak; and you or I do know all that is good of him, and yet we stand by and say nothing, we have grievously and shamefully denied him, and are responsible for his condemnation. Thus, when Paul stood at the bar of Roman justice on trial for his life, when not one man stood with him, his brethren by their absence and silence denied that he was their brother, or had any interest in him. Paul seems to have forgiven and loved them still, for he knew their weakness, and the fearful danger which they sought to avoid. This,

then, is the meaning of the word "denial." Let us pause and consider it well.

But is there any danger that a disciple, a christian man, will ever deny his Lord? The world always hates him. It has a place of rest for foxes and birds, for vipers and vultures, but none for the Son of man. The world always denies Jesus, and of it Jesus will say, "I never knew you." But is it possible that a child of God, an heir of heaven, a joint heir with Jesus, will ever deny him? Let us ask the first stranger we meet about it, perhaps a visitant from another world. Let us tell him about this man. He was made upright. Once he enjoyed the favor of God. Jehovah walked and talked with him. He set upon him marks of distinguishing favor. But this man, moved with perverseness, sinned against the God who had so crowned his life with blessings. This man became filled with hatred and envy against his Maker, and even went to the length of calling himself more just than God and more pure than his Maker. Thus he corrupted his way; but the love and compassion of God did not fail. And God so loved him, even in his guilt and shame, that he gave his own and only begotten Son that this man might be redeemed from death, and then shed forth in his heart the Holy Spirit to guide and comfort him all his days; and besides, had promised him an everlasting home in regions of blessedness. Now ask this stranger could this man ever deny and refuse to love, honor and serve so good a God and Savior; and surely he would be amazed at the thought. Yea, once we ourselves would have been astonished indeed if we could have been told that such would ever be the case with us. In our first love we were ready to say, with Peter, "I will never deny thee;" "though all men deny thee, yet will not I." And we meant what we said; and so did Peter also.

"Jesus, and can it ever be
That I shall be ashamed of thee?"

was the impulsive language of our heart; and we were astonished, and disposed to seriously question their christianity entirely, when we saw any who faltered by the way. O, I like to see this warm, single-hearted enthusiasm of the young believer. But he has some lessons to learn yet. Will he be as steadfast and as zealous when these lessons are learned?

If we turn to the connection of the texts named at the head of this article, we shall learn why the Savior intimated that his disciples might deny him. He tells them about the

"sheep among wolves," about councils and scourgings and synagogues and kings and rulers and governors who shall be their enemies, and before whom they should be brought. He tells them of foes in their own households, of the enmity of brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, and of dearest ties sundered and broken. He tells them of hatred and persecutions, of sorrow and death, and that they must follow in the blood-marked path which he trod, and feel the pressure of the thorns which pierced his brow. It was not to be all sunshine. No disciple of Jesus, in the midst of the conflict, could ever lift up his head and say, "Jesus, Master, thou didst deceive me." He summed up the cost, and warned them of it. Yet, when it came, how hard to bear! No wonder if many a timid heart shrank from the ordeal. But Jesus could foresee and pity and provide for even their weakness, and so he speaks a word of encouragement: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father"—before his angels. And a word of warning: "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father"—before his angels. Looking at this dark side, we ask, Who will, who can be his disciple? Who can venture to confess him? Taking both sides together, we can see where the conflict which every believer feels within arises. Our flesh and the powers of darkness on the one side; the spirit of love, joy, gratitude, and the victorious power of heaven, upon the other. The same conflict assailed our Master in the garden. On the one side we hear the cry of agony, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" on the other, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." O how well he knows our conflicts! O for the victory which he gained, to abide with us and put our foes to flight! In the early persecutions of the people of God, at one time fifty of them were condemned to death. The executioner entered the inclosure where they were imprisoned—old men, young men, old women, young women, some mere children—and led them one by one to the place of execution, in full view of the rest; and just binding a cloth over their eyes, he cut their throats one after the other. The old, it is narrated, went unflinchingly to their fate; but the young wept, and were timid, but still would not accept deliverance at the price of denying their Lord. There have been thousands of such victories of faith. Jesus speaks words of encourage-

ment calculated to cheer the faltering. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before God and his angels." "I will stand by that one he means. If he be scorned and shamed and mocked of men, so have I been. If he shall endure confessing me, on the other hand he shall be comforted. If men dishonor him and reproach him, I will honor and praise him." And which does that disciple love best, the praise of men or the praise of God? Jesus also gives solemn admonition to warn, as well as the word of encouragement. "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before God and the angels." Can we expect that it should be otherwise? Can we deceive the Master by appearances? Can we say to men, "I know him not," and to him at the same time, "I am thy disciple, and thou art my Lord?" And when we say, "We are not thine, and thou art not our Lord," can we hear him say to us the opposite? It is true in all our daily experience, that we are cut off from him when we deny him before men. Has ever a christian yet been able to feel, "He is mine, and he loves me, and says before God, This is my disciple," when at the same time he was denying this Savior before men? There may be questions asked about this language of our Savior, about what it means, and how it is true, and how it can harmonize with other Scriptures; but whether they can be answered or no, the awful fact stands out as a matter of my life experience, that if I deny him, I know he denies me before God, so that I can come to God no more and call him Father and Friend. And this I should know if gospel or epistle said nothing at all about it. These words of Jesus meet my life as I live it out day by day. And so do the opposite words, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before God."

But have these words any reference to the future world? Does Jesus mean that there he will confess or deny us, according as we confess or deny him here? The doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints is sweetly and gloriously true, and at times I can rejoice in it with great joy. But how can I believe that Jesus will confess me there, when I feel that he denies me now? I want, I need a present Savior. I want to feel that he confesses me now, and then my whole soul can rejoice in the hope, the assurance that he will always confess me. I cannot say that I ever doubt the doctrine that Jesus loves and saves his own even to the end, and that in spite of their denials of him; but this can do me no good when I feel that I have denied him and am denied of him. I at once feel to say, All these things are true of the saints, but they cannot be true of me. I am shut out of the comfort of the doctrine now. My Lord denies me now. If I am hungry now, of what avail is it to tell me that there is a certainty of provision at the end of the journey? I want bread now, and day by day I want it. I am lonely and afraid; of what avail to

tell me that at the end I shall have a friend? I want a friend to-day; and the only pledge that I can have of the future is the present. If Jesus denies me now, I cannot feel that he will ever confess me. If he confesses me now, I can look upon the future without the shadow of a fear. Jesus spoke to our daily need. Heaven is not an abstract thought, a place far distant. Hell is not a remote possibility. Here is heaven. Here is hell. I know that they exist, both the one and the other. If Jesus confesses me, it is heaven; if Jesus denies me, what is it but hell? There is a heaven and hell beyond, it is true, but they are not real to me unless I know them here. Jesus talks to us of this present life. He reproves us for present faults, and comforts us in present sorrows. Confessing or denying him is in this present life. Confessing and denying us is equally an experience of our present life. And whether here or hereafter, he will deny no one who confesses him; he will confess no one who denies him. Man's sin shuts him out from God in time and in eternity; but whosoever loves God, whether in this world or that, shall go out no more forever.

Is there then change with God? No more than there is in the sun that shines above us. All the changes are in the atmosphere of this world—in us. The sun shines upon our face and lightens it. If our face be turned away, the shadow there argues no change in the sun, but in us. Confessing him, we feel his favor; but denying him, we have turned away from his favor. Yet he is the same beneficent Sun of righteousness, pouring down his beams of sanctifying light and heat. Change, plenty of change in us there is, but none in God. And this, too, is not merely a Bible doctrine, but we have proved it. After the longest absences from him, groping in our darkness and groveling in the dust of earth, when we have returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls have we seen any change? We know that he has not changed; and the line that is straight in three points must continue so to the end.

How may I deny my Lord? We all have need to ask that question. Have you and I ever said, "I would have done better than Peter—I have done better?" Then you and I have not known ourselves. Perhaps you and I have not said in so many words, "I know not the man," and then enforced our denial with oaths; yet what have we done? Let us see. Did I not hear his name reproached and taken in vain and made light of by my companions the other day, and did I speak a word in his praise? Did not his enemies give another blow to the cruel nail that pierced him because I was silent? Was I not guilty of denying him before men? Or, was I not found in the bar-room with besotted, profane men, and did I by my very manner say I am a follower of Jesus, or did I not so act that no one would think of calling me by his sacred name? Was not that denying him? Did I not spend

precious time the other day in foolish talking and jesting, and did my words sound like the sober speech of a christian? Was I not then throwing off the yoke of Jesus, and denying his claim to my every word? Did I not the other day speak and feel enviously and ungenerously of a brother, and did I not magnify his faults in my own heart and before others? Was this following Jesus? Was it not denying him? I have professed to owe all to him, my life, my time, my whole self, and all I have; have I not been denying him by keeping back part? Have I laid all upon his altar? Did I make the effort that I should to assemble the other day with his people for his worship? Which did I appear to love most, the world or his disciples, my business or the business of his kingdom, my earthly home or my heavenly home? Did I not deny him grievously when I heeded not his command, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together?" Have I not denied many a claim of his upon my time, my strength, and my means? There were some of his poor, and I shut up my heart against them, though I saw their need; and now I remember he said, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me." I made no inquiry about the wants of him who broke the bread of life to me, and now I remember that the Lord has told us, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn;" and I fear that I have denied the Lord in this also. Is there anything in which I have not denied him? Must I not say, Forgive the past, and cleanse me now, and help me for the future? For one, brethren, I must plead guilty to every one of the counts in this indictment. Jesus demands all, and what have I given him? What have I not withheld? As a minister have I not denied him? Have I not neglected my calling? Have I given myself to the work to which he has called me? Have I not squandered time? Have I been instant in season and out of season? Have I given as freely as I have received? Have I been faithful to visit the poor, the sick, the needy, the afflicted, the mourner, and to preach the word faithfully, to reprove, rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine? Am I clear of my brother's blood—of the blood of all men? I have come short, I have failed, and herein I have denied my Lord. These are personal reflections of mine; perhaps they may meet the case of some other.

And "him will I also deny before my Father." I always feel that this is true when I am guilty. Now it seems to me that Jesus has presented the case in this way. "I have told you of great trials that are before you. A faithful walk in obedience to me will bring all these things upon you. They will have a tendency to discourage you, but I set before you a large reward. All these things, with my favor, are infinitely better than peace and ease in the world without me." And in this also Jesus

speaks to experience. We know that this is true. O that this truth may be written upon our hearts and abide there all our days!

Whether any shall be benefited by these reflections, is as the Lord will. One thing I know, that the writing of them has been profitable to me. I have had a solemnity of feeling in writing that I could wish might abide with me still. May God bless his truth to us all.

As ever, your brother in hope,
F. A. CHICK.
REISTERSTOWN, Md., Jan. 17, 1884.

VARNA, Ill., Jan. 30, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The SIGNS OF THE TIMES still comes to us laden with gospel truth, in which the writers see eye to eye, as near as it is possible in our imperfect state in the flesh, where we see only in part and know in part, and at best is as looking through a glass darkly. Language is imperfect, and writers and speakers are not always able to select words that will exactly convey their ideas; and sometimes the language used is misunderstood, and is made to convey something which the writer did not mean or design, and thus a controversy springs up between two who see alike if they understood each other. And sometimes brethren may differ by viewing a thing from different standpoints. For instance, Jesus is "the Root and the Offspring of David." Now, one brother writes a good communication from the standpoint that he is the "Offspring of David," "which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Another brother views him as the "Root of David," and also writes a good letter, but takes some exceptions to the views of the first brother. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Thus we see that there may be a seeming difference, when in reality there is no difference; for each believes he is God, Man and Mediator.

Again, on the subject in John v. 7, one brother views the Godhead as one in three, and another believes it is three in one; yet both believe in the one true and living God. And in bearing record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, these three are one. Here I am inclined to think the difference is more technical than real. I am led to believe that we ought to be very careful in examining each other's views; and when there is a real difference in views, we should handle them in a brotherly way. "A man is not crowned unless he strives lawfully;" and that law is the law of love.

The purpose for which I took up my pen is to examine the letter of brother Rittenhouse, in SIGNS No. 2, page 18. Here I believe is a real difference in views, and I presume that brother Rittenhouse will not be surprised, for he wrote for the "exam-

ination and criticism of your readers, and is "willing it should rest on its own merits." It is certainly a little new to some of the Old Baptists to regard the account of the pool of Bethesda "as a deception and mere tradition." They generally regard all Scripture given by inspiration of God as profitable. Whether we all understand it or not, it is all profitable to some one. It is all understood by the church entire. But if this pool was a deception, I fail to see any profit in it.

Now, brother Rittenhouse, by his position, has a dilemma with two horns. First, the narration given of the pool is true. Second, it is not true. First, it is true, being written by an inspired man; therefore it is infallible, not invalidated because none of the other New Testament writers have said anything about it. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." But shall we require this in a man who speaks as he was moved by the Holy Ghost? I will dwell on this part no longer, as brother Rittenhouse has already committed himself to the second, viz., it is not true. But John did not know it, for he gives "an apparently candid statement of it as a fact." If John knew that it was a mere tradition, and failed to so record it, then we impeach him as an inspired writer.

But I will proceed to give my views of the pool, and the lesson designed to be taught by it. It is over twenty-five years since I was brought to believe the Scriptures; and although there is much that I do not understand the true meaning of, yet I believe they are so guarded by infinite wisdom that not an idle word or useless narration is given. I believe this is designed to teach us the superiority and power of gospel blessing over the blessing in the law; or, in other words, the pool with its attendant circumstances represent the law in another similitude from the temple service, and the man who had lain there thirty and eight years represents a gospel subject. In Jesus Christ the blessings are not yea and nay, but in him are yea and amen. No condemnation in the gospel. In order to contrast the two fairly, we would need the law in similitude different from the Mosaic ritual, that is, divested of its nay; and here we have it in the pool. In the Mosaic economy there was blessing in obedience, and chastisement for disobedience; and in the pool there was a blessing for the one that could meet the conditions, that is, get into the water first after the troubling by an angel. But there was no chastisement for not doing so. Anything that can confer blessings for obedience must be a law, or represent a law. But let us turn to the poor man that has lain so long, being too weak to meet the requirement or conditions; too weak to walk, and having no kind friend to help him. Still he lays there, expecting that some time he will be benefited by the healing power with which the water is invested. He knows of no other way, neither does

any one in his condition till Jesus comes. Then in his extremity comes the meek, the lowly, the loving Jesus. There, reader, is yourself, if you have ever been toiling at the law, expecting healing or justification by it. Although Jesus healed him, yet he knew not that it was the Savior till he appeared the second time, and made himself known. So it is with every poor, sin-sick soul. Brother Rittenhouse says, "I doubt whether this pool business ended with Bethesda and the palmy days of Jewish piety." So do I; but it is not carried on in the wild hallucinations of modern religionists, in their blasphemous assumptions of converting souls; but the poor, sin-sick one, who is too weak to comply with any conditions, is the one that is at the "pool business." Such might sing,

"Beside the gospel pool,
Appointed for the poor,
From time to time my helpless soul
Has waited for a cure."

But when Jesus has appeared the second time, and made himself known to him, he no longer needs that hymn, for such know that the blessings and power of the gospel come not through the pool. All know for themselves how long they lay there, and how sorrowful they felt at heart when they saw that all their efforts failed, and the law could not help them, for they could not comply with the terms; like the man that journeyed from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and left him half dead. By chance a priest and Levite came that way, but they passed by on the other side. No, the law could not help him; but here comes another, the good Samaritan, just in the right time to save him. He must represent a gospel subject, and the good Samaritan must represent the blessed Savior, who never gets there too late. How beautifully this represents the Lord's people in their last extremity, when they have tried every effort they know to try, and feel that they must perish. They will seek some lonely place and try to offer one more prayer, feeling that they have done all they can do, and have come to the end of their works. They throw themselves on the mercy of God. "If I perish, I perish." Then comes Jesus in all his loveliness, in all his fullness, and is just what the poor one needs. He pours in oil and wine, sets him on his own beast, and takes him to a place of rest. Now he has the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, is clothed with the garment of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness.

Again, how beautifully fitting is Bethesda to us Gentiles, as the law never was given to the Gentiles. Yet every Gentile, as well as Jew, who feels the need of justification, expects it by legal works, for it is natural. Yet no Gentile ever presumes to perform the ritual of Moses, but thinks that somehow the work of God, in conjunction with his own works, will bring the desired effect. This the pool represents, in the troubling of the water by the angel, and the step-

ping in after. Although the water only healed bodily infirmity, and the law only gave temporal blessings, yet mankind ever expects something that is not there. "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life," said the Savior to the Jews. Every one expects eternal life from some good work, till Jesus comes and breaks the sad delusion. Here, then, is the superiority of gospel blessings; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. I believe the man at the pool received salvation, as well as bodily healing. But the Gentiles, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; and that law is that God by his Spirit strives with man, (troubles the water,) and offers salvation, and whosoever will (step in) accept the overtures of mercy will be saved. This is about the universal belief of mankind in a state of nature, believing themselves to be under a covenant of works, but without any text of law to seemingly warrant such a belief.

I will close, submitting the above thoughts to you, brethren Beebe, to dispose of as you think best.

Yours in love of the truth,

JOHN DOWNEY.

GHEAT, Ky., Dec. 17, 1883.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Sister Eva L. Corbin, of Williams, Iowa, has requested some of my feeble thoughts for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Isaiah xl. 1, 2: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

This language emanates from on high. It was spoken by the God of the universe, the Redeemer of his people, and was applied to a certain people. It was applied to spiritual Jerusalem, to that Jerusalem which cometh down from God out of heaven. Her children are born of God, born from above; hence, in their spiritual birth, they come down from God out of heaven. That address was not to that Jerusalem which then was, and was in bondage with her children. Her warfare was not accomplished, nor were her sins pardoned. Her sorrows, afflictions and final overthrow were in the future, when that day should come spoken of by the prophet Malachi, who said, "Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." It was that day of which our Lord spake when he said to the unbelieving Jews, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." That spiritual Jerusalem was not left desolate. Her God commanded that she should be comforted. He did not leave the grounds on which her comfort was to rest vague, indefinite, and a matter of speculation and conjecture. He said, "Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her

iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The prophet beheld in prophetic vision that period when the Messenger of the covenant should suddenly come to his temple, and the great work which he should accomplish when he had come clothed with that body which was prepared him. But he speaks in the present tense: "Her warfare is accomplished." When we remember that it is declared that he was a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, we can readily understand why the prophet used the present tense. Isaiah, when prophesying of that great work which was before him, uses this language, employing the present tense: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." He says again, "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." He says again, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." The law proclaims, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." But he being the head of that spiritual Jerusalem, his people, his church, he justified them, because he bore their iniquities in his own glorious body. Then we can comprehend the apostle's meaning when speaking of what his Lord was made unto his people. He says, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." If he bore their iniquities, and was made unto them redemption, surely they stand justified before the eternal Father. If justified, they are also glorified. The apostle says, "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Thus we begin to see how her warfare is accomplished. If a man is brought into court on a plea of debt, and it appears from the proof in the case that his debt has been voluntarily paid by another, his warfare in that case is accomplished, and he stands justified before the court. That spiritual Jerusalem, the bride, the Lamb's wife, was in debt ten thousand talents, and had nothing to pay; but her glorious Head and Husband, moved by that eternal and immutable love which he bears toward her, came forward and paid that debt, and satisfied the law in all its jots and tittles in her behalf. But she who was in prison is now made free, yea, free indeed. The prophet

Zechariah says, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." Isaiah says, "For she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." And the Lord by the prophet Zechariah says, "Even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." The very great ignorance of the feeble writer of these rambling thoughts may cause him to offer that which others may deem error upon the meaning of the word "double," as used by the prophets in these two quotations. Perhaps but few will doubt that the offering made by our Redeemer was vicarious. If it was vicarious, it was in the room and stead of his people. But when he fulfilled the law, which they had violated, in their room and stead, it only restored them to their primitive state in which they existed prior to their violation of the law, and would not secure to them the inheritance of the saints. The apostle says, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." And to the church at Ephesus he says, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And Peter says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Peter was addressing the saints scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, &c., and he says they were begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He had suffered on Calvary, and by his stripes they were healed; but now he has risen from the tomb, and brought life and immortality to light. The apostle says, "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Again, he says, "Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." Our Lord said at the grave of Lazarus, "I am the resurrection and the life." By his resurrection that immortality was made manifest. Before his crucifixion he was mortal, was subject to death. He says, "I lay down my life for the sheep." "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." None other in the vast universe had power to take up his life when once laid down but the Son of God, and he had that power because he hath immortality. His resurrection secured the resurrection of the whole redeemed family, and in their resurrection they are made immortal. The apostle says, This mortal shall put on immortality, and this

corruptible shall put on incorruption. While they were mortal they were corruptible, but in the resurrection they are made both immortal and incorruptible; then they will be like their glorious Lord. The apostle John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." See him as the triumphant conqueror over death, hell and the grave. Now, dear saints, you are one with your glorious Lord, and by reason of that oneness you participate in all the benefits of that victory; for you are made an heir of God and a joint heir with the Lord Jesus Christ, an heir to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Then surely you have received double for all your sins. You are not only redeemed from the curse of the law and the sentence of death, but you have secured to you all the glories of immortality, that immortality of which the apostle speaks, saying, "Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality." The Lord's people being one with him, have that immortality secured to them. It is part of their glorious inheritance, for they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. What more, my dear young sister, could you desire? What more can the blessed follower of Jesus crave than to be made an heir with their glorious Lord and King to that immortality? Methinks I hear you say,

"I'm rich to all intents of bliss,
If thou, O Lord, art mine!"

When in the sweet exercise of faith they cry out, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Yes, they are exalted from this state of corruption, this state of mortality, in which their inheritance is pain, disease and death, to that glorious state of immortality and endless life at the right hand of God, where there are joys forevermore. The psalmist says, "In thy righteousness shall they be exalted." It is alone in the righteousness of their glorious Lord that they are exalted. They have no righteousness of their own as the foundation on which to build a hope of exaltation; but they rejoice to know that it is written, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." O what a glorious refuge, what a sure foundation, have you, dear saint, upon which to rest! As you view by faith that refuge, that foundation, you break forth in the language of one anciently, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!" In faith, they sweetly sing,

"Should storms of seven-fold thunder roll,
And shake this globe from pole to pole,
No thunderbolt shall daunt my face,
For Jesus is my hiding place."

But the prophet says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." He records that cheering word twice. He says, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." Why did he repeat that word? He gives the answer to that question in the text: "Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned." Ah, dear saint, what a comfort it was to you when you had passed through days, weeks and months of thick darkness and gloom, through a constant warfare with Satan and your sins, in which the awful thundering of Sinai spoke defeat to you at every step and on every side. Yes, when in that, to you, awful condition, the Spirit spoke to you in sweetest accents, Your warfare is accomplished, your iniquities are pardoned. It was then that you were comforted. It was then that your tongue was loosed, and with streaming eyes you cried out, "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." Then you realized that his mercy endureth forever. That warfare was now accomplished. That iniquity was now pardoned. That mountain of sin and iniquity which had risen before you, the shadows of which had enveloped you in thick darkness, and caused you to grope in deep despondency, was removed, and you by faith were enabled to behold the glorious Sun of righteousness shining with resplendent glory and beauty and with healing in his wings in the gospel heavens. The wounds that sin and Satan had made were cured. The thunderings of Sinai were now forever hushed, for you by faith beheld your glorious Lord as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. This was the first solid and enduring comfort that you had ever received. But the Spirit did not leave you in this land of sin and sorrow without another comfort. The prophet says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye." When you have told to the church your conflicts and delivery, your sorrows and your rejoicings, you are brought into the sweet enjoyment of the love and fellowship of the children of the kingdom, and are permitted to be baptized, thus bearing testimony of the burial and resurrection of your glorious Lord, and are permitted to partake of the bread and wine, emblems of his broken body and spilt blood, all of which lie at the foundation of your hope of a blessed and glorious immortality beyond the gloomy scenes of earth. Yea, more. You have the glorious gospel preached to you by God's dear ministering servants, whom he has called and sent forth to feed the church of Christ which he hath purchased with his own blood. Thus, while traveling through this valley of the shadow of death, you are comforted and built up in your most holy faith, for the gospel presents to your spiritual mind the advent, humiliation and exaltation of your Lord at the right hand of the Majesty on high, on his mediatorial throne, where he ever liveth to make intercession for you. And

while you are passing through this valley of the shadow of death, he has given you his rod and staff (faith and hope) to comfort you. For your comfort he has said to you, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." Then, dear follower of Jesus, you have the comforting assurance that he will not forsake you. Let your condition in life be whatever it may, in poverty's vale or abounding in wealth, you have the comforting assurance of the presence and protecting care of your glorious Redeemer. But soon, perhaps very soon with many of us, life's journey will be over, and if we are the children of God, that faith and hope which were given to comfort us in time will no longer be needed, but we will be called to bathe in one everlasting sea of love; for God is love, and we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And, dear saint, the apostle has said to you for your comfort, "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Then how glorious and full of meaning is the language of the prophet, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

May our young sister, at whose request this has been written, and all the dear saints who may read it, if it should be published, be blessed with all the comforting promises of the gospel, and be enabled by grace divine to press onward for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; and may you, dear editors, have continually unfolded to your spiritual vision the great and sublime beauties and glories of the great plan of life and salvation through our exalted Redeemer, is the sincere prayer of your little brother,
H. COX.

THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—The beloved disciple says, "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."—1 John v. 6. To the disciples the Master says, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but

ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."—John xiv. 16, 17. It is the holy Spirit, then, that is both the Witness and the Comforter. Now what is the witness given by the Spirit of truth? In the first place, it witnessed that Jesus is the Son of God. "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him."—John i. 32. But the witness of the Spirit to the glorious truth that Jesus is the Son of God does not stop here; for "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Rom. viii. 16. So wrote Paul to the brethren. This, then, is the Spirit's witness, that Jesus and all who are joined to him are the sons of God. Now the inquiry arises, How is this witnessed and made known to us? and what is the evidence given that we are the children of God? In answer it may truly be said that the Scriptures contain a true record of the testimony and evidence borne by the Spirit, that Jesus and his brethren are the Son and children of God. But still the truth as recorded in the Scriptures is not sufficient of itself alone to convince and assure us that we are the children of God, and that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. If so, then all men who read and hear the Scriptures should believe. And while it is true, also, that John the Baptist was a man sent from God to bear witness of the Light, and to point to Jesus, the Son and Lamb of God, (John i.), and the apostles and ministers of the word are witnesses of these things, (Luke xxiv. 48), yet all this testimony of the Scriptures and ministers of the Spirit is not in itself enough to enable us to say truly with assurance and comfort, "We are the children of God." For then the ministers of Christ might go forth into the world with the Scriptures, and persuade multiplied millions of the children of this world to become the children of our God, and the heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him. Therefore one thing more is needed, and must be possessed before we can claim and enjoy the witness of the Spirit, that we are the children of God. And this is the holy Spirit of truth and comfort, by which the holy Scriptures were revealed, and by which all the ministers of the word testify. The Spirit itself must be in us, and bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Please notice that it is not our spirit itself abstractly that is the child of God, but we ourselves are the children of God. This is that which the Spirit itself (not the Spirit itself) witnesseth. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, as well as with the writers and preachers of the word. Notice, it is that which now is "beareth witness." It is a present living, an abiding, blessed reality that we are the children of God. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "Beloved, now are we the sons of

God."—1 John iii. 1, 2. Now, what is the evidence of this in us, as given to us by the witnessing Spirit? How may I know that God is my Father, and I am his child? "And because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6. Therefore the Spirit of adoption and sonship is in your heart, constraining you to love God, and to cry to him in the filial and trusting confidence of a child. And this holy Spirit of truth and love, which witnesseth with our spirit, and cries, "Abba, Father," in our hearts, is the Spirit of God's beloved Son, and our holy Savior. Therefore, dear child of God, you are united and joined to Jesus, the Son of God, in his risen life, and are sealed and owned as one with him in his holy sonship to God. And now the Lord Jesus is most lovely and precious to you, and with joy you believe in him as the Son of God and the only and all-sufficient Savior; for all your hope of salvation and a glorious resurrection unto life is in him. Well, doubting, trembling and fearing child of God, this is the Spirit's work and power in you—the Spirit itself bearing witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God. And the fruit and evidence of the Spirit will be found in you, and manifested by you. You will have faith and hope and love in the Lord Jesus, and your love will embrace all who are of like precious faith, while Jesus will be to you the chiefest one of all, and you will desire to be like him and with him. And now hear what the Scripture saith, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ [the anointed Son of God, and Savior] is born of God."—1 John v. 1. O how readily and truly you believe this with all your heart! I, too, believe it. O how pleasant, good and precious it is to believe in Jesus! With the first disciples we are sweetly constrained to confess Jesus as our Lord, and say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. xvi. 16. Why, dear brethren, you could not help believing thus in Jesus, for you have indeed learned by experience that "Neither is there salvation in any other," while in him is plentiful redemption. Therefore you believe in him. Now the beloved John says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." 1 John v. 10. That is, he hath the Spirit in himself; for "it is the Spirit that beareth witness," saith John. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life."—John v. 13. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."—Gal. iii. 26. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—John xiii. 25. "And every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."—1 John iv. 7. Love is the first fruit of the Spirit, and connected with it is faith. These fruits are in you who believe on the Son of God, and they are the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, assuring us of our union and

oneness with Christ, in whom we live and believe. Now, then, as we have seen, the Spirit that beareth witness not only testifieth in the Scriptures and in the ministry of the word to the truth of God in Christ, but also testifies in the hearts of them that believe in Jesus; therefore they have a living holy witness within themselves, agreeing with the truth of the Scriptures as preached to them by the ministers of Christ, so that they know the joyful sound, and are epistles of the quickening and comforting Spirit, and joyful witnesses with the blessed Spirit to the truth of salvation in Jesus. Now, in the threefold witness of the Spirit, as testified by the Scriptures, by the ministry of the word of truth, and with our spirit, that we are the children of God, as evidenced by faith and love in his Son, all testify of Jesus, that he is the Savior of lost sinners. And as thus taught and convinced by the holy Spirit in our hearts, in the Scriptures, and in the preacher of righteousness, that we were sinners, and ready to perish, we fled to Jesus for refuge, and laid hold upon the hope in him. For we heard the joyful sound of his voice in the sweet power of the gospel, saying unto us, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28. This was the voice of the witnessing Spirit, and the power of the gospel speaking in our hearts, bidding us come, and inspiring us with the power of faith to come. Jesus says, "And they shall be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."—John vi. 45. And thus, coming to Jesus, we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, and shall be saved by his life, which he gives unto us. And now, living and believing in the Son of God, we shall never die.—John xi. 26. For believers in Christ are "sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14. And thus, sealed in Christ, and having the promise of the Spirit, we who "have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him."—D. BARTLEY.

JANUARY 21, 1884.

CAIRO, Jasper Co., Texas.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the experience of sister E. A. Ferguson, which was written and sent by her to my mother, Mary Richardson. I have her consent to send it to you, and hope to see it in print. I have heard her relate it with much feeling. I think others would also rejoice in reading it, and therefore I forward it to you.
Yours in tribulation and love,
DURHAM RICHARDSON.

CAIRO, Texas, June, 16, 1883.

MRS. MARY RICHARDSON—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—You ask me to write my experience, and I feel that we should always be ready to give the reason of our hope in Christ. I will try to do so, in my own stammering way, the Lord being my helper.

In the year 1833, when in my fourteenth year, I became distressed about my condition, and thought I would get religion, which I thought I could do. I would go off by myself and try to pray. My parents being Old Baptists, I had never gone to a Sunday School, and was not taught to pray. My prayers consisted of but few words. After I became grown, and mingled in society, these feelings wore off. I would sometimes think that I ought to be doing better, but thought I would put it off until I could have a little more of this world's pleasures. I was very fond of going to parties and dancing. I believed that my mother was a christian, (my father was dead), and that she prayed for me. I thought that the prayers of all christians were heard. I felt sure that my mother prayed for me. I went on in this world's pleasures for some time longer, putting away the thought of getting religion from time to time. While I was with my mother I went with her to her meetings. In the year 1846 I was married and left my mother, and moved about ten miles distant. There I heard no Old Baptist preaching for several years. In 1849 I moved to Jasper. In 1854 I lost my oldest child, which came very near killing me; at least I felt so. In 1858 my mother died. It then seemed as though the words were spoken to me, You are getting along in years, and now have no mother. Who will pray for you now? The pleasures I once enjoyed were no longer a pleasure to me. I would go to hear the Methodists and the Missionary Baptists preach. In 1859 God called another of my little girls home. She was five and a half years old. In her first fever I was sitting by her bed, when she sprang up, laughing, and motioned as though she was trying to get hold of something. I asked her what the matter was. She said, "O ma, look at those babies." I often think of the sweet smile that was on her countenance when she breathed her last. My troubles were now great. I had lost two darling daughters and my mother, and I did not know how soon I might have to go also. Instead of getting better, I grew worse. After a short time the Methodists held a protracted meeting. I saw one after another go to the mourners' bench and profess conversion, and among the number were two of my boys and some of my particular friends. But few were left outside of the church. Some of my lady friends, whom I thought were christians, were very happy, and came and told me that if I would join the church on six months trial, and go to the mourners' bench, I would be sure to get religion. I thought if I could be as happy as they seemed

to be, I would be willing to do anything that lay in my power. So I joined on probation, and went to the mourners' bench. Some of the members came around to talk to me, and said that all I had to do was to give God my heart, and believe I had religion, and I would feel that I had it. I have always felt ashamed to think of it, much less to tell it. Whenever I would try to believe I had religion, something would say to me, You are only a hypocrite. The oftener I would hear them, the less use I had for them. In 1861 I moved to the country, and I then quit going to meeting. I would often read the Bible, but everything that was in it was dark to me. It seemed to contradict itself. In 1862 the Lord saw fit to lay the hand of affliction on me again. He took my second son. It seemed that my troubles were getting to be more than I could bear. I felt that it was because I was so wicked. I would try to pray every night, and thought when I got good enough the Lord would forgive my sins. But instead of getting better, I got worse. I would try to banish all from my mind, but I could not. The first Old Baptist meeting I attended was an association held at Town Bluff, in 1866; the next was an association held down the river; the next was an association held at Mill Creek. The people looked to me the happiest people in the world, and O how I wished to be one of them. I felt that I never would be, for I felt that all that the preachers said condemned me. When on our way home, one of my sisters in the flesh said something to me about joining the church. I answered her very quickly, that the Old Baptists would not have me. I did not want her to think that I was troubled about my condition. She said, "If you feel that you are changed, do not stay away from the church." Afterwards I was sorry that I did not let her talk to me. In 1871 I had a severe spell of sickness, the doctor and friends thinking every day would be the last. I was lying in a stupor, neither asleep nor awake, and something seemed to speak to me, and said, "You are very sick; you may die; are you prepared?" It seemed that my life was spread before me like a blank sheet of paper, which said, You are nothing. How true. I find myself worse than nothing. In 1872, on the fourteenth of April, my last daughter was laid low with pneumonia; also my husband had been in bad health for two years, but was no worse than usual. He was taken with congestion of the brain, and died on the twenty-third of April. My daughter lingered on until the twenty-fourth of August, when it pleased the Lord to take her out of her suffering. I felt that my last comfort on earth was gone. But I had one left to nurse that I had nursed for several months—my daughter-in-law. On the fourth of October following it pleased the Lord to take her home. Then I had nothing to do but think of my troubles, and they were so great I could hardly bear them. My heart felt like a

stone. I could not shed a tear. It seemed that the fountain was dry. I could neither eat nor sleep. The harder I tried to get over it, the worse I got. I felt that my case was worse than any other. When I tried to pray I could not think of anything to say, only, "Lord, have mercy on me," and that seemed to sink me down. I went on in this way for some time, getting worse all the time. I felt that I had lived in sin so long that the Lord could not do himself justice in saving such a sinner as I was. I still kept trying to do something. I worked until I had nothing to work with. One morning in May, as I was walking out in the garden, I felt so heavy that I could hardly put one foot before the other. I had a pain in my breast, and I thought I was sick, and every breath I breathed was, "Lord, have mercy on me." I felt that I was a sinner justly condemned, and that it was adding sin unto sin for me to ask for mercy. I picked up a small garden hoe to try to hoe some. It felt so heavy I could hardly lift it. I thought of the Old Baptists. O how I longed to hear them talk. For some cause, unknown to me, I felt the sweetest peace of mind. My weight was all gone. I did not know what was the matter with me. Then I thought, I have found a Comforter. Bless the Lord, it is Jesus. I could hardly keep from praising him aloud. I felt that it was such a free gift. My little hoe that was in my hand appeared as nothing. I hoed my task, and felt that I could hoe the garden over and not tire. I laid my hoe down and went to the house. As I went up the steps I felt that I was as light as a feather. It seemed to me that everything was changed. The leaves on the trees looked greener, the sun shone brighter, and everything was beautiful. In the evening I walked out with Rose (my son) to feed some hogs. As twilight came on it seemed different from any evening I had ever seen before. I asked Rose if it was not a strange looking evening. He said he did not see anything, only it was a little cloudy, which I had not noticed until he spoke of it. As I came into the hall I got a pan of water and went on the front porch to water some flowers, when something attracted my attention outside the yard. It looked like a pillar of white cloud. It seemed to be in motion, but never got out of its place. Wiley Riggsby was on the porch with my little boys. I asked them if there was anything outside near the gate, and if they had turned in all the cattle. They said they had, and there was nothing out there. About that time the brightest and the largest star that I ever saw shot out of that pillar of cloud. It gave the brightest of light, and shone all around me. As I looked at the light I thought of the Hebrew children when they were led by Moses out of Egypt. When I looked again, it was gone. I thought my troubles were over. But it soon occurred to me that I did not know whether I had a hope or not; that I never had heard

a christian experience, and I felt so unworthy. I thought I would write to one of my sisters, but my heart failed me. I felt that I could go any distance to hear an Old Baptist preach. At last I got a letter from one of my nephews, saying that there would be preaching at Mill Creek on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August. That was good news to me. The time came, and I went. The preachers were there, and it was a great feast to my hungry soul. When the door of the church was opened I felt as cold as a piece of clay. My sister said to me, "Go." I shook my head. I had no such thought. I could not see why she should have thought of such a thing. I never had said a word about it to any one. I then talked to my sisters, and they advised me to go before the church. The next meeting was the association held at Mill Creek. When the time came, I went, determined, if the Lord was willing, to offer myself to the church. I went forward, telling them that I had not come there to deceive the church, and if I was deceived I wanted them to tell me so; for I felt that if I was a christian I was one of the least. I told but little, and to my surprise old brother Burns said that if he had an experience that was his. To my astonishment they took me in. After being baptized, I felt that I had the answer of a good conscience.

I will close, as I have been quite lengthy, and fear I will weary you. If so, cast it aside, and all will be right.

I remain your sister, I hope, in Christ,

E. A. FERGUSON.

BROUGHTON, Hamilton Co., Ill.

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I have often thought that I would try to write a short sketch of my experience of grace, if indeed I know anything about God's love and mercy.

When I was young, and at a time when I least thought about God and his mercy, something caused me to see myself a poor, undone sinner in his sight. When in my seventeenth year I attended an Old Baptist meeting, and it was their communion day. They attended to the washing of feet, and among the number was my mother. I and many of my young friends had taken our stand near by, but for no good object; for I must confess that I never had thought anything about my soul's salvation. But I was made to see myself a rebel in the sight of God, and that I had been a great sinner in his sight all my life. I have thought that my sins were so great and many that God could never bless me. I knew that I had never done anything that would cause him to bless me. I could not see how he could forgive one so vile. My sins seemed like mountains before me, and my Creator one who had done so much for me. I often tried to pray, but my petitions were so small that they seemed like chaff before the wind, and appeared to fall to the ground. It seemed to me I had

sinned so much that God turned a deaf ear to all my prayers. I knew I had never done anything good, and all my sins lay open before me. I felt that I was a condemned sinner in the sight of God. I had heard it taught that we must do a certain amount of work to bring God under obligations to save us. I attended camp meetings, and tried to learn the right way if possible. The preachers would tell sinners to come up to the altar, and that they would lay hold of the so-called means, and cause God to bless them. They would beg and plead for sinners to come. I knew and felt that I was a sinner, and I surely thought the preachers knew the way, for they professed to be God's children, and God's ministers to teach his humble children the right way. So, feeling persuaded that I was right, I would go up to the so-called mourner's bench. I tried to pray, and did all I could to please God and bring him under obligations to forgive my sins. I traveled on in this way for three years, I believe, often asking myself, What will I do? Many hours have I spent in trying to do something to obtain relief. I traveled on in the dark until September, 1862. One night I had been attending meeting in camp, as we had preaching in the army. During the services they called for mourners, and it seemed to me that my sins were so many and great that God had forever forsaken me. After the meeting was over I went back to the camp and tried to beg God to remember me in mercy and forgive my sins. About eleven o'clock in the night one of my soldier friends came up to me and said, "Let you and I go to the grove for secret prayer." We went. He and I had been raised in the same neighborhood, and had made a profession when young, and I must confess that I believed him to be a christian; that is, I believed he had been led from nature to grace. When we had reached the grove he said to me, "Pray God to bless you. You cannot do anything. God must do the work." We knelt by the side of a bush. I had come to where I could not see any way for my escape from eternal despair; for I knew I had done all I could, and that all I had done was mere chaff; that I would soon have to bid farewell to all my earthly friends, and take my place with the devil and his angels forever and ever. But this one thing I was ready to confess, that if God damned my soul it was just, for I could see him as pure and just, and could not see how he could bless one who had been so long in sin, and a rebel against a holy and just God. The thought came into my mind that I had done all I could, and if ever I saw God in peace it would be through his love and tender mercy alone. I then could say with one of old, "Lord, save, or I perish." It was then and there that I received a hope in Christ. Well do I remember the time and place, and I often wish to see it once more. That was the happiest time I have ever experienced in all my life. I could claim God as my

Savior, and that through his tender mercy and love alone; for I knew that I had never done anything to merit his love. I am willing to give God all the glory. For we learn in God's word that "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." I sometimes am made to wonder and doubt, and fear that I am mistaken. Surely if I am a christian, I am the least of all. As God is all-wise, and knows all things from the beginning to the end, and does his pleasure in heaven and on earth, I conclude that he knows them that are his, and that he knew them from eternity. John says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." God's children are spoken of all through the Scriptures as sheep, and for them he sent his Son into this world, to save them from their sins; and all that Christ came to save will be saved. And, dear child of God, if you are one of his, you were chosen in Christ before the world began. You are saved and called, not according to your works, but according to God's purpose and grace, which was given you in Christ before the world began. Then, dear children of God, may we live according to our holy profession; and when time shall be no more with us, may we be permitted to enter the celestial city at God's right hand, to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb forever and ever.

Dear brethren Beebe, I did not intend to have this sent to you for publication, as I did not think it worthy; but some of my brethren wish me to send it for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I wish you to do your pleasure with it.

Yours forever,

I. I. LANHAM.

LEVIAS, Ky., Dec. 27, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I wish to pen a few thoughts for publication, if your better judgment thinks proper. The subject that I wish to call attention to is one that I affirmed in a discussion with a Campbellite a short time ago, and reads, "Do the Scriptures teach that infants are born in sin?" The Campbellites and many others teach that infants are born pure and holy. But as my opponent failed to answer my main Scriptural quotations and argument, I will pen a few of them for the consideration of any and all who believe in infantile purity. Let us first examine Romans v. 12. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Again, Genesis viii. 21. "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." In Romans iii. 19 it is said, "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Do not these quotations prove that Adam and his posterity are all in sin? If infants are pure and holy, how could they die? "For the wages of sin is death."—Rom. vi. 23. "The sting of death is sin."—1 Cor. xv. 56. If the sting of

death is sin, how could infants die if they were not sinners? "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."—James i. 15. If sin bringeth death, could death come without sin? It could not. If any one thinks that death could come without sin, please tell me how, and give me one quotation on the subject. Next turn to 1 Peter i. 23. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible." This shows that we are first born of corruptible seed. And how could we be born of corruptible seed, and at the same time be born pure and holy? If we are born of corruptible seed, must we not be corrupt? Hear Job (xiv. 4): "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Who will dispute Job's word? Every one who says that infants are born pure and holy does dispute his word. Who will dispute David's word? "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalm li. 5. "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies."—Psalm lviii. 3. Did David tell the truth? If he did, then every one who says that infants are born pure and holy tells that which is not the truth. Job asks the question again, "How can he be clean that is born of a woman?" "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."—Psalm xiv. David says, "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity." "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 15. Subject means placed or situated under. "Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."—Gal. iv. 3. If infants are not under the law, did Christ redeem them? Christ came to save sinners. If they are not sinners, Christ did not come to save them. But one more quotation. Paul says, "For we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin."—Rom. iii. 9. If the Jews and Gentiles are all under sin, are they not under sin when they are born? or are they neither Jews nor Gentiles when they are born? If not, tell me what they are. If any one who sees this article thinks that he can reconcile these Scriptures with infantile purity, let me hear from him; for one of the ablest Campbellites in this country failed on them. But he labored hard for one day to show how sinners are saved, and how their sins are remitted, and that by baptism. After laboring hard for one day to show how they were saved, he then worked hard another day to show how those saved characters can go to hell.

I wish to write a communication on the next proposition, as my opponent failed to answer that. It reads, "Do the Scriptures teach unconditional salvation?"

Yours in hope of eternal life,

J. B. HARDY.

CENTRAL CITY, Kan., Nov. 12, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Once more, providence permitting, I take my pen for the purpose of addressing a few lines to you, and with your kind permission, to the readers of our dear family paper; and knowing full well my own inability to do so, I will trust to the Lord to guide my thoughts in the right way, and keep me from error. A few weeks after I last wrote you, which is sixteen months ago, I became afflicted with acute inflammation of the eyes, which has left them in a very weak condition, so that I am able to read or write but very little, and for months together I have not been able to read a word. It has been a long and dreary time; for while my natural vision has been impaired, my spiritual vision has been so clouded and bedimmed with fear and distrust, that I had to grope in darkness that can be felt; indeed,

"I scarcely have a ray of light;
With me 'tis little else but night."

The apostle tells us, "All things work together for good to them that love God." But do I love him? is the question that often arises in my mind, and causes me many an anxious thought. Am I his, or am I not? If I am his, why all these murmurings at the dispensations of providence? for is he not the God of providence as well as of grace? But O! I am such a stiff-necked and rebellious child, it takes many stripes to keep me in the straight and narrow way. I am prone to wander from the God I love, and like Ephraim I rebel and murmur at the rod, and shrink at every stroke. Yet there are times when I feel to say with the psalmist, that it is good for me to be afflicted; and, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." Were it not for the sweet hope of a better and brighter inheritance beyond the grave, I feel that I should sink by the wayside; but I trust the eternal God is my refuge, and how can I sink with such a prop? Dear, tried and afflicted ones, cheer up. Although your frail bark is drifted to and fro on life's tempestuous ocean, and rude waves of adversity may arise and threaten to engulf you, fear not, for your Father is at the helm, and underneath and round about you are the arms of his everlasting love. You cannot sink. He will safely guide you to the haven of rest, and O how sweet will be that rest! The apostle tells us, these light afflictions are but for a moment, and are not worthy to be compared to the glory that awaits the redeemed of God.

"Then, O my soul, complain no more,
The storm of life will soon be o'er."

But I must stop, lest I weary you. I would say to those kind brethren

and sisters in Miami, Johnson and Wilson Counties, that I thank them for the interest they manifested in our welfare, although I shall have to decline their kind invitation to visit them, as I am too helpless and too much of an invalid to leave home; but I would be very glad to receive a visit from them, or from any of our faith and order; indeed I think the sight of an Old School Baptist would be good for sore eyes. We live in Reeder township, Anderson Co., five miles northeast of Mount Ida, our nearest railroad station.

Your little sister in tribulation,
SARAH A. VANVELSAN.

WYALUSING, Pa., Jan. 20, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been several years since my name has appeared in our family paper, except in a few obituary notices; but some how a desire has seized me to let the friends of my acquaintance know that I am still living, and am the same poor, trembling sinner that I ever was; but I hope that I can say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." It is fifty-two years since I saw myself a great sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. It grieved me much to think that I had sinned against such a good and holy being all my life, and I could see no way in which God could be just and save such a poor, miserable sinner as I. All my cry was, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." In his own time and way the blessed Savior appeared for my deliverance. Mine was not perfect deliverance at first, as so many speak of, but rather a gradual deliverance, so to speak, wherein I was strengthened from day to day to believe that I, though all unworthy, was made a recipient of God's grace, love and mercy. But I have been so forgetful of God's mercy, so ungrateful, that I have often thought it could not be that I was a christian, or I could not forget my Savior, as I many times have, when my mind would run on vain and foolish things. But O how good the Lord is! My heart leaps sometimes for joy to think that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly. What wonderful love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! And it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even so he is pure. Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defense. I shall not be greatly moved. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. For he hath saved me with an everlasting salvation; therefore hath he drawn me. Yea, he drew me with cords of love, or I never should have run after him. Brother Paul says, "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God

which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." But I heard a professed preacher say that he could put his hand in the Savior's hand, and he could take it out again. But the Lord's children know they have no such power; they know that it is the work of God to believe on him whom he hath sent. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." I have taken the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since it was published, with the exception of a few years, when it was taken by those with whom I lived, and I had it to read without paying for it. I look for its coming as for a dear friend.

ABBIE DODGE.

OCOQUAN, Va., Dec. 4, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—Inasmuch as I have been requested time and again by the dear saints of God to drop them a line or two through the SIGNS, I will, by your permission, try to do so; but first allow me to state that if the Lord does not guide my thoughts and pen, the few black marks that may appear on this paper will only prove how dark is the mind and how crooked are the ways of the writer, and altogether unfit for the Lord's house. And as a hint to the wise is sufficient, I will not worry you with a longer preface.

If I know my own mind, dear children, this morning, my thoughts are on the sweet fellowship of the saints. In other words, it comes in the form of a question, thus, What is it that gives us to know the fellowship of the saints of God? The longer I live the more I am anxious about this; for to feel and know this will be a comfort to the poor, afflicted child, as he or she travels through the desert land, where the nights are so dark and long and the way so rough that they are often heard to cry out in anguish of soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Dear souls, (for it is to such I would write,) I wish to say to you that you are indeed doubly dear to me, for you and I are continually journeying together; and for this reason I am ever near to you in heart and mind, and my ear hears your cry, and I know how bitter the cup that you all have to drink of. This in part answers the question at the heading of this my address to you. But, my dear kindred, who are so sick of sin, and long for the break of day, please bear with me a little while, that I may tell you of something more lasting in comfort and sure in its effects than all our conflicts have or ever will be. It is the fellowship of the sufferings of Jesus, unto which the saints of God are conformed. Now, to be conformed is to be made like; and as "Jesus" means "Savior," then it follows that our Savior was made like unto his brethren. But how? Dear, doubting ones, just call to mind how in your experience you were found un-

der that law which said, "The soul that sinneth it shall die!" For if so be that Jesus is a Savior to you, you know what I mean here. And were you, and are you now, ready to break out in the language of the poet, and with much trembling say,

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well?"

If so, that spirit in you that confesseth this, confesseth Jesus; for it was he who said, "Not my will, but thy will be done." Dear, tried saint, did you ever think of this in your dark hours of distress? It is Christ in you the hope of glory. And strange indeed that all our nights of sorrow and days of burning grief on account of the dreadful tempest of sin and unrighteousness are but so many way-marks to tell us that it is being conformed to or made like Jesus in his sufferings for us. And while we desire to be like him, the very evidences he gives us we invariably place wrong end foremost, and begin to say, Yes, but did Jesus suffer as we do? He knew no sin, but we are troubled because of it. We cannot do the things we would. But let us look beyond our light afflictions here to that suffering of Jesus, who was sorrowful even unto death. Dear child, just think, he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. He was made to be sin for us. Now, when we can see in our own experience that if God in his holiness and purity should send us to hell, or, in other words, banish us from his presence, and give us to feel the power of his displeasure forever, it would be but just, then consider him who is pure and holy, sinless and pure, yea, rich, possessing all things, yea, the Just, being our Surety, our Head and Husband, and yet was not in the transgression; I say, dear soul, consider all this, and then behold how stood our case, full of wounds, bruises and putrefying sores; all sin, and no soundness in us; deeply in debt to the law, and nothing to pay with. Our life is demanded, indeed we are dead already; for all who were in Adam transgressed in the same day that the forbidden fruit was touched, and in that day the same number died. O, dear, doubting ones, consider our helpless condition! Who of us can look to an Arminian system for life and salvation? Who desires their hope of deliverance to hang on the works of our dead hands? But our hope of life is hung more firmly than that. We have suffered on account of sin, but we can never know the strength or full pain or sting of it, unless we know first what it is to be without it. But Jesus was made sin for us, who knew no sin, and suffered the death due to it, and upon his dear hands hung our life, and there in him we met the penalty which the law justly inflicted upon us.

"Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Can never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are saved to sin no more."

He cried, "It is finished!" And even so, dear child, it was done, and each one of his members met the demands of the law in him, who was made sin

for them, that you and I (if so be that we are members of his body) might be made the righteousness of God in him; because he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. So, where sin did abound, we know grace did much more abound; for it was while we were dead in sin that he (God) commended his love to us. Dear souls, let us not forget these things while we groan, being burdened with sorrow and sadness; for let us call to mind what an inspired apostle penned for the comfort of the saints of God, in treating on what was done for them, and of the love of God, how great, strong and unchangeable it is, and how and on whom it is bestowed. He says, "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But [mark the contrast] God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." So, dear souls, we can see in part, and but darkly, what suffering One endured with the sins of all his poor, lost, ruined and undone brethren upon his dear head. Please read the case of Joseph and his brethren, how he carried all their guilt and shame in his own breast, while time in its onward course was bringing about the purpose for which he was sold into Egypt. Yet they had no tidings of him, and cared not, so long as everything seemed to go well. But the time came, like it did with you and I, when they were to know the fellowship of his sufferings. Yet he had not sinned after the manner of their sin; but he loved them; they were his kindred, yea, his own brethren. He felt for them, and had a fellow feeling with them, and was well aware that their sin had brought him down to the dark land of Egypt, to suffer long and be without the comforts of his father's house; but it was to preserve them alive. But the time came, "the fullness of time;" and, brethren, you know what pain and sorrow each heart underwent, and what manner of communication was held between them. There was one feeling. They felt to know that they had sinned, but could not undo the deed. Nothing but mercy or death could put an end to their sufferings; and mercy could not be hoped for, for a piercing knowledge of sin was then theirs to eat and drink. But all the while their faithful brother Joseph knew their hearts, and time and again turned away to weep, for he was in fellowship with them. One feeling pervaded all their breasts. What a dear family! Dear, troubled souls, do you now begin to see why this oneness of feeling is called fellowship? Do you not often find poor me along the way, asking if such a thing as hope can be mine to indulge? I fail to find words to tell you how I feel; but as I read your letters in the SIGNS, I feel this oneness somehow. I cannot help it, and I do not want to. The lines of the poet come in just now, and I will pen them as they sweetly echo in my breast:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;

The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

But now the night is far spent, and these imperfect lines number many, and I feel that were I to scribble on I could not tell the story like those who are gifted to comfort the saints; and as it is my whole desire that they be comforted and fed, I will give place heartily to them, and say, Please write on. And as a closing remark, allow me to say that you little know while writing who the Lord intends it for; and as he alone disposes of all things, he can never be mistaken. May his richest blessing, according to his will and pleasure, be yours to enjoy, while each may endeavor to continue in love and fellowship, is my heartfelt desire for the truth's sake.

Your little brother,

ELI T. KIDWELL.

HARLEM, Mo., Dec. 25, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—This beautiful morning finds me with a strong desire to render unto our great covenant-keeping God thanks for his love and kindness towards me, in sparing my unprofitable life to see the close of another year. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all my journey through. But when I look back over my past life, and see how far short I have come of doing my Master's will, I am made to wonder why I am spared so long. It cannot be for any good that I have done, but alone through the mercy of God. How many near and dear friends, both by nature and grace, have been called away! Yet there are a few of us left behind, who have the blessed privilege of meeting together occasionally in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, to talk of the joys and sorrows through which we have to pass while traveling in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. We have no abiding city here, but seek one to come, whose builder and maker is God. Dear brethren, it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. Many times we are like the children of Israel, with the sea before and the enemy behind us. Now what is to be done? I cannot go forward, I must not turn to the right nor to the left. Surely this is a distressing time. I am at my wits' end; I am in a waste, howling wilderness; I have wandered away from the fold; I have lost sight of my Shepherd; I have wandered in a land wherein is no water; I must give up all for lost. Just as we have given up all, when the waves of trouble have almost overwhelmed us, how sweet to behold a friend close at hand, and to hear the words of comfort from one who has all power both in heaven and earth, "Fear not, for I am with you, I am your God, and will give you aid." O, my dear brethren, have you ever been in this condition? If so, you know far better than I can tell you what joy it affords a poor soul, when surrounded on every side, and can see no way of escape, to hear the voice of one who has all power, saying, "Fear not; I am with you."

"This calms the weary traveler's breast,
Gives joy and life and peace."

We can then say, Though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for my Shepherd is with me. Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord, endure hardness as good soldiers, for Jesus' sake, and may the God of all power be with and keep you in this evil day.

RICHARD WALLER.

BROWNSVILLE, Tennessee.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—After some delay, which I hope you will forgive, or overlook my careless act, I send you my remittance for 1883 and 1884.

The Lord yet reigns in Israel; for the heavenly message was, "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever: and of his kingdom there shall be no end." It requires a king and subjects to constitute a kingdom. These subjects were chosen of God. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate;" and "whom he did predestinate, them he also called." Not by men or means, for he is the Sovereign of the universe, highly exalted over all created things, and says, "I will do all my pleasure." Then it was the pleasure of God to send his Son into the world, to save sinners, "of whom I am chief," says Paul. Here is a pattern to all who shall hereafter believe to life everlasting. All God's people were children of wrath, even as others. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. By grace are ye saved." Here is the work of God; "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

R. G. MARBURY, SR.

NOTICES.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I wish to say, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to any of the brethren who are desirous of settling in Dakota, that I would be pleased to have them address me, or stop with me as long as they like. We have here two large flouring mills, a State prison, a mute asylum, four large school-houses, one college, one daily and two weekly newspapers.

A. K. ENGLISH.

SIoux FALLS, Dakota Ter., Feb. 15, 1884.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ANY one knowing the whereabouts or present post-office address of the following named person, will confer a favor by sending the same to this office:

Samuel A. Stewart, formerly of LeSueur, Minnesota.

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

We still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars, see advertisement on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of G. BEEBE'S SONS.

IMMUTABILITY OF GOD.

"WILL you give us an article on Jonah iii. 10 and Genesis vi. 6, and other places where it is said that God repented? Yours in love of the truth, I. J. C."

REPLY.

Our dear brother who makes this request will not need to be told that the passages cited cannot be understood to conflict with any other portion of the inspired record. As the whole revelation of Scripture is given by the unerring Spirit of God, it is absolute truth; therefore every portion of it must harmonize perfectly with the whole. The least discrepancy would invalidate all the testimony and disprove the truth of the record. But the witness which the believer has within himself, attests that the record is true. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."—1 John v. 10. The truth that God is immutable is clearly declared as the reason why his people are preserved. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. If this foundation were destroyed, the hope of every saint must perish with it, and the black pall of despair would cover the sinful race of man. That nothing in the Scriptures can teach such a terrible doctrine is therefore clear, and we shall not stop to consider that false theory. The passages to which our attention is called may be mysterious to finite minds, but in the light of divine truth they testify to the same great fact of the unchanging purpose of God, which is revealed in the whole record of the testimony of Jesus, whose name assures the salvation of his people from their sins.—Matthew i. 21.

"And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." The context shows that this declaration signifies the change in the manifest providence of God, which appeared in the sparing of that city of Nineveh against which Jonah had been directed to prophesy. So far is this text from indicating any change in the purpose of God, that it confirms the immutable declaration which is recorded by another prophet. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice,

then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.—Jer. xviii. 7-10. This was exemplified in the case of Hezekiah, recorded Isaiah xxxviii. 1-8. The messages sent by the prophets had the effect which the Lord designed in these cases, and then was manifested the gracious purpose of God in adding to the days of Hezekiah which he had already lived, fifteen years; and in the case of Nineveh, the effect of Jonah's preaching was just what God had designed it should be; and the mercy displayed in sparing that idolatrous city was the very purpose for which the message was sent to them. Truly it appeared to them that God had changed his design, since the destruction threatened was not visited upon them at that time; but when that denunciation of judgment had wrought the effect upon them which God had designed it to do, then he manifested his long-suffering mercy in sparing them according to his purpose, as declared in the words above quoted from Jeremiah. The message sent by Jonah denounced the sentence of justice against that wicked city; the forbearing pity afterward displayed in averting that awful calamity manifested the great mercy of our God even in the dispensation of his temporal providence toward the children of men, which is everlasting.—Psalm c. 5. The inability of finite minds to understand how justice and mercy harmonize in the government of God, is no better ground for doubting that harmony than our inability to gaze upon the meridian sun is evidence that the sun does not exist. The deficiency is alike in either case in our own weakness, and not in any defect in the subject contemplated. Reason is too weak to grasp the wonderful truth that God is just in saving his people from their sins; but as this glorious revelation is made to his saints by faith they are enabled to rejoice in it. In temporal dealings with the fallen race of man the mercy of God displays only his absolute sovereignty; but in the revelation of salvation to the subjects of his "grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," his justice and mercy are together manifested. Sin is condemned, and yet sinners are freely justified by his grace. Sovereign power spared the wicked city of Nineveh from temporal destruction; but amazing grace has saved his people from their sins, though they "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." When that grace was manifested in our salvation we did not see that our sin was less sinful in the judgment of God, but we were made to rejoice that we were redeemed and saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin.—1 John i. 7. We did not see that the truth and justice of God were sacrificed in our salvation, but we rejoiced in the revelation of divine grace by which we were washed in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."—Titus iii. 7. So, he is "a just God

and a Savior." This is faintly typified in the sparing of Nineveh after the sentence of destruction had gone forth against it. So, it may be said of every ransomed sinner, as it was said of Jerusalem, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" The condemnation of the sinner is just, and yet God is just in justifying the ungodly.—Rom. iv. 5. This marvelous work of our God is beyond the understanding of finite intelligence, hidden from the wise and prudent, and yet it is revealed unto babes. As Jonah fretted against the mercy which spared Nineveh, carnal reason may murmur against this more wonderful exhibition of the goodness and mercy of God; but as the prophet was instructed by severe reproofs, so the rebellion of the natural mind in the saints is silenced by the wise judgments of our Lord. As "he giveth not account of any of his matters," it becomes us to heed his solemn command, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."—Psalm xlvi. 10.

"And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." In this text, as in that on which we have been writing, the words recorded are explained by the connection in which they are written. To understand them as teaching that God "repented" and was "grieved" as men might do under disappointment, is not only at variance with the whole inspired revelation which he has given of himself, but it represents him as destitute of foreknowledge and subject to failure in his designs. This is too preposterously blasphemous to be worthy of argument. The plain meaning of the text will be seen by reference to the command in the first chapter, where after blessing the man whom he had created, "God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," &c.—Verse 28. Until the time referred to in the text, this blessing in his providential dealings with men had prospered them in this respect. In the execution of his righteous judgment against their great wickedness, now this blessing was withdrawn, and instead of multiplying them, God visited awful destruction upon them, saving only Noah and his family of all the inhabitants of the earth. In the brief and comprehensive language of inspiration this almost universal extermination is expressed in the record as it appeared to created minds; not as authorizing the doctrine of a changeable God, but as showing the dreadful extent of that visitation. That God from the beginning not only knows but declares the end, is expressly stated by himself. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea,

I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xlvi. 9-11. Then he cannot be subject to disappointment and grief, as finite creatures are. And on his immutability rests the hope of every saved sinner.

The important testimony of this text is the same great truth presented in the text from Jonah, that is, the sovereign grace of God in the salvation of his own chosen people from their sins. The judgment of God has already come upon all men to condemnation, for that all have sinned. There is no deliverance from that judgment by any efforts of the sinner, since all his works are defiled by the sin which reigns in him; nor is there any created power which can render any relief to his hopeless case. As the earth was then covered by the waters of the flood, so all earthly refuge is cut off from the condemned sinner. The special favor of God has provided salvation for his elect in Christ Jesus, the ark of the everlasting covenant of grace. Securely shut in that safe abiding place by the Lord himself, no storms of vengeance can overwhelm them. As there was nothing unforeseen to the omniscient God in the universal corruption of all flesh, by reason of which the flood was brought upon the ungodly world, while a safe refuge was prepared for the preservation of the chosen family of Noah, so, in the entrance of sin by the disobedience of the one man, Adam, the eternal purpose which in his manifold wisdom God purposed in Christ Jesus was by no means frustrated. On the contrary, the very wickedness of sin was overruled to the accomplishment of the purpose of God.

"Here Satan was baffled in what he had done,
For the fall wrought the channel where mercy should run

In streams of salvation which never run dry;
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

Even Balaam was compelled to witness to the truth, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"—Numbers xxiii. 19. And Samuel said to Saul, "The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent."—1 Samuel xv. 29. This is conclusive evidence that no expression in the Scriptures can be rightly understood as teaching that God is subject to disappointment, grief or repentance, in the sense that these emotions are understood as applied to finite creatures.

While many expressions in the Scriptures, when detached from their connection, may seem to conflict with the great truth of the immutability of God, the disagreement is not real, but is the result of our own blindness to the infinite glory of God. So, Israel of old charged that the way of the Lord was not equal, but the Lord proved the fault to be in themselves.—See Ezekiel xviii. 25-30; xxxiii. 17-20. This charge is continually urged upon the tried subjects of grace by the tempter, and their carnal mind

readily accepts the falsehood. But the saints cannot afford to lose the comfort of full assurance on this vitally important point. If it were possible that God could change, the hope of every sinner who trusts in sovereign grace must perish; for conscious vileness in themselves would at once sink each of them in despair, even as when the Lord announced that his betrayer was eating with him, every disciple asked, "Lord, is it I?" So every saint would at once feel that there was no possibility of salvation for him if sinfulness could alienate the everlasting love of God from the objects of his choice. But thanks be to his holy name for the sweet assurance given in the revelation that he changes not. Every redeemed sinner is included in the experience recorded by the prophet, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."—Jere. xxxi. 3. This is the abiding witness which he that believeth on the Son of God hath in himself.—1 John v. 10. But there would be no comfort in that testimony without full confidence in the immutability of God, and therefore it is written that "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."—Hebrews vi. 17, 18.

In these passages the truth of God is not controverted, but the apparent discrepancy results from the error of separating a single expression from the connection in which it is written. In this way any record may be falsified. The same principle of observing the context is necessary in rightly understanding any portion of Scripture. However obscure the true meaning may be, it is certain that no passage can be correctly construed when it seems to conflict with the clearly revealed truth of the whole inspired testimony. When any passage is not clear to us, it is always safe to wait for the light of that revelation which the Spirit shows to the saints, rather than attempt to search out by the dim light of depraved reason that knowledge which God has hidden. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering."—James i. 5, 6.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SEVERAL discreet brethren have advised that the discussion of the *Tripersonality of God* should not be continued in the SIGNS, as it seems to be very difficult to use expressions which are not liable to be misunderstood in writing upon such a wonderful mystery. We have no unkind feeling toward any of those who have written us, however their views may seem to differ from our own. After all that can be said or written, the great mystery must ever remain to hide the eternal God from finite minds. As several very able articles from highly esteemed brethren have already been rejected, we earnestly request that all our correspondents will in future avoid referring to this exciting subject in any expressions not clearly recorded by inspiration.

BOOK NOTICES.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Yours of the 8th inst. is at hand. I herewith return brother W. F. Jones's letter, and authorize you to transfer his subscription as he requests.

I can neither be surprised nor can I complain of the impatience of some of the subscribers to the History, as they are not aware of the many and great disadvantages under which I have labored in endeavoring to make a faithful and proper completion of the work. Those brethren to whom I have explained these circumstances, either orally or by letter, have become satisfied that I am doing the best that I can. Out of about fifteen hundred who have paid their subscriptions, only three, so far as I know, have requested the return or a different appropriation of their money, and two of these have done so because of their poverty and need. I heartily thank my brethren for their kind patience with me in my labors to serve them and the cause of truth, and I assure them that I do not believe their patience will be tried much longer on my account.

Other church historians have taken from thirty to fifty years to write their histories; my father and I will have taken but about seven. Their works generally begin with the christian era, while ours runs four thousand years further back, to the creation. I was mistaken in my estimates of the time I should require to finish the work, because I first supposed that my labors would begin where my father's ceased; but I afterwards discovered that his work, which he did not live to revise, needed a complete, careful and laborious revision, and it is upon this revision that the most of my time has been spent.

The Kehukee Association thought it better to call upon such subscribers as were able and willing to prepay their small subscriptions, than to ask a few brethren to advance the large amount required to secure the publication. I therefore begged the association not to impose upon me the labor of receiving, recording and receipting these numerous small amounts, but they thought best to do so; and this business for a while consumed a great deal of my time. Comparatively few Primitive Baptists take any of our religious periodicals; so that large numbers of subscribers to the History have written me at various times to know when the work would be finished, and how it would be sent, and to ask many other questions about it. Answering these inquiries has taken much of my time. The occasional sickness of myself, and members of my family and faculty and pupils, has unavoidably interrupted my labors upon the History. Having a family dependent upon me for support, I have not been able to devote all my time to the History. Although I have at great expense employed collegiate graduates to teach my own special advanced classes, I have been compelled

to superintend my institution, manage its finances, and do much correspondence in reference to it. Last year I suspended its exercises seven months to try to complete the History. As I have been doing for years, I am even now greatly sacrificing my worldly interests in order to make the work what it ought to be—truthful and reliable. For two dollars the subscribers will receive a book worth four or five dollars, according to the usual prices, and they will thus be amply compensated for the delay in the publication.

I hope and believe that, if the Lord will, I can send you the manuscript next month.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., Feb. 12, 1884.

DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES.

MUCH esteemed and very dear brethren, sisters and friends of truth:—Our book is now in press, and will be ready for binding in March. We need three hundred dollars more subscription to finish paying the last installment on the work. Please do me the great kindness to assist me at once with one dollar each, as per published Prospectus in SIGNS of January 1st, 1884.

S. M. CARLTON.

HENDERSON, Rusk Co., Texas.

MEMORIALS.

THE Predestinarian Baptist Church of Christ called Bethel, at Indian Grove, Livingston Co., Ill., passed the following resolutions as a memorial of Elder LEWIS HESS, our beloved brother and former pastor, who departed this life at his home in Kansas, on the 30th day of October, 1883.

WHEREAS, It becomes our duty, as children of the heavenly Father, to bow in humble submission to all his dealings with us, knowing he has a right to do with his own as seemeth good in his sight; and believing that all his acts are directed in love and mercy, that he has called his servant to come up higher, to lay his armor by, and dwell with Christ, which is far better; therefore,

Resolved, That we sorrow not as others without hope, knowing that our dear brother was faithful to him who called him; that he shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God; proclaiming Jesus as the way, the truth and the life; and we pray that we may be reconciled to all his dealings with us, knowing that the Judge of the whole earth doeth right.

Resolved, That the church tender to the bereaved family, and to sister Hess in particular, our most sincere sympathy in this trying hour; and may he who has promised to be a Husband to the widow and a Father to the fatherless, comfort their hearts with the joys of salvation, that they may be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, till they also are called to lay their armor by.

Resolved, That a copy of the foregoing be sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

JOHN DOWNEY, Mod.

J. G. STEERS, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

On Wednesday evening, February 6, 1884, at the residence of H. C. Wortham, in the city of Pawnee, Nebraska, by Elder James M. True, Mr. Frank S. Hall, of Webster Co., Neb., and Miss Addie E. Magee, daughter of Deacon B. W. Magee, of Pawnee City, Neb.

JANUARY 23, 1884, by Elder John W. Timmons, at the residence of the bride's parents, near St. Martin, James S. Yault and Amanda R. Dennis, both of Worcester Co., Md.

At the residence of the bride's father, in Wicomico Co., Md., January 29, 1884, by Elder Joseph L. Staton, Joshua T. Powell and Annie E. Sirmon, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It is a duty devolving upon me, to give a brief sketch of the life and death of our much beloved and highly esteemed brother, **Reuben M. Wragg**. He was born December 10, 1816, in Greenville District, S. C. When six months old his parents moved to Scott Co., Ky. When seven years old his grandparents sent for him, and he went back to Carolina, and staid there until he was fourteen years old. He then went to Kentucky, and lived there until 1841, when his parents moved to Winston Co., Miss. There he married Amanda M. Williams, March 19, 1845. In the fall of 1850 he moved to Texas, and settled near Palestine, in Anderson Co., and lived there until he was called home by death. He professed a hope in Christ in his seventeenth year, and was baptized by Elder Blackburn, in the fellowship of the church of Christ at Elkhorn (I suppose), in Kentucky. I have often heard him speak of hearing our aged brother, Elder Thomas P. Dudley, preaching the gospel, which was glad tidings of great joy to him. He loved to talk of the aged brother, and of the truth he proclaimed from the pulpit. Often when speaking of these past memories he was melted to tears. While he was in Mississippi he joined Concord Church, Elder Micon being pastor at that time. After he moved to Texas he joined the church known as Old Fort Houston. Elder Hanks, I think, was serving the church. He was a member of Fort Houston Church until his death. The writer of this notice has been personally acquainted with him two years, and personally acquainted with those who were acquainted with him for twenty years. Brother Wragg was naturally of quick temper, but he was so kind, mild and smooth spoken, we are persuaded to believe that like Paul he was enabled by the grace of God to keep under his body and bring it into subjection. His walk was orderly. He seemed so much interested in the brethren and welfare of the church, that between meetings he would leave his home and his business and visit the brethren, and talk to them of the wonderful goodness and greatness of God. Often have I been glad when, unexpected to me, late in the evening, he would ride up. We would then talk of the power, goodness, and mercy of God until midnight, to the edification and comfort of each other, I believe. He seemed to watch over his brethren for good. It seems he was always on the watch for the church, and if he saw the enemy approaching, or anything coming that might cause trouble in the church, he was sure to sound the alarm. In short, brethren, I wish I was such a man as I think he was, in meekness and gentleness, esteeming others better than himself. He had no place in him for the popular belief of the professional world, that is, salvation by works and grace. With him it was all of grace from first to last. He loved to see the church traveling in meekness, and wanted the conversation of the brethren to be good; for he was such as become the profession he had made. His last illness was short (one week), being pneumonia. The most of his talk during his sickness was advice and instruction to the church. He said, "Brethren, stand firm, and earnestly contend for the faith. In all troubles, I know of no better course to pursue than the course we have pursued formerly, and that is, stand for the truth, live by it, and die by it." A short time before he expired he told me to keep

nothing from the church that I thought the church would be interested in. He said, "Brethren, he helps to each other." He was a good citizen, neighbor and friend, and we think those who knew him best loved him most. He was a lovely and loving brother, a kind, generous and affectionate husband. Many of his neighbors miss him, but not as do the church. His dear old companion is left in grief. We mourn, but not as those who have no hope, for we believe he is with God, in the full enjoyment of his love. Therefore knowing that God knows what is best for us, and that he does what is best for us, we should be still, and bow in humble submission to his will. May God in loving-kindness comfort us in our sadness, and give us grace sufficient for us under all circumstances, is the prayer of your weak brother.

U. J. BELL.

PALESTINE, Texas, Feb. 14, 1884.

DIED—November 10, 1883, at his home in the town of Madison, Lenawee Co., Mich., **Deacon George Livesay**, aged 83 years and 9 months. Brother Livesay was born in Orange Co., N. Y., in the year 1800. His wife, sister Ally, died of paralysis several years ago. Brother Livesay was one of the oldest living members of the Fairfield Church, being received into membership Aug. 31, 1839, and baptized by Elder J. Carpenter. His was a remarkable experience. His knowledge of the Scriptures, together with his zeal for truth, made him a shining light. To him we looked for counsel. For several years his body seemed failing, but his mind brightened as he approached the tomb. He seemed to have no fear of death, but wished the hour to hasten when he could be at rest. His disease was pronounced blood poison. While paring a corn with a lance which he often used in practice, (veterinary surgeon) he drew a drop of blood, but thought no more of it until after two or three days, when it commenced to pain him, and his whole foot was one mass of corruption, while his sufferings were terrible, and he often prayed for death to come to his release. He arranged his worldly affairs, counseled his children to be honest and upright, and to take the Bible for their guide. His seat was seldom vacant in the church. He was chorister for many years, and we miss his voice in our meetings. His daughter and son-in-law, Deacon Eugene Tuttle, have had a terrible trial. He left a large family of children and grandchildren, but they know that he is at rest. Elder T. J. Wyman preached a very comforting discourse at his funeral from 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. Hymn 1252, Beebe's Collection, was sung, which seemed perfectly appropriate.

Father in heaven, we bow
Submissive to thy will;
Thou hast taken but thine own,
And thou art faithful still.

Called from this world of sin,
A blood-bought sinner dies;
Joins the glad song of the redeemed,
In worlds beyond the skies.

Assured of his release
From all his toil and pain,
We know our brother sweetly sleeps;
For him to die was gain.

May our God, who is rich in mercy, comfort his afflicted family, together with the church, is the prayer of your sister in hope of eternal life,

SARAH WYMAN.

WESTON, Mich., Feb. 5, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Through the providence of God, our heavenly Father, it becomes our duty to announce to the brethren and sisters the death of **Nancy Ford**, one of our dear old mothers in Israel, who obtained her discharge from all earth's sorrows and toils on the 22d day of January, 1884, and on the 24th her dear old body was taken to the Missionary meeting house in Tonica, where a discourse was delivered by the writer from the words, "These all died in faith," to a large and very attentive audience, after which the remains were deposited in the cemetery near by. Sister Ford was born May 13, 1804, in Green Co., N. Y. She obtained a hope in the Redeemer in 1828, and was baptized in the same year by Elder H. Pettit, and became a member in the church at Lexington, N. Y.

She was married to Mr. Philo Ford, Sept. 6, 1823. She was the mother of eight children, four of which, with her husband, preceded her to the grave. Three sons and one daughter are left, well to do in the world. She came from New York to Illinois about fifteen years ago, and united by relation with the Sandy Creek Church, and has been a consistent and worthy member until death. As an orderly, faithful, humble and true follower of Christ, I reckon she had equals, but no superiors. Thus another of the faithful is gone to rest. Her disease was paralysis, which attacked her some months ago, but she partially recovered. About forty-eight hours before her death she had another stroke, which completely paralyzed her whole being, so that she was not conscious of anything, and passed off as a child going to sleep. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Yours as ever,

WM. A. THOMPSON.

TONICA, Illinois.

DIED—In Monroe Township, Linn County, Iowa, March 31, 1883, brother **Isaac Varner**, in the 75th year of his age. He had been in declining health for many years, but was able to sit up in his chair the greater part of his time. About one week before he died he told his wife and some others that he was confident his end was near; and in talking of the Scriptures he said to them, "My Savior laid in the earth three days and three nights; and when I am stricken I shall last just three days and three nights." This was on Monday, and on Wednesday about eleven o'clock he was stricken with paralysis and lived until Saturday, between eleven and twelve o'clock, when he quietly passed away. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was a faithful member of the Green's Grove Church of Old School, Predestinarian Baptists, and his seat was seldom vacant when he was able to get there. He professed a hope in Christ and joined the Mt. Hope Church of Old School Baptists, in Monroe Co., Ohio, in October, 1851, and was baptized by Elder Isaac Bar. He remained a member of that church until he moved to Iowa. Some time after moving here he joined the church of which he was a member at the time of his death. He leaves a wife and eight children, forty-four grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren, with the church and other friends, to mourn their loss, which we trust is his great gain. His funeral was preached by Elder E. H. Gillett, of Lena, Illinois, from the words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." May the Lord bless this dispensation of his providence to the bereaved ones.

MARTHA GOFF.

MARION, Iowa, Jan. 29, 1884.

DIED—At his home near Duart, Ontario, January 16, 1884, **Mr. Archie Walker**, aged nearly 82 years. During his long lifetime, until within the last five months, he was scarcely confined to his bed by sickness for a single day. Last summer he became troubled with an affection of the heart, which eventually terminated his life. Only within the last week, however, he was confined to his room a whole day. In his final suffering, as in all his life, he neither murmured nor complained; but with humble submission he relied implicitly upon the will of God.

Although for many years he was devotedly attached to the Old School Baptist Church, he felt himself too unworthy to ask for membership with them; yet his heart and home was ever open to receive them, and very many have lasting memory of his cordial kindness to those who love the doctrine of salvation by divine grace. In his last illness he spoke of having at one time felt the love of God shed abroad in his heart; but that in latter years his "love had grown cold; yet the love of God was always very warm." His daily life attested his love of truth and righteousness; and his dear, surviving family have reason for gratitude to God in the unquestionable assurance that the Lord whose praise he so sincerely loved, has taken him to the everlasting joy of his unveiled presence. May the power of divine grace sustain his companion, our dear sister, and enable her and each of the children to be resigned,

and say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good."

OCTOBER 7, 1883, at the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. J. P. Uptegrove, near Campbell Hall, N. Y., **Mrs. Ann Wilkinson** fell asleep in Jesus, aged 79 years, 4 months and 19 days, her mortal tabernacle being broken down by a complication of diseases, together with the infirmities of age. Her health had not been good for a long time, but after August she failed rapidly, and for the last two weeks her sufferings were intense, yet her mind remained clear to the end, and she frequently expressed a desire to depart to her everlasting rest. She was baptized in the fellowship of the church of Middletown & Wallkill, in 1842, by the late pastor, Elder Gilbert Beebe, being at that time the wife of the late Deacon Silas D. Horton, after whose death she was married to the late Col. Samuel Wilkinson. Her exemplary life endeared her not only to her family and the church which was so cherished by her, but to all the community who enjoyed her acquaintance. Her funeral was largely attended at the residence, and her body was laid in the Pine Hill Cemetery, near the old meeting house where she had for many years delighted to meet with the church and heard the preached word of truth. May the Lord comfort her surviving children, and, if it be his will, enable them to rest in the sweet assurance of faith which shone even upon the cold face of their dear mother's corpse, and finally awake in everlasting life, to praise the God of grace in eternal glory, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

B.

DIED—September 10, 1883, **Susie Louisa Griffin**, great-granddaughter of Elder Steven Woolford. Sorrow reigns in the hearts and home where Lulu was an idol, and her school-mates often sigh when they call to mind the lovely, joyous one, who was always welcome to her place at the head of her class. Life was full of charms for our eleven years old darling. But, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." She was sick only three days, with peritonitis. The last morning she had no pain; and must have apprehended death, for she said, "Doctor, will I get well?" He replied, "We are trying to make you well, Lulu." Later she asked me to lay on the bed beside her, and I did so. With sweet composure she said, "Aunt Sue, I am nearly gone." I said, "Lulu, do you think you are dying?" She said, "Yes." I asked her, "Are you willing to die?" She replied, "O yes. All is well." Calling her mamma, papa and grandma to kiss her good-bye, and putting her dear arms around them, she said, "Call Nellie and Maggie [her little sisters] quick." After kissing us all good-bye, and sending loving messages to dear absent ones, and making a few requests, one of which was, "Mamma, put flowers on my grave," in a tone of solemn joy she said, "Grandma, I'm in heaven. Come." In a few minutes we were alone: our lovely one was in heaven. Very tenderly her six cousins placed the dear form in the dark grave. Sorrowfully we turned, nevermore to hear Lulu's joyous greeting. Elder Durand was with us on the first Sunday in November, comforting the mourners with the consolations of the precious gospel. O may each of her dear ones be made willing by divine power to say, "All is well."

SUSIE L. WOOLFORD.

I DEEM it my duty to send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of **Henrietta Conklin**, wife of Joseph G. Conklin, who is the oldest son of the late Deacon Conklin, of Ramapo Church. She died February 16, 1884, from diphtheria, after three days of terrible suffering. She was a loved and honored wife, faithful in her duties, and I believe she truly desired to have a conscience void of offense. I have enjoyed her conversation; for although she was not identified with us, she loved the Old School Baptist doctrine, and I keenly feel the loss in my lonely condition. She was forty-seven years of age, and has resided at Otisville, where many cannot forget her hospitality.

M. HELLINGS.

PATERSON, N. J., Feb. 17, 1884.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1884.

NO. 6.

POETRY.

PSALM CIV. 34.

I LOVE to meditate that hour
When Jesus owned me his;
Subdued me by his Spirit's power,
And hushed my soul to peace.
He gave me eyes my Lord to see,
As one who had been slain,
And whispered, "This I bore for thee—
For thee endured the pain."
He gave me ears his voice to hear,
And then for me he cried,
"Father, this mourning sinner spare,"
And showed his wounded side.
And then he looked on me and smiled,
And spake my sins forgiven;
He owned me his redeemed child,
And sealed me heir of heaven.
'Twas then I learned his saving power,
My heart was tuned to praise;
The fragrance of that hallowed hour
Shall sweeten all my days.

J. T. R.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"VERILY thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior."—Isaiah xlv. 15.
God is beyond the reach of the wisdom of man. The wisdom of the Greek is foolishness. Though men may speak of gods many, and lords many, yet the world by wisdom knows not God. When the "God of Israel" was manifest in the flesh, he took upon him the seed of Abraham. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." Yet how precious is the testimony of the apostle, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."—John i. 14; 1 John i. 1, 2. Hidden from the natural sight of men, yet by the unspeakable mercy and power of God gloriously revealed to the faith of his elect, so that they endure as seeing him who is invisible.—Heb. xi. 27. But cannot man by diligent study, by the concentration of the powers of the natural mind upon the Scriptures, find out God? Never. The thoughts of the wise are vain. When every possible investigation has been made, the natural man can conceive of nothing but an idol, which in his vain imagination he thinks is the only true and living God.—Rom. iii. 11. In types and shadows, in all the "ordinances of divine service" in which typical Israel worshiped God under the first covenant, how hidden was the way of the Lord. The natural Jew might observe all these things in the letter, and yet utterly fail to know the mercy, the grace and the salvation of God; and even to the one who was "a Jew inwardly," how hidden were the things of God, veiled in types

and shadows, the things that are made, the marvelous works of God which men behold. O what power, what majesty, what handiwork, we see. Our thoughts are lost when we try to think of the infinite greatness of the invisible God. Are there not times when in our meditations in spirit we exclaim, "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power who can understand?"—Job xxvi. 14. "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." This scripture peculiarly belongs to the Israel of God; and in the manifestation of them as born of the Spirit, how true is it in their experience that their God, their Savior, hideth himself. When first brought under divine teaching, quickened and made alive to their sad and awful condition as vile transgressors of the law, which is holy, just and good, what woe does the poor sinner experience! He feels the holy anger of God revealed in the law to burn against him, condemned and bowed down beneath the burden of his transgressions. From day to day he gropes along with many sighs over his sinful condition. The cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," is in his heart, but he fears there can be no mercy in store for him. "How can it be there is mercy for me? How can the Lord love such a rebel? How can the Lord shew kindness to such an ungrateful worm?" He feels that the holy God dwells in "thick darkness," and from the thick darkness there issues forth condemnation and woes to the transgressor. The demands of the law wax louder and louder, and the strength of the poor sinner and all hope in himself becomes weaker and weaker. Amidst all the condemnation and sorrow which the elect of God experience when they are made to see and feel their sinnership before God, how hidden is the mercy, the grace, the tender love, the marvelous loving-kindness of the Lord. The poor, troubled soul little thinks that all the terrible things he is being taught and has to endure is of the everlasting love of Jehovah. At present this is veiled from his sight, though often from his longing soul the inquiries arise, "Will the Lord have mercy upon such a poor sinner? Will the Lord in salvation ever break forth from the thick darkness? Will the Sun of Righteousness ever arise and shine upon such a wretched sinner?" Taught of God, the sinner finds out to his sad dismay that in his flesh dwells no good thing; that he cannot please God;

and by the deeds of the law all hope in himself of justification in the sight of God perishes. Then does the Holy Ghost work in the sinner that feeling after the Lord.—Acts xvii. 27. The felt need of the Mediator, Jesus Christ, and the desire of his soul is, "O that I knew where I might find him!" And when the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, is pleased to testify of Jesus in the soul, that he is "the Lord our righteousness," O what sacred joy and peace fills the poor sinner's heart, while he sings the praises of the Lord.

In matters of divine providence, how often have the dear people of God to say, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." In meditation upon the life of Joseph, how beautifully this is set forth. Even good old Jacob at one time exclaimed, "Me have ye bereaved of my children. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me."—Gen. xlii. 36. And in the eventful and rugged life of David it is recorded, "David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul."—1 Sam. xxvii. 1. And when we are led to contemplate the many little incidents in our own pilgrimage, how dark, shut up and mysterious has our way at times appeared. We have thought, How shall I be able to surmount this trouble? What can be the meaning of all these things? And sometimes it has appeared that our way grew darker and darker.

"We see each day new straits attend,
And wonder how these scenes will end."

"Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." We are ready to inquire, How can there be mercy and goodness to me in these things? How can it be that all these things shall work together for my good? We fear the dark and threatening clouds, and think that in these trying matters our God is against us. O what searchings, what earnest, sorrowful cries are forced forth from our troubled souls to the God of Israel, who hideth himself from us. And in a little measure we enter into companionship with Job, to say with him, "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him. He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."—Job xxiii. 8, 9. But in the midst of all that is so difficult to understand, and that we judge to be hard and against us, the invisible hand of the gracious God is still our support, and a little hope is at times felt that the Lord

will in his time make all things plain. Then we know a little of what it is to be reconciled to God, and we are enabled to wait for the salvation of the Lord.

"Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

Have we not proved this, and found that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy?—James v. 11. And on no account would we have our pathway otherwise than it has been.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

"Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." This is verily experienced by the chosen of God under the chastening of their heavenly Father. What can be more painful to the children of God than the hiding of the face of the Lord from them? Have we at any time indulged ourselves in the lusts of the flesh, or has there been bitterness, and wrath, and malice, and evil speaking, in our hearts? The God of Israel will visit for these things. It cannot be that we can nurse these things in our bosom, and at the same time delight ourselves in the light of our heavenly Father's face. In the sight of men we may wear a cheerful face, but it cannot be so beneath the frown of our God. When we have gone on frowardly in the way of our vile hearts, our God has hidden himself, and was wroth.—Isa. lvii. 17. O what gloom has overshadowed us, and how depressed and uneasy we have become. In all our froward ways, desolation, confusion and captivity is our portion from the Lord. That sweet enjoyment of his love, those reviving and consoling tokens of the love and the wonderful favor of the Lord, all seem to be taken from us. And when the dear Lord is pleased to open up to us the iniquity of our hearts, to show us our ungrateful wanderings from him, O what confusion and shame we are in. We then realize that we are away off from our God and his delightful land. "The house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they trespassed against me; therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they by the sword. According to their uncleanness, and according to their transgressions, have I done unto them, and hid my face from them."—Ezek. xxxix. 23, 24. We hear them therefore bemoaning themselves, saying, "Our bones are dried

and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts."—Ezekiel xxxvii. 11. The God of Israel, the Savior, has hidden himself behind the thick cloud of our sins. And when the Lord thus hideth himself, who can behold him?—Job xxxiv. 29. But our Jesus hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And the language of our souls has been, "I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Israel, and I will look for him."—Isaiah viii. 17. What a precious, holy and soul-melting time we have proved, when we have felt with power the gracious words of the Lord in our hearts, saying, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—Isa. liv. 8. The Lord has healed our backslidings; he has "blotted out as a thick cloud our transgressions, and as a cloud our sins," and once more in the light of the countenance of our gracious, loving God, we have been made to rejoice. There are many lessons to be learned under the hidings of the face of our Savior. The God of Israel knows what is needful and seasonable for us. Nothing can compare to the blessedness experienced by a poor sinner when by faith he beholds the face of the dear Redeemer shining with tender love and compassionate mercy upon him. And when at any time the beloved Lord Jesus withdraws his shining, and is veiled from our sight, then we are made to know the terrors and sorrows of the night. Many a ravenous beast creeps forth, the adversary is lively in his attempts to fill us with doubts and fears and hard thoughts. Wearisome nights are appointed us. How lonely, weak and disquieted are we when Jesus has withdrawn himself and is gone. When will the night be gone? We are filled with tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.—Job vii. 4.

"Flowers need night's cool and darkness,
The moonlight and the dew;
So Christ, from one who loved it,
His shining oft withdrew.

And then for cause of absence,
My troubled soul I scanned;
But glory shadeless shineth,
In Immanuel's land."

Yes, we are troubled when our God and Savior hideth himself from us. But in the night seasons the Lord does not forsake us, for he says, "I will be as the dew unto Israel."—Hosea xiv. 5. Israel's heavens shall drop down dew.—Deut. xxxiii. 28. There is given us an humble and contrite heart, our couch is moistened with tears, and our souls are filled with desires for our Immanuel to shew his face and chase away the gloom and sorrows of the night; for we have learned and now see that Jesus is all our light, all our salvation and all our joy. The Lord hideth himself in his teaching. He is pleased to bring us unto the experimental knowledge of the things recorded in the Scriptures. Here a little and there a little, we receive instruction. Like the two disciples on

their way to Emmaus, we journey along, often communing with our own hearts. Jesus is near, but unrecognized. Our eyes are holden that we should not know him.—Luke xxiv. 16. But our hearts burn within us while he talks with us by the way, and while he opens to us the Scriptures. And when our eyes are opened, we see it is Jesus who has thus been instructing us. While here in the body, in our brightest "visions of God," by faith it may be said, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." We shall see him as he is.—1 John iii. 2.

"And when on thy bosom reclined,
Thy face I am strengthened to see,
My fullness of bliss I shall find,
My heaven of heavens in thee."

Your brother, I hope, in Jesus,
FRED. W. KEENE.

BUTLER, Md., Jan., 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The year that has just passed away, with all its changes, leaves this one fact unchanged, that "The carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." This should admonish us all to be considerate, and careful not to let carnal reason, the seat and throne of all spiritual wickedness, control or direct us in writing or speaking of spiritual things. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. But blessed is the truth that God by his Spirit reveals unto his spiritual children the deep things of God. The Spirit leads them into the deep mysteries of the wonderful plan of salvation by grace, and the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are revealed to their faith, and not to their natural reason. How greatly have I been comforted, dear editors and brethren, by your communications in our valuable medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, during the past year; and I anticipate being edified and comforted during the year now before us. May you, dear brethren and sisters, continue to write of that righteousness "which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."—Phil. iii. 9. Often is my soul cast down within me. Looking within, I can see nothing good or desirable, but everything that is abhorrent, wicked and abominable. But I turn from this sad sight of corruption, to the holy Scriptures, and there I read the words of him who taught as never man taught. In that wonderful sermon on the mount sometimes I find only condemnation. There the law of God is spiritualized: that law which said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." "As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so to them." Yes, the very law that slew me, I being carnal, sold under sin, there meets me, like the flaming sword, turning

every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. But hark! I hear the jubilee trumpet. Its sweet, silvery sound reaches the dark recess of my fainting soul, saying, "Arise, my fair one, and come away." "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Arise, my soul, and look away from self, for in the flesh there dwells no good thing. Look away from the law; for all who are under the law are under its curse. Look unto Christ, our righteousness: look to his obedience. By the obedience of one, many are made righteous. Look to Calvary and behold the flaming sword of the Father's justice drinking the blood of his dear Son. Hear his cry, "It is finished." "Christ hath redeemed us from under the curse of the law," "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." "Now, to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."—Gal. iii. 16, 17. Now, having faith in Christ, and being children of promise, as Isaac was, we see Christ, our Head, taken and slain in our place, as the anti-typical ram caught by his horns in the thicket. He saves all the chosen Isaacs, and reveals the everlasting love of God, the mercy and grace of Jesus the Son, the Word that was in the beginning with God, the Word that was God, the Word that was made flesh and dwelt among us, whose glory we beheld, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The Holy Ghost takes these deep things of God, and by faith reveals them unto us, for our comfort, and that his name may be glorified. But this is not done until he takes us and strips us of all the filthy rags of our own righteousness, and shows us our poverty, weakness, sinful and vile condition, that boasting may be entirely excluded, and his holy name be glorified. But we are so changeable in our frames and feelings, that often doubts and fears perplex us, and our comfort is fled like the morning dew, which seemed to invigorate the drooping plant for a little time. We find the words of David to be ours, "O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, and from the hill Mizar."—Psalm xlii. 6. Yes, the soul that was refreshed by some sweet promise is now cast down, and must go back to some past experience, to some former Bethel, where, like Jacob, it has found the gate of heaven. The land of Jordan is the land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of corn and wine. These soul-reviving and life-sustaining provisions are found in no other land but

the land of promise. "And of the Hermonites." These highly favored people dwelt there, and derived their name from the mountain of Hermon, one of the landmarks of that typical land. It is described as a lofty peak of three summits of about equal height, although we have no account of their actual height, as we are told by travelers that they have not been measured. They stand in an exact triangle, and present to the eye a remarkable sameness, and are estimated at ten thousand feet in height. How could this mountain, as the land of the Hermonites, have been of comfort to the soul of the psalmist when his memory carried him back to this cherished place, if there were no sweet deliverances in times of former trouble associated with its remembrance? Here, surely, the light of God's countenance, through the atonement of the Son, revealed by the Holy Spirit, was again brought to the remembrance of his cast down soul, and he was brought out of prison, in answer to his prayer, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name." This mountain is also called "Mount Sion, [the elevated] which is Hermon."—Deut. iv. 48. None but those who are born of the Spirit, and who are cast down and mourning because they are not enjoying the comforts of free grace, can look back to those sweet and precious Bethels where their hungry souls have been satisfied.

"From the hill Mizar." This is an elevation, but not of sufficient magnitude to be called a mountain. It is situated on the trans-Jordan part of Palestine, from which Mount Hermon may be plainly seen. It is here presented to represent the place where all the children of promise are first given the soul-cheering view of salvation by grace, when first brought to know the Father's love, the Son's redeeming grace, and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, leading them unto the truth, and are made to rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation, and made to say with this sweet singer in Israel, "My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord."—Psalm civ. 34.

Yours in fellowship,

THOMAS H. SCOTT.

"MANY are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."—Psalm xxxiv. 19.

Why the afflictions of the righteous should be many often puzzle the finite mind, while the carnal nature rebels against what the infidel and moral reasoner terms the injustice of God; but when by the grace of God we are brought to an experimental knowledge of the wonderful goodness and mercy of our sovereign King, we feel to exclaim with the psalmist, "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth." When we look about us and recognize the prosperity of the ungodly, the tempter enters our hearts and causes us to grumble and complain; and in such a condition we cannot enjoy so much as a sip of God's love, while we fail to see that it is these

same trials that work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The natural man cannot understand these things, for they are foolishness unto him. He can enjoy the prosperity and pleasures of this world for a season, but cannot carry them beyond the grave. But unto them that have a hope, there is a looking forward, beyond this world of decay, to a life hid with Christ, which shall be eternal. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."—Rom. vi. 22. The afflictions of the righteous are many. The proud and stubborn heart rebels, but the contrite heart accepts them as coming from the hand of a loving Father, who doth not afflict willingly; and the assurance that the Lord will deliver him out of them all is the balm and nectar that refreshes the soul of the poor wayfarer during his earthly pilgrimage. For "The Lord will not cast off forever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies." When we have been sojourning in the wilderness, and dwelling in waste places, and have struggled with the demons that inhabit the region of darkness, we cry out in anguish of soul for deliverance. It is then that the Lord is pleased to roll away the clouds, that we may view the angel of the Lord that encampeth round about them that fear him. Yea, he does more than this: he delivereth them. It is when groping blindly in the dark, or struggling, helpless, in the horrible pit, that the cry for help and light goes out from our burdened hearts. But the weary, worn heart is not content with help and light only, but begs for deliverance; and in the fullness of time deliverance comes. For he who promised is faithful. It is only the broken and contrite heart that can send forth the cry of distress. And "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Only such can taste or know of the mercy and goodness of the dear Redeemer. It is only the afflictions which work the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby, that give this broken heart and contrite spirit. We must be stripped of our proud, rebellious nature, our cherished plans must become frustrated, our life hopes laid low, until it verily seems that our very life is crushed out and buried in the dungeon of grief and despair, death and the grave seem our only portion forevermore, every atom of self-righteousness and the mighty works thereof become as nothing, and even our carnal reason must be lost sight of. We must be purged from the corruption with which our Adamic nature abounds. Now, the natural heart cannot, will not, rob itself of these fleshly lusts which are born and bred in it. But when by the light of a new heart we are made to see the filthiness of the old nature, we are sorely grieved, and cry for deliverance, and our anguish is great until

the precious Savior applies the atonement of his pardoning power, thereby cleansing us from our uncleanness. O how great is our rejoicing in such season, when death to temporal things is swallowed up in such a victory! This is not self-victory, the mere easing of our conscience for a time, by promptly attending to imposed duties, or by any work we have done, for it is God who hath given us the victory. Well may we sing at such seasons of his mighty love, "O how great!" But the all-wise Creator, and ever loving, tender Father, has decreed that such uplifting cannot last while in this mortal state; for the old warfare continues, as Satan is loth to yield dominion over us. Hence our afflictions are many. When we would do good, evil is present with us; for with the new heart we desire only to serve God continually. But old nature is ever up and doing, ready to lead us into by and forbidden paths. Thus only as we are kept by Israel's God can our wandering footsteps be directed aright, for of our own strength we can do nothing. And if in a flash of pride we look beyond the cross, we find only sorrow in folly, shame and strife. We are ever in our experience learning lessons of humility. How sweet is the spirit of true humility! It is a lesson precious unto our souls. With the assurance of hope on one hand, and the blessed promises on the other, with the light of the Savior's smiling countenance above us, and the knowledge that Zion's entrance is but a little distance beyond, it is very easy to glide smoothly along over life's thorny road. But it is not on flowery beds of ease that the pilgrim is borne heavenward; but when, like Israel's host, we are pressed by foes on every side, and every way of escape is cut off, then faith applies her wondrous power. The sea is walled on either side, and the ransomed pass over in safety. It is when in a little wrath God hides his face, when from lack of faith we fall fainting by the way, when through the deceitfulness of sin we wander in a solitary way, and thereby feel cut off from God's mercy, or when the darkness of uncertainty settles like a death-pall over us, or when tempest-tossed in the trough of despair, because of the doubts and fears; it is when beset by all these fiends that the child of God cries out in agony. Human aid is of no avail, while the form of godliness but mires the soul deeper than before. In the midst of this trial, if enabled to cry, "Abba, Father," we feel our unworthiness, and experience that it is only by the grace and mercy of a loving Father that he can send forth this supplication to the throne of grace. But the heavenly King is able and willing, and will abundantly pardon, and will not suffer us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear. Not one of his dear children will be lost. His word hath gone forth, and will not return unto him void. When the dark shadows of affliction cross our pathway, how often are we bidden to taste, trust and seek. "O

taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." For though "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." How like distilling dew upon the parched ground are the rich promises of the great Jehovah! Surely they sustain and direct the straying feet of God's children as they journey forth through the valley of sorrow and the trackless desert, to Beulah's land. And as we journey, we are oft struggling and striving with the enemy; then, again, being led by still waters, and feeding in green pastures. Yet whatever our trials, whatever our temptations, the grace of God is sufficient for us. His sovereign power, majesty and will are from everlasting to everlasting, and by his grace and divine love are we kept until we reach Zion, the city of solemnities, which is a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; a place where the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams.

R. C. P.

HERRICK, Bradford Co., Pa., Feb. 25, 1884.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—I send you two letters which will explain themselves, if you conclude to publish them. I regret the necessity of asking their publication; but as the subject has already been introduced in the SIGNS without an explanation, and as many readers of the SIGNS have seen the charge referred to in the *Gospel Standard*, it seems desirable that this explanation should appear. I consider the letters of Elders Stipp and Purington upon the sabbath very full, clear and explicit.

Affectionately your brother in Christ,

SILAS H. DURAND.

HERRICK, Bradford Co., Pa., Nov. 1, 1883.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD:—In your number for October you have published a serious charge against me, over the signature "R. H. B." (Mrs. Ruth H. Bodman,) and have in your remarks assumed the correctness of the charge. In this you have done me great injustice. The charge is untrue. I was surprised and pained to see my name thus used in your periodical, where it has appeared a number of times within the past thirteen years. You certainly can do no less than publish my reply. In addressing me personally, you have given me the liberty to reply to you, as well as to Mrs. Bodman.

Mrs. B. says: "S. H. Durand deceived me by telling me that the Old School Baptists kept the Lord's day." While I have regarded Mrs. B. as a child of God, and cannot now think that she would willfully tell an untruth, I have to say that this is untrue. She is in a forgetful and mistaken state of mind. I did not tell her that the Old School Baptists kept the Lord's day, neither in any way was she deceived by me. In repeating the charge she uses the term "sabbath," while professing to give my words. Now, I have never called

the first day of the week either "the Lord's day" or the "sabbath," because I have not found it so called in the New Testament. The term "sabbath" is nowhere in the Bible applied to the first day of the week, therefore I do not so apply it. I recognize no one as having authority but the inspired writers. I have not understood the expression, "the Lord's day," in the only place where it is used in the Bible, as applying to the first day of the week, but to that spiritual day spoken of in Psalm cxviii. 24.

I said to Mrs. B. that the Old School Baptists do not work on Sunday, except to do works of necessity; but expressly said to her that it is not as keeping a sabbath that they refrain from working, for they, with some exceptions, do not regard it as the sabbath, or as holier than another day. Their reasons for not working I think I may give as three. First, the law of our country forbids unnecessary work on that day, and we are commanded to obey the higher powers.—Rom. xiii. 1-5. Second, it is the day universally appointed for religious meetings, and it is a good thing that we can have one day in the week to meet for the public worship of God without distraction from business. I will mention as a third that which is most important to me, that the apostles and early disciples appear to have met regularly on the first day of the week. It is true that they met on other days, and from day to day.—Acts ii. 46. But two expressions, one in Acts xx. 7, and one in 1 Corinthians xvi. 2, appear to indicate that it was a custom to meet regularly for worship on the first of the week. (The word "day," it will be noticed, is supplied in both cases.) The apostles, however, have given no precept as to what day of the week is to be observed for meeting. So those who are prevented from meeting on Sunday have no good reason for thinking that a meeting on any other day will be less favored of the Lord.

If the apostles had been inspired to regard the first day of the week as substituted for the Jewish sabbath, they certainly would not have left the subject without a word, especially as our Savior commanded them to teach his people to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them.—Matt. xxviii. 20. If the command given to national Israel to observe the seventh day of the week as a sabbath of rest is now binding upon the church of God, the first day having been substituted for the seventh, it is so important that I cannot see how it could have escaped any mention in all the New Testament; for if it be over us, the penalty must also be over us, and then who could have hope? We are not allowed to abate one jot or tittle of the strictness of the law. Our Savior did not do that even while teaching the true spiritual meaning of the Jewish sabbath, and showing that the Son of man was Lord even of the sabbath day. No man ever truly kept the sabbath, nor ever experienced the blessing of it,

until through Jesus Christ its righteousness, which could never have been fulfilled by him, is fulfilled in him.—Rom. viii. 2. What a blessing that those who are in Christ Jesus are no more subject to the condemnation of the law, for we are no longer under the law, but under grace. The apostles, therefore, instead of commanding the keeping of a literal sabbath, expressly enjoined the church to let no man judge them in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, (the word "days" supplied,) which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is Christ.—Col. ii. 16, 17. The apostle expressed fear that his labor in teaching the Galatian brethren had been in vain, since they observed days, and months, and times, and years.—Gal. iv. 10. But in the epistle to the Romans we are told, if I understand the apostle correctly, not to judge and break fellowship with each other because one esteems one day above another, and one esteems every day alike.—Rom. xiv. 4-6. While, therefore, the members of the church of God in this country universally refrain from unnecessary labor on Sunday, they do not, with some exceptions, keep it as a sabbath, or regard it as holier than another day. Mrs. B. tells you that she knew their sentiments on this subject. How then could she say that I had deceived her by telling her that they do not work on Sunday, unless she has found this to be an incorrect statement? This she will not say.

I am not, as you intimate, an Antinomian, nor verging in that direction. It is my desire and endeavor to walk according to the gospel of Christ, and to teach the observance of all his precepts. I do not "twist the word to suit my conscience," but humbly believe I am enabled to prove my conscience by the word. I teach a deliverance through the gospel from the Jewish sabbath, with all other things pertaining to that dispensation, and that now the antitype of that literal sabbath, the true christian sabbath, begins in the experience of each child of God when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ and thus enters into rest; as the apostle says, "We which believe do enter into rest."—Heb. iv. 3. That thenceforth all days are alike to him as regards holiness; and that having entered into his rest, he has ceased from his own works as God did from his.—Heb. iv. 10. And that on all days and nights of the week the words in Isaiah lviii. 13, 14, which you have referred to, are alike applicable to him, that he shall not do his own works nor speak his own words on God's holy sabbath, which has now begun in his soul nevermore to end; and so far as he does turn away from that command, and from the works and words of Jesus to those of men, to that degree he will fail to enjoy spiritual rest.

In regard to the first day of the week, I neither engage in worldly business myself on that day, nor allow another to work for me, nor do

I teach that it is right to do unnecessary work on that day, for the reasons stated above. Where I have found a brother inclined to engage in business on Sunday, other than what seems necessary, as I have in two or three instances, I have admonished him; not because I regarded him as breaking a sabbath, but disobeying the law of the land.

Mrs. B. has reported me as having said, and you have repeated it as a fact, that if my strawberry-bed needed weeding on the sabbath day, I would weed it, and my conscience would not be hurt. This I think I never said. I am quite sure she is mistaken, and that I said nothing at all about a strawberry-bed. I would not have been likely to, for we do not raise our strawberries in beds, but in the field, and cultivate them with a plow. Besides, this would not have illustrated my idea, for what needed weeding on Sunday could have been weeded on Saturday, or could have waited till Monday, and so would not have been necessary labor. Mrs. B. has evidently thought it unimportant to remember accurately my illustration, and so missed the point. I said if I had wheat in the field in danger of being destroyed or injured by rain, I would get it in the barn on Sunday, and my conscience would not be hurt. But if Sunday were a sabbath to us, as Saturday was to the Jews, I would not be allowed to do it.

Mrs. B. came to the church in New York unsolicited by me. She had become acquainted with many of the members, and with their doctrine and practice, and expressed it as her belief that the Lord had directed her to come and ask a place with them. She first became acquainted with me, as many others in this country have done, through my communications in the *Standard*, and wrote to me. When she first heard me preach, which was about six years ago, she said to me that the Lord had shown her that I was one of his servants, and expressed much joy, as she had not heard preaching for a long time. Our correspondence has continued upon spiritual things till within the present year. She has always addressed me with cordial expressions of fellowship, and has never, either by letter or in personal conversation, intimated that I had been in any way in fault. This causes the surprise to be greater that I should see the charge of deception on my part published abroad through your columns. The Savior's direction should have been observed by her and required by you: "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone."—Matt. xviii. 15. Also, there are obvious reasons for the apostle's plain direction to be observed: "Against an Elder receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses."—1 Timothy v. 19. One should never be condemned without being heard. Great wrong may be done by publishing a charge against a brother, especially from so great a distance, when the circumstances, and the present condition of mind of the

accuser, cannot be known. In this case the injury will not be so great to me and to the cause, especially in this country, because my acquaintance is very wide among the Lord's people, and through grace and mercy I am favored with their fellowship and confidence. And those who see this charge will generally consult me in regard to it, as many in this country and in Canada have already done. I have written to Mrs. B., and have called her attention to these things, but have received no answer.

I wish to say in conclusion that I have enjoyed the spiritual sabbath in my soul when I have been enabled to enter into that sweet rest that is in Jesus; and I have not found in my own experience one day of the week more holy than another, nor enjoyed any more spiritual rest because of any difference in the day. I enjoy much comfort in meeting with the dear people of God in his solemn worship on Sunday. But I also meet with and try to preach to them much of my time during the week, for we have many churches here, and all cannot be supplied on Sunday; and I find the week day meetings just as good, only that worldly business necessarily detains some, and sometimes disturbs the quiet of the meeting. Sometimes I fail to enter into rest during all the hours appointed for public worship; and then when alone, perhaps at midnight, my experience of the sabbath will begin. When it pleases my dear Jesus to appear to my soul in his great love and mercy as the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings, then I can say, with the psalmist, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."—Psalm cxviii. 24. This is the Lord's day with me, a day made by the light of his countenance. Then I cannot but keep the sabbath, counting it my delight; not doing my own works, for his works are full, and satisfying, and glorious; not speaking my own words, because his words are enough, and are the joy and rejoicing of my soul, (Isa. lviii. 13, 14; Jer. xv. 16); and not seeking my own pleasure, because I find in his presence fullness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures forevermore. I have had a wonderful experience of this of late, which I would like to speak of particularly, but will not now. Upon a sick bed, where I lay for many days, while in great weakness of body, my soul also was brought down very low and cast into great darkness. Truly I cried unto the Lord out of the depths. My prayer was for a renewed token of his favor. Never can I describe the depths of suffering, nor the strength and urgency of my supplication. At length the dear Lord heard my cry, and gave me this precious token, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins." With these came a degree of peace and assurance, but no especial joy. Then my prayer was that the Holy Spirit might appear as my Comforter, confirming the words unto me, and taking of the things of Jesus and showing them

unto me. O! how my soul clung in my pleading to the promise that he would be given by the Father to those who ask. It seemed long before the answer came; but it came at length most blessedly, and all the darkness is forgotten in the holy joy and heavenly comfort that I have in believing. My heart is melted under a sense of the wonderful goodness of God to the chief of sinners, and I want continually to praise his good and gracious name. Trials and afflictions seem light and easily borne while it is so sweet a sabbath in my soul.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
SILAS H. DURAND.

HERRICK, Bradford Co., Pa., Feb. 25, 1864.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD:—The number of your magazine for February has just reached me. In it I find extracts from my letter sent you last November. The portion referring to the charge against me in your October number you have neither published nor referred to, but have left that charge standing undenied. It was on account of that alone that I wrote. The portion of my letter referring to the sabbath you have mutilated, omitting important parts of my argument, and so presenting me unfairly before your readers upon that subject. A careful and candid examination of your remarks will show to any one that you have not truthfully represented and fairly met what you have published of my statements upon that subject. This would appear much more clearly if you had presented my letter in full in your pages. I will mention two instances. I repeated to you what I said to Mrs. B., "If I had wheat in the field liable to be injured or destroyed, I would bring it into the barn on Sunday, and my conscience would not be hurt." Instead of speaking to this point, and showing me that I would have no right to save my wheat from destruction on Sunday, you say, "Were a member of our church persistently to bring in his wheat on Sunday, we need scarcely say he would be excluded from church fellowship." Now, why did you write that sentence? From what I wrote in the unpublished portion of my letter, and even in what you did publish, you must have known that such would be also the case here. But if one had a sack of flour standing where it was liable to be destroyed, would it be wrong for him to remove it on Sunday? Would it be right for him to stand by and see his shocks of wheat destroyed, and not try to save them because it was Sunday? I will here say that I have never had such a case occur; have never brought in wheat on Sunday, and do not remember that I have ever known any of my brethren do so.

Again, you say, "An objection is made that the word *day* is supplied by the translators in Acts xx. 7 and 1 Corinthians xvi. 2, and so may mean the first something else." Now, I merely mentioned the fact that the word *day* was supplied, but drew no inference. But I had already said,

"The apostles and early disciples appear to have met regularly on the first day of the week." In noticing the Scriptures to which I referred, you omitted my reference to Hebrews iv. 3, 10, which I understand to have a very direct bearing upon the subject of the sabbath.

I leave it with you to consider whether in all this, in publishing a charge against me and refusing to publish my defense, in laying before your readers mutilated portions of my letter, and in your manner of replying to such portions, you have acted in a fair, candid, truthful manner, as becomes an editor, and much more a christian. You express fellowship for my experience, and say on this account you will reply kindly and affectionately. This you have done; at least you have not used harsh language. I do not know why you should. I do not feel any desire to speak harshly to or of you, nor of any one. Harshness and anger and bitterness and wrangling between brethren tire me. There is no one in the world to whom it would gratify me to apply a harsh epithet. Therefore I merely wish to submit to you my judgment concerning the course you have pursued toward me. I do not expect you to publish this. I believe that truth and justice before God and your brethren require that you should do so, and also that you should publish my former letter in full. You owe it to your character as an editor and a christian. But I can see why it would require much true courage to do so. For my own sake I do not now feel the anxiety I did at first. The Lord overrules all, and will cause this, with all things, to work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. He has given me the sweet privilege of trusting and resting in him.

Many years ago I saw that there appeared to be a misunderstanding on the part of many of the Lord's people in England and America with regard to each other; and occasionally I saw in the *Gospel Standard* allusions to our people which I felt must have been made because of this misunderstanding. I knew that the family of God were one everywhere, and I desired to do what I might to break down any existing prejudice between them, so that true fellowship and brotherly kindness might be manifested. To this end I have written private letters, and letters which have been published in the *Standard*. Other dear brethren, among whom I will mention Elder Samuel Danks, of Cincinnati, Ohio, with whom some of your people are personally acquainted, have exerted themselves to the same end. Notwithstanding your unjust course toward me, I do not feel my desire at all abated to see true gospel fellowship maintained between the dear people of God in England and America, and all parts of the world, so far as they have communication with each other.

With regard to what you have written about the law, taking together your remarks in the number

for October and in that for February, I do not know that I can fully and clearly understand your position, and I do not wish in the least degree to misrepresent your views. It is not in my mind now to dwell upon this subject. My own views, so far as expressed, I endeavored to make so plain that I cannot think you understood me to hold that the righteousness of the law is done away. The law, or ministration of death, *written and engraven in stones*, was done away, with its peculiar glory.—2 Cor. iii. 7, 11. But its righteousness is fulfilled in the people of God.—Rom. viii. 4. Its fulfillment by our dear Savior is experienced by them. It is written in their hearts, made their one desire. It is in the spirit and from the heart that they keep it, and not because it is over them as written on tables of stone. Our Savior showed the law to consist of only two commands, and the apostle says, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." The apostle clearly explains the spiritual sabbath, which is fulfilled in those who believe, in Hebrews iv. 3, 10, and other places.

Now, my friend, when you write again upon the law I ask you to be more definite. The law itself was unmistakably definite to the Jews. The language of the gospel I have understood to be very definite in showing the removal of the legal covenant, and a complete deliverance of the church from under the law ministered by Moses, and the liberty of the people of God from all that bondage, and that now there is but one law that rules them, and that is "the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus," and all righteousness is there. If, therefore, you believe that any part of that law is still binding upon the people of God in its letter, I hope you will be explicit and tell us what it is, and where the direction is found; and that you will not leave the manner of keeping the sabbath as indefinite as you have in the *Standard* for October, but will tell how it is commanded to be kept, if not as the Jews were directed to keep it, and where the Gentiles were ever commanded to keep either the seventh or the first day of the week holy; and that you will no more imply that in teaching a deliverance of the church from under the law, your brethren are "aiding the spirit of infidelity to sweep all worship off the face of the earth."

I will send a copy of this letter, with my former one, for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, where most of those who read the *Standard* in this country and in Canada, with some in England, will see it.

I think I can truthfully subscribe myself yours in the fellowship of a hope in the Lord Jesus Christ,

SILAS H. DURAND.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Oct. 21, 1833.

DEAR FRIENDS IN THE LOVE OF GOD:—Feeling something of the sweet peace of God abiding with me, which fills me with love to him and his dear little flock, who are promised

the kingdom according to his good pleasure, I am inclined to express with my pen a few thoughts to you, hoping I am prompted by no fleshly desire.

Dear children, who have been made to see and feel your utter vileness and wretchedness without the righteousness of Christ, and are brought nigh by the blood of Christ, subjects of the great mercy and grace of him whose love caused him to lay down his life for his friends, may I not write freely to you, as one who may expect kind forbearance, and that charity which suffereth long and is kind? We who have received all things at the hand of God, and have been made with shame to confess our sins in his sight, ought we not above all others to be kindly affectioned one toward another? I have felt to shrink somewhat from writing, generally, lest I should give wrong impressions in some way. I dread the thought of overrating or undervaluing anything, for I believe and am sure that only the truth can do any one good. I wish to speak from experience rather than observation, for sight without feeling is vain. Much injury may result from thoughts written, and great misunderstandings may occur, more often the result of walking by sight rather than by faith. It seems to me that our ignorance and blindness, while in a state of death to spiritual enjoyment, cause all our trouble and misunderstanding concerning the motives of our brethren. While, on the other hand, if God's love dwells in his people richly, they will with quiet humility desire to search themselves, and beg that the dear Lord will search them as with a lighted candle, that they may know what manner of spirit they are of. And when such is the case, no fear of being made an offender for a word need be felt; for the fruit of the Spirit dwells in such, and love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, patience, faithfulness and meekness leave no room in the heart of one of God's dear children for unjust criticism. Some choice letters appear in our dear family paper, full of gentleness and love, and express sweet union of heart; and how good it is to find one who claims no superiority over another. May contention and strife be far from the household of God, and may we as dependent subjects lay aside all malice and guile and evil speaking, and strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. May we also realize something of the great responsibility resting upon the dear brethren who labor so unselfishly and faithfully to make the SIGNS a welcome guest in every Primitive Baptist household, and have no inclination to see anything in its columns which cannot feed and encourage the dear people of God, who are hungering and thirsting after the bread and water of life. May we ever have the welfare of the church at heart, and prefer Jerusalem above our chief joy. And the tried servants who are called to minister unto the saints, to speak in the name of Jesus, and be instant, not

only in season, but out of season, who are brought into trying straits, both temporal and spiritual, because of the necessity of the gospel being laid upon them; should we not as a highly favored people encourage them in their labor of necessity, prompted by heavenly love, by our presence and attention at the meetings of the church, and relieve them of temporal embarrassment as much as in us lies, and by so doing lighten their burden, which will cause them to feel that their labor is appreciated, and they can cheerfully live and die in the service of their Master?

After having written thus far, a sort of fear takes possession of me, lest I may seem out of my place in writing of these things, which seem for others rather than one so young and ignorant as I, and so vile by nature. But I have had much exercise upon this subject, and I hope it may be received in the same spirit that it is written, for I feel to hope that I possess a love for the dear people of God. I have such trials of mind on account of my vileness by nature, my desperately wicked heart, my foolish, wandering mind, that I often become wearied and sick of self, and find that earth's joys are fleeting, so that in this world we have no continuing city, but seek one to come, whose maker is God. But the just shall live by faith; and the life I now live, I hope I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I hope and trust that I have been made to worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

"Perishing things of clay,
Born but for one brief day,
May they pass from my heart away,
And Jesus only be mine."

I look about me and behold the tribulation and sorrow that the dear people of God are called through, for they cannot go around it; and I think of a truth, were it not for the faith by which the just shall live, they could not endure the roughness of the way. But that grace which is sufficient for all the tried saints is rich and full, and with such a support life's burden is made bearable.

I think the dear friends will be glad to know that we are permitted sweet seasons, though solemn, at our meetings, in consequence of so many very precious gifts being removed from us. We are few in number, but feel that the Lord is in our midst, and grants his humble servants many sweet morsels for the needy in Israel. Brother Marvin Vail speaks once a month for us, with the ability that God gives him, and the precious messages are soul satisfying. May all who are called to the ministry of the word be led to preach the gospel in its purity, with an eye single to the glory of God. Not as men-pleasers, but as ministers of the truth, using plainness of speech, whether men hear or forbear, and with gentleness and meekness of heart desire only to feed and instruct the spiritual man; for that which the natural man craves and relishes is not gospel truth, and cannot benefit the dear child of God. In writing this I have

added some thoughts recently, as they have occurred to me in connection with those of some weeks ago, according to the above date, and which I did not expect to make any use of, as that writing had so long been laid aside; but following the impression of my mind, together with a strong desire to speak with God's dear children, weak and unworthy as I am, I submit these disconnected thoughts to you, dear brethren, knowing that you will not publish this if there seems to you unprofitable sentiment expressed. I shall only thank you kindly for withholding it from the dear family paper, if it seems best to you to do so. May Israel's God compassionately keep us from error and delusion, and make and keep us simple, teachable and mild.

With christian love, your unworthy sister,

WATIE A. BEARD.

308 STEVENS ST., CAMDEN, N. J., Jan. 17, 1884.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—A few years ago I sent you a letter with a request for your views on a certain passage of Scripture, which seemed to be in some way connected with my experience, which was the parable of the barren or fruitless fig tree, on which you said you did not know at that time that you had any special light. In your letter in reply you requested me to write a more full account of my experience, which I have not done; but I have often thought I would like to do so, and many times it has been impressed on my mind to write, but my inability (with my unworthiness) to write satisfactorily to myself and of interest to others, has been the cause of my delay. In reading the experiences of God's dear children in being brought from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the sons of God, how often have I been led to bless and praise the God of all grace for his goodness and love to the children of men. I have felt, too, that I would like to bear testimony to the truth of the way of life and salvation through the once crucified but now risen and exalted Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins unto Israel. Great is the mystery of godliness; not only in God being manifested in the flesh, but also in the manifestation of his Spirit in our depraved, sinful bodies. So I feel it to be with me in my experience in the way, I believe, in which I was made to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be united with the Old School Baptists, whom I believe to be the children of God.

In the first place I wish to say, in honor of my parents, that I was born of kind and respected parents; though while I lived at home they were not professors, so they did not teach their children religion, but taught them industry and morality. In the spring of the year, when in my eighteenth year, with others I went to an evening meeting to hear an old black man preach. Whether he preached the gospel or not I do not know, as I had no knowledge of anything that he said; but while returning home,

after separating from my company, a little before I got into the house something mysterious to me seemed to pervade my mind. I felt that I was a condemned criminal in the presence of a just and holy God. I seemed to be so overcome with the justice of my condemnation, that when I got into the house I sat down, or rather sank down, on a chair, and O the dreadful feelings I endured! I cannot describe them, but I felt so convinced of the reality of my condition that I was struck dumb, and could not utter a word. I was without any hope of mercy. How long I sat there I know not; but at last there seemed to me to be a light above me, and in that light I saw smiling, lovely faces, looking down upon me with encouraging, sympathizing looks, though they spoke not a word. Two faces I saw were those of my father and mother. This seemed in a measure to relieve me of that terrible distress of mind, and I went to bed. The feelings I had the next day I shall never forget while memory lasts. I seemed to be happy, and my work appeared light and easy. While working in the field with a brother, twice was I just at the point of telling him how happy I felt; but I did not, neither do I remember telling any one. After a few days those feelings wore off in a measure, and I left home to learn a trade. From this time until I was twenty-four all has been a mystery to me, for I never thought myself a christian.

About this time, I think, in the year 1831, the different churches began to hold protracted meetings, which seemed to be the means of getting many converts. During those seven years of my life I was permitted to attend many of their meetings. I cannot say that they ever benefited me much, though I had a desire to go. While learning my trade I attended a protracted meeting in Norristown, Pennsylvania, quite often. There were two ministers who conducted the meetings. One was a Mr. Fletcher, who did most of the preaching, which was mostly the terrors of the law. The other was a Mr. Nichols, who I thought was a beautiful singer, and sang some beautiful verses, that were quite interesting to me. One hymn which seemed to be of interest to me was called "The Turtle-dove." One night after hearing him sing that, in the morning I was told by the person I was learning my trade with, that while asleep I had sang the hymn all through, which I could not have done when awake.

I will have to leave many events of my travels about this time untold, as I am becoming too tedious. There is one circumstance I will relate, as I have often wondered why I did as I did. I went one evening to a Dunkard meeting, on foot and alone, about two miles, and had to cross the Schuylkill River. In doing so I had to ford it, carrying my clothes in my arms while wading through the river. I do not know that I was particularly benefited, only in their external acts or doings, which I thought very be-

coming, as they seemed to manifest much love for one another. Not long after this, for some cause I came to the conclusion to go west; so I left the home of my birth, with all my kindred of the flesh, and started for Ohio. The first Sunday I was in Ohio I heard for the first time an Old School Baptist preach, by the name of Thomas. There seemed to be something in his preaching attractive, which drew my attention. He was telling of something that I wished to hear, and which I wished to know, and which I thought I had never heard of before, which was salvation by grace alone, and not by works that we poor, sinful creatures could do; that by grace are we saved, through faith, which is the gift of God. One year after I came to Ohio I was married to my present wife, she being a member of the Baptist Church, which led us more into their society and to attend their meetings. I did enjoy their meetings, and some of the ministers thought it my duty to go before the church. Why they thought so I could not tell, as I did not think myself a fit subject, or worthy of uniting with any church. My only desire at this time was to know and be assured of some evidence, some special manifestation, that I was a child of God. About this time the church which we attended had their yearly meeting of two days, which I attended, with this great burden of mind. After attending the meeting the first day I returned home with that sincere, heartfelt desire that God would give me some token or manifestation of his love. In this condition I retired to bed, but not to sleep for some time. While meditating upon these things there appeared to me something mysterious, a form like unto the Son of man, with rays of light proceeding from him, like the rays of the natural sun, which lighted the room in which I was. This I thought was something wonderful and strange, which I could not account for. But the day following the last day of the meeting, in the forenoon, a dear old brother preached. He took for his text, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."—John vi. 40. That sermon was indeed a feast to my troubled soul. Not that I saw the Son (Christ) with my natural eyes, but with the eye of faith. I beheld him as the only Savior of sinners. I cannot give a description of the consolations received, by being prepared to receive the truth of the word of God on that day, by one whom I believe was sent of God to preach his gospel. Was not this a manifestation of his love to me? Yet notwithstanding such wonderful displays of his goodness and mercy, I still had one last excuse, and that was that I did not understand the Scriptures, as I thought all christians could read them understandingly and profit thereby. Then I took up the Testament, opened it at the thirteenth chapter of Luke, and began to

read. In the first five verses Christ is teaching the necessity of repentance, which is connected with the remission of sins. Unto those who were pricked in their heart Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The sixth verse of the same chapter begins the parable of the fruitless fig tree being planted in his vineyard. My attention seemed to be brought to meditate, and to read again and again. There seemed to be something applicable to my situation, so I continued to read on, until I came to the eleventh verse, which seemed to afford more light, in the case of the woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound eighteen years, being loosed from that bond. When the master of the vineyard came, seeking fruit for three years, and finding none, he said to the dresser, "Cut it down." Then he answered and said unto him, "Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down." The application of it to me appeared in this way: I was the fruitless tree; the Lord was the planter; the Spirit was the dresser. Justice said, Cut it down; mercy said, Spare it. The fruit is the works of the Spirit, not of the flesh. So I was led, as I hope, by the Spirit to go before the church with my little experience, in much fear and trembling. I was received, and baptized by Elder Thomas, the one I first heard preach, which is about forty-two years ago. Yet notwithstanding all my barrenness, I am still spared.

Dear brother, I have written much more than I expected to, and perhaps more than is profitable, yet I feel that the half is not told. When I am led to meditate on the love of God, it seems to spread out like an ocean, and like one of old I can say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" I might have written more in connection with my experience and of my travels through the wilderness; but what I have written is for your perusal, believing you to be sent by the Master Builder as a teacher unto his church. If you discover anything in what I have written which is not in accord with the word of God, or if I have erred in any way, I do desire to be better instructed. It is the truth only that will do me good; therefore I do desire a reply when convenient. This is at your disposal, as you may think best.

If not deceived, I am your brother in tribulation,

S. G. SUPPLEE.

OTEGO, N. Y., Jan. 25, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I have found my thoughts going out and reaching after the dear writers and readers of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; and well it may be called by that title, for

the comfort it brings to the many thousands of the Lord's dear children, scattered as they are in different parts of the globe, not hearing the pure gospel preached, and isolated from any of their dear kindred in Christ. But while reading of the trials, joys and deliverances of those who write, they are told much of their own experience, which is often a surprise to them, to know that those who are strangers in the flesh should have just such thought and feeling, both of the flesh and of the Spirit, as they have had, and would no doubt have been ashamed to tell them. But while reading, there is such a melting in our souls, our hard and vile thoughts are brought down, and for a time are put out of sight, while such love and union is felt that we find tears of joy springing up from our heart. Then we hold in our fond embrace all the redeemed of our God, feeling that assurance that we are one in Christ Jesus, born not of man, but of God. My dear brethren and sisters, I believe I know this by experience. I can testify to it, and I believe I love to, but am often ashamed of myself. When I see so much of the depravity of my wicked heart, I wonder that I dare speak of the goodness of our God. But we need never expect that the flesh will harmonize with the Spirit while we sojourn here below, for they are contrary one to the other, and will thus remain until death is swallowed up in victory. Then we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known.

"There sweeps no desolating wind
Across that calm, serene abode;
The wanderer there a home shall find,
Within the paradise of God."

The little band of brethren and sisters at Otego are, I believe, dwelling together in unity, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, for which great blessing we would adore and praise the name of the Lord. It has been his great pleasure to cause to go in and out before us his servants, who have not itching ears, but those who have not and do not skun to declare the whole counsel of God. The fourth chapter of 2 Timothy now comes into my mind. The charge and the command is to preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. It seems that not one word in this verse can be separated from the other, and doctrine seems to make all complete. I believe I have heard many a discourse preached without hearing the words election, predestination or foreordination used. The discourse may be full of doctrine and experience, but I love the words which I have mentioned. Once they were a terror to me. I wanted to know them with my natural powers. But the Lord's ways are not our ways. When it was his will and pleasure to show me his revealed word, I believe I understood in a measure the foreordination, election and predestination absolute, as coming from one who spake and it was done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

"This God is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
His love is as great as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end."

Many things come to my mind of which I would like to speak, but I hope not to be tedious; and whatever I may write I will leave to the better judgment of the editors of our family paper, to do with as they see best. The goodness of God to us a church and people has been greatly manifested in sending his chosen servants to minister to us of the riches of his grace. It is now a little past thirteen years since his will was fulfilled in sending Elder S. H. Durand to us, strangers in the flesh to each other; and in the nearly three years that he attended regularly with us, it was a time long to be remembered. We may well call it a golden day. The Lord gathered his dear, wandering, footsore and heavy laden children into the fold. He brought them to his banqueting house, and his banner over them was love. Also, it was his will to make manifest his trembling servant, our brother Bundy, who, like many others, chose death rather than speak publicly in the name of the Lord. But the Lord had said to his servant, "Go speak to the people in my name." He had fought and struggled for years, and now the appointed time had come. And I believe it was also ordained that brother Durand should come here at that time, to be a father and helpmeet to our dear brother Bundy. We greatly desire that the love and good will may continue, and that the tie which has bound us together may last while we dwell on these mortal shores. Others of the Lord's ministers who have visited us, we would be glad to welcome again, who came in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace. Of brother Bundy's gift, the churches to whom he has been sent know better than I can tell them, as experience is far the best teacher. We are glad to say that our dear brother Bundy is thus far restored from his severe illness, so that he returned home on the evening of the twenty-third of January, 1884, and is now doing well. It looked to all mortal minds that his work in this world was done; but we feel that his mission is not filled yet, or his discharge would have come. May our dear brother be restored to the churches again. If it be God's holy will, we know it will be so. Now I would say to the dear friends who were so kind and untiring in caring for the Lord's dear servant, The Lord will reward you. This is all I can say; but I hope we may ever be mindful of the good work, and hope if such should ever be our lot that we may have strength and willing hearts and hands to do the same. It was my great privilege to attend the yearly meeting at Osborne Hollow on the ninth and tenth of this month. The severe storm without, and the sad tidings of Elder Bundy's illness, cast a deep gloom on those who were assembled; but as the meeting opened with such great solemnity, it did seem as if every heart was filled with the presence of Israel's God, ready to

receive the wonderful truth which was so ably and clearly set forth by our ministering servants, Elders Durand, Vail and Campbell. The trumpet gave the certain sound, and was all of one piece. It could truly be said to the Lord's children, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." It was a time long to be remembered, when Zion's children were enabled to sit together in heavenly places in Christ, without a jar. How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.

I would like to write a few lines in regard to what has been written in the *Gospel Standard*. We have taken it for several years. Brother Durand was our agent, who sent for it. We have enjoyed reading it very much, but could see plainly that in many points the writers saw only "men as trees walking." I understand that the SIGNS is taken in England by some of the Lord's children, and it may be that the eyes of their understanding may be opened to see beyond the traditions of men. Even if these are men of God, their traditions are not of God, but wholly of men. I am an English woman, born in that country, and lived there over seventeen years. I have not forgotten the iron yoke which the people were under. I never, when a child, believed in it; but why, I could not tell. My feelings have been hurt by the sarcastic and unscriptural remarks which have been given in the *Standard*. They are far from being gentlemanly, yet coming from one who professes to be born of the Spirit. And for those who live in America and enjoy its freedom, they are no credit to the Primitive or Old School Baptists here, nor to the Strict Baptists (so-called) in England. I believe that those uneasy spirits who are trying to stir up strife among us, as well as in England, are truly set forth somewhere in the New Testament, by the apostles of the Lamb, while writing of certain ones who should come in among the saints unawares. The churches are warned to look out for such. And so far as our dear ministers claiming titles, we feel to say boldly, It is false. But it looks as if the one who asked that question was desirous of that standing. No doubt the adversary has told him that he ought to preach. I fear he has never realized the passing between the upper and nether millstone. But while the billows roll from shore to shore, there is sweet comfort in the assurance that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

I will now close this with my yearly greeting, desiring that some dear child of God may be comforted thereby. With much love to all the dear household of faith, affectionately your sister in hope,

CHRISTIANN L. FRENCH.

HERRICK, Bradford Co., Pa., Feb. 20, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have obtained the writer's consent to send you the following for publication in

the SIGNS, if you think best. It has been profitable and comforting to me.
Yours in christian love,
SILAS H. DURAND.

CHARLOTTE, Mich., Dec., 1883.

MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER DURAND:—If one so unworthy as I am permitted to call you by the endearing name, brother. I personally am not acquainted with you, but I have read a number of your communications through the SIGNS, which I have had the privilege of reading for over thirty-five years. In your communication of December fifteenth I can bear witness to your expression when you spoke of the nearness of Jesus to you in your afflictions. It called to my mind some of the past visits of Jesus to me, near forty years ago, while on my bed. Before that I thought I had to assume a certain position; but at the time I speak of, Jesus my Savior and my God dwelt in me, and I knew he was mine and I was his. Then I could indorse the language of the apostle Paul, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." And then by that faith I was enabled to see Jesus, my near Kinsman, at the right hand of his Father, and his amazing intercession for poor, unworthy me. And by that faith I had boldness to enter into that within the veil, whither Jesus the forerunner has entered. So then I could draw nigh to God, having my heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and my body washed with pure water; and then my confidence in the flesh ceased. Since then I have gone halting, and few presents have I for Esau in order to reconcile him to me. Should I, it might appease him for a short time only, for he is a very unreconciled old man.

Jesus said to his disciples, The children of the bridechamber cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them; but the hour cometh when the bridegroom shall be taken away, and then shall ye fast in those days. As it was with the disciples, so it is with all of God's little ones; when first wedded to Jesus there is a season of rejoicing. This puts me in mind of Moses' law. When a man in Israel married a wife he was exempt from war for one year, and staid at home with his wife to nourish and cherish her. This is a mystery, says Paul, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. The year is past, and now the war begins internally. Our foes begin to show themselves. We fancied they were all slain. Now the poor child by the light that is in him sees that carnal self wants to be gratified. He feels revengeful toward some person that he fancied has done him an injury.

And now the writer will tell you of a trial he had when he was only about three years old spiritually. At this time I was living on my farm in Richland County, Ohio. My charge was wife and some four children. The road lay near our house, leading to a village some four miles distant. There lived one-half a mile south of

me a man who was quite profligate in his habits. At that time he was very insulting to my children, so that they were afraid of him. I felt a disposition to retaliate, which I did by calling him some malicious names, which excited him very much, so that he threatened to whip me; and from every appearance he could have done it. Before this occurrence my peace was as a river. I could say, If a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. The peace that I had heretofore was gone, and gloominess shrouded my mind, insomuch that I was lost in amazement. My hope seemed to be clear gone. While in this trial I heard a sermon preached. My natural understanding could say the preaching was truth, but I could not feed upon the truth. There was no food for me, and the sweet peace I once enjoyed was clean gone. But before I got home the difficulty between me and my neighbor came to my mind, and the first impression was that I must go to him and acknowledge my fault. After many hard conflicts I went, but he was not at home. Then the carnal mind tried to make me believe I had done my duty, and now stay away from such a corrupt man. And this I should have done if my peace had returned to me. But I loved my former peace so well that I went the second time, and he was not at home. Then the tempter said, Surely it is enough; now stay away. But the darkness still remained, and through much struggling I went the third time. He was not at home, but on my way home I met him. His looks were terrible. I accosted him, "Sir, this is the third time I have been to your house in order to see you." The answer was, "What do you want of me?" "Sir, you know that I profess christianity." "I know you do," was the reply; "what of that?" "Why, I have wronged you, and I want you to forgive me." At this the poor man, trembling and sobbing and shedding tears, cried out, "You have not abused me; it is I that have abused you." From that minute my peace returned, with all my former enjoyment, and my enemy was at peace with me.

Perhaps the reader of this scribble is ready to say, What of all that? The apostle Paul says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I learned that these conflicts were some of the all things. But what was the result? I learned that I had been harboring a vile enemy to destroy my peace, and that I would be as justified in harboring an incendiary to burn my buildings over my head. I learned that "in keeping God's commandments there is great reward." And I learned that "Great peace have they that love thy law."

Since then I have often wondered why it is apparently such a great task for many professed christians, when overtaken in a fault, to frankly acknowledge one to the other; and that when compelled they simply force

out, "If I have done wrong, I hope you will forgive me." I cannot see any great sorrow in such; and if not, there is no joy attends such.

Now, brother Durand, I am in my seventy-second year, and forty-nine of that last October since Jesus appeared precious to me. I am quite nervous, but may be you can read my poor scribbling. Please reply to me if you think best.

From yours in tribulation,
AMOS DILLIN.

P. S.—If you see fit to correspond with me, and my health remains as at present, perhaps I will write you my experience, and why I believe in the eternal union of Christ the Head and the church his body.

A. D.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Feb. 19, 1884.

ELDER BEEBE'S SONS—BELOVED BRETHREN:—I have been a subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for more than twenty-five years, and in all that time I have not felt that it was my duty to complain of anything that I have found in the paper. It is true that in some of the communications I have found ideas which were dark to me, but that I do not consider very strange, for there is a great deal that I do not know. I have felt to thank God that he has given to the editors of the SIGNS so much grace and wisdom, and enabled them to send forth a paper filled with so much encouragement, comfort, consolation and good admonition to the saints of the living God.

I saw one thing in the last SIGNS (No. 4) which hurt my feelings. It was to learn that some had been censuring you because the publication of the Church History had been delayed so long. It appears to me that such a thing is unreasonable, if not unjust. I think it would be well for those who do so to read again brother Chick's communication on fault-finding; or, better still, let them read Philippians ii. 3, 4: "In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." If we observe this rule we shall stop and think more than once before we find much fault with a brother. I must believe that brother Hassell is doing all he can to complete his part of the work on the Church History.

Your reply to "J. H. C.," of Colorado, was plain truth, and to the point. In a special manner your remarks on Matthew xii. 31, 32 were good to me. This Scripture had been dark to me; but while reading your remarks the cloud lifted, the light shined, and I felt to praise God for the gifts that he had given to his servants. I thought then how easy it is for any one to write or speak about that which has been revealed to them; or, in other words, how easy it is for any one to speak that which they do know, and testify to that which they have seen (by revelation). God has placed the members of the body as it has pleased him; and he has bestowed the gifts as it

has pleased him. God has done this "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." This should be the object and aim of all God's servants; and where they do this there will be little or no clashing or disputing, because everything will be said and done in love.

Now, dear brethren, may the God of all grace comfort your hearts, and grant you all that grace, wisdom and patience that you need to still send forth a paper filled with that which shall gladden the hearts of the poor and afflicted sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

H. CAMPBELL.

CALEDONIA, Miss., Jan. 1, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish you a happy new year, and the same to all my Father's children, wherever they are. May grace, mercy and peace be multiplied in such abundance as to enable us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called; that we may live in peace and love, and thus adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all our thoughts, words and actions, through all our remaining days; that we may finish our course in love and christian fellowship; and when we shall be called to leave the walks of men, may we then be able to lay down these mortal bodies in the exercise of a living faith, and be borne away to the mansions of everlasting bliss, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary will be forever at rest. Brethren Beebe, when your father, our much esteemed brother, was called to lay down the editorial pen and go to his rest in heaven, I suffered a great deal of uneasiness, for fear that our highly esteemed paper, the SIGNS, would lose some of its editorial sweetness and edification, for the want of some one to take up and wield the pen of the senior editor. But thanks be to the God of all grace, who rules and governs all things according to the counsel of his own will, he hath chosen and called our dear brother, W. L. Beebe, to take up the editorial pen; and we feel to thank God that it has not lost any of its sweetness and edification of the scattered children of God, who are scattered all over our broad land. I have been much comforted in reading the rich communications of the brethren and sister who contribute so much comfort to the saints, and make the SIGNS a welcome visitor to our firesides. I have long entertained the same view in regard to the Deity as expressed by Elder Purington. Dear brethren, in reading the editorial in the last number of Vol. 51, my mind was caused to review the past; and finding so much imperfection, I was made to grieve over the past, and the desire arose in my mind that, if spared, my future walk should be more circumspect than in the past. For fear of wearying you with this imperfect communication, I will come to a close by saying that, if God so directs, you will hear from me again,

in a concise sketch of my travels for a period of about eighty years, fifty-one of which I have been an Old School Baptist, and forty-six years in the ministry.

As ever, your brother in hope of a better life,

S. C. JOHNSON.

OLIVET, Iowa, Jan. 6, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Again I am required to write to you, in order to send my remittance. I have just read the first number of the SIGNS for this year. The editorial introduction, and also the articles on the sabbath, by brethren Purington and Stipp, are much to my approbation. But the question arises in my mind, Is not the first day of the week to be honored in some way? Not, however, as a sabbath in the place of the seventh day. While we find the establishment of the first day as a sabbath by Constantine, may we not look upon this act in somewhat the same light as we look upon the wicked act of the crucifixion of Christ, of doing that which God determined should be done? That is, to honor the resurrection day of Christ, which is the first day of the week; not as a sabbath, but as entering into the new dispensation; much like Israel of old in keeping the passover, in remembrance of their coming out from Egyptian bondage. So we, on each and every first day morn, should remember our great deliverance from the bondage of sin, and also render a song of thanksgiving to the Captain of our salvation, which was sealed to us who have entered into that rest, in the triumph over death and the grave. What an endless chain of thought!

Before I drop my pen I feel to say a word in connection with the article written by Elder Chick on the word "Immanuel." I was well pleased with his remarks on that subject. Oh how our inmost thoughts go out in thanksgiving to "God with us!" One may come into my house, sit in the chair at my side, dine with me at my table, near my side, and even lodge upon my bed, and confer all that man could do for me; but "God with us" is more than all this. Not God at us, but in us, the hope of glory. So near us that all our sins fell on him. "God with us" to take our sins away. We may talk our life away upon the subject of relationship, but the word "Immanuel," "God with us," is more than pen or tongue can tell. If I were able I would like to dwell upon this subject with my pen; yet my heart and mind delight to dwell upon the soul-reviving and comforting thought, "God with us." I will close. I hope I have not hurt the feelings of any one. I remain as ever, yours in love,

AARON WOOD.

ALBANY, Mo., Dec. 31, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Through the abounding mercies of our covenant-keeping God our life is yet spared, and we are nigh the close of another year. Solemn reflections crowd upon us in looking over the

past, while we tremblingly hope and trust in an unseen hand to direct us safely through the inevitable developments of the years to come. "We walk by faith, not by sight." Thus while we realize our insufficiency and utter helplessness, in and of ourselves, the Lord our God becomes our only sure and safe retreat. We cannot look elsewhere for support and strength and faith to wait all the days of our appointed time, until our change come. The past has proved to us that the bounds of our habitation, beyond which we cannot pass, are known to our God. Also, that every affliction and trial has been meted out to us which he in his wisdom saw was for our good. Notwithstanding, while passing under the rod, it is grievous to be borne. In the past year many of the saints have passed through sorrows such as they never suffered before; yet the Lord has tempered the winds, and softly whispered comfort beyond their expectations, and administered to them the sovereign assurance that "All things work together for good to them that love God," and, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Among the number of the suffering saints (though unworthy to claim the promises) who have been miraculously preserved through heart-crushing sorrows and trials, I, a poor sinner, am found. Through grace alone can we bear the stroke sent upon us, and endure our afflictions, which work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory.

"Not a single shaft shall hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."

In the humble hope that we may all be prepared to stand in our lot, trusting alone in the Lord, who is declared to be a sun and a shield, and will give grace and glory, and no good thing withhold from them that walk uprightly, I will close. Do with this as you think best, and pray for me and mine.

Your brother in the feeblest hope,
ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

NEAR COLLINS, Ark., Jan. 20, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE—DEARLY BELOVED:—Having read with interest and unreserved approval the articles of brethren Stipp and Purington, I desire to drop a line for their encouragement, and also for the encouragement of any dear, feeble lamb of the flock who may be entangled by the sophistry of the daughters of Babylon on the subject of the man-made sabbath. Their arguments and scriptural deductions, I think, are conclusive and unanswerable, and I do hope that the same may be sealed by the blessed Spirit to the edification and strengthening of many of the household of God. It is a subject upon which I have thought much, and have long been satisfied that the item of the sabbath in the ceremonial law was given, like all other items of that law, to the Jews, (or Israel), and came in and went out when all the residue of that law came in and went out, and was as perfectly fulfilled by Jesus, the Mediator, as any other part of the law which God gave Israel. I wish you, brethren Beebe, all covenant blessings, both temporal and spiritual, and hope you may be sustained in your arduous work by the help and love of the brethren and the sustaining grace of our God. I am nearly seventy-four years old. It is nearly half a century since I became a Baptist.

A. TOMLIN.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

TO OUR DELINQUENTS.

THERE is nothing connected with the business part of conducting our paper more difficult than to determine what course to pursue in regard to our delinquent subscribers. If we discontinue them, some take offense; and if we continue them, many become so careless that years elapse before we hear from them, if we ever do; and very often, after the subscription has become several years in arrears, we receive notice from the postmaster that the party is either dead or moved from the place.

For fear of giving offense to some of the more sensitive ones, we have deferred for a long time the discontinuing of any subscriptions on account of their delinquency, until now our list has become so encumbered that we are obliged to prune it; and before our next number we shall strike from it those from whom we have not heard in a long time, and send them statements of their accounts, and request that all such will send the amounts due at once, as we are in need of the money to assist in defraying the expense of furnishing them the paper.

It frequently occurs that after sending out bills we receive replies that sickness in the family has incurred heavy doctor bills, or other losses have so embarrassed them that they cannot pay the account at the time; and thus the matter is passed by, and that is the last we ever hear from it. Now we would ask all such, Is a doctor's bill or any other debt any more of an obligation than the amount they owe us for their paper? Would it not be as well to deduct the small amount due us from a large bill, and pay us, as to pay the full amount of the large bill and let our account go unpaid altogether?

The amount to each one is small, but these hundred's of small accounts aggregate to a large sum, and we cannot afford to lose it. We have waited for years for our account, and it certainly is entitled to as much consideration as any debt more recently contracted.

DR. H. A. HORTON'S MIASMA ANTIDOTE.

ON the last page of this issue of our paper will be seen a renewal of the advertisement of the Miasma Antidote originally compounded by Dr. H. A. Horton, son-in-law of the late editor. To many of our readers this medicine is well and favorably known, as shown by the hundreds of testimonials and commendations sent us when we published this advertisement some years ago; and we now run this notice without any charge to brother Welch, but purely in consideration of the interests of our suffering brethren and friends.

BACK NUMBERS.

AFTER this issue we shall discontinue sending the back numbers to the commencement of the volume to new subscribers, unless especially requested to do so. We still have quite a number on hand, and can supply them when desired. The principal advantage to a subscriber in commencing with the first of a volume is that when he gets the last number he has the index to all his numbers, and everything complete.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

ISAAC AND ISHMAEL.

"FOR it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar."—Gal. iv. 22-24.

Brother J. Darbrow, of Kentucky, asks, "What promise was it by which Isaac was born? And was there no promise of salvation to the son of Hagar?" By reference to the record it will be seen that by the word of the Lord the promise of a son was given to Abraham, when according to nature it was impossible that he should realize the fulfillment of that promise. Ishmael was not recognized by the Lord as the promised seed, but after years had passed the promise was verified in the birth of Isaac. As to the literal circumstance, this was the promise by which Isaac was born, and in which Ishmael had no part. Therefore with his mother he was cast out of the house of Abraham, and was not heir with Isaac. In this promise nothing but the temporal salvation or preservation of the family of Abraham was directly expressed, either in reference to Isaac or Ishmael, though there was a promise of the natural preservation of Ishmael, which was given after he was born, and that promise was connected with the announcement that "In Isaac shall thy seed be called."—Genesis xxi. 12, 13. Accordingly, while the natural descendants of Ishmael were strong nations, they were never recognized as the nation on whom rested the peculiar blessing bestowed upon faithful Abraham. In that promise given to Abraham eternal salvation was not secured to all his posterity, nor was that salvation confined to his children after the flesh. "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 29.

The true meaning of this record concerning these two sons of Abraham is explained in the text, where we are told that these things are an *allegory*. This is a figure of speech in which a great fact is expressed by a literally true relation of a circumstance in which that fact is illustrated. The purpose of this record is not merely to trace the descent of these nations, but in the statement given we have the eternal truth of the election of God presented in connection with his sovereign power in the salvation of his people from their sins. This miracle of grace is beyond the comprehension of finite intelligence, hidden from the wise and prudent,

and known to babes only by direct revelation from God. As all the natural seed of Abraham are not children of the promise, so those who are chosen of God in Christ Jesus among all nations are in the true sense children of the promise; and no created being has the right to limit the election of grace to any nation, or to deny the sovereign power of God to call his sons from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth, whether they be found among the children of Ishmael or in the desolate mountains of Moab. Absolute sovereignty was displayed in calling Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, though he was an Amorite; and that power is still able to call whom he will. So, in the new song of praise to the glorified Lamb they sung, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. v. 9, 10. None are beyond the power of that grace, whatever may be their natural lineage or their sinfulness; and no advantages of birth or education can qualify any sinner to sing that song without the experience of the grace of God that bringeth salvation. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Rom. x. 12, 13.

The glorious truth declared in this allegory is stated by the inspired apostle in the last verse of the text. These two mothers are the two covenants; Agar is the Sinai covenant, and as many as are of that mother are in bondage which can never allow them liberty. "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." This is the freedom of the sons of God; and it is important to remember that this liberty is not attained by diligent toil, but is the birthright of all them whom Paul includes with himself as being children of this free mother. Hence he goes on to exhort these free children to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Judaizing teachers had troubled the churches of Galatia with the doctrine that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised and kept the law of Moses. This was the yoke against which Paul was admonishing them; and it is very essential to the comfort of the saints still to heed the admonition. The whole system of creature works is included in this yoke; for since the saints are not justified before God by the works of the law, it is evident that they cannot hope to find that justification in any other works of their own. The subjects of divine grace are dead to the law by the body of Christ. As he died for all whose sins be bore, they all were dead by that one sacrifice. Therefore, "Ye are not under the law, but under

grace." The old objection is still urged against this truth, as it was in the apostles' day. It was then charged that they made void the law, that is, that they were antinomians. The apostle refuted that slander, and his defense is ample for the saints now.—See Rom. iii. 31. The argument of which this text is a part conclusively settles the point that the gospel dispensation is not a mere supplement or modification of the Sinai covenant; but that it is as distinct from that legal system as is light from darkness, or the substance from the shadow. So, Paul says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."—Col. ii. 16, 17. As the free born Isaac was not subject to the bondage under which Ishmael was born, so the gospel church is free from the yoke of perpetual servitude which rests upon all who seek to be justified by the works of the law of Moses. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John i. 17.

It is not revealed in the Scriptures, neither is it profitable for us to know, whether Ishmael was a subject of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. No created being is competent to judge of that matter concerning him or any sinner. We know that the grace of God is abundant for the salvation of all who were included in the gift of God to our Redeemer in the covenant of redemption. None of them can be lost, for they are all kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Ishmael is presented in the allegory as representing the children of Abraham under the Sinai covenant. These were under bondage, and could not inherit the liberty of the saints under the gospel dispensation, for that liberty was not revealed while the legal covenant remained. So, it is said of some of them, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. xi. 39, 40. Evidently those referred to were subjects of salvation by grace, yet they did not inherit the liberty which God provided for his people in the gospel day. Under the Sinai covenant there was no distinction among the natural Israelites between those whose faith rested in the promised Savior and those who had not that faith; but under the perfect law of liberty the free born children of God are clearly manifest as being born of incorruptible seed, even of the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. Being thus made free by the Son, the saints are now free indeed. In this allegory these are represented by Isaac, the son of the free woman. As it is explained in the text that mount Sinai which gendereth to bondage is Agar the bond-woman, her son is the type of such as look to that legal covenant for righteousness. But all such are condemned, for that all have

sinned; and the law knowing no mercy, cannot give life. In the allegory, therefore, Ishmael must be cast out. On the other hand, Isaac was the heir of promise; not because he was by nature better than Ishmael, but because he was the free born son of Sarah the free mother. So, the saints under the gospel dispensation are the children of Jerusalem which is above (that law), and is free from its rigorous exactions; therefore her children are not under the law, but under grace.—Rom. vi. 14. These free born children are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.—Rom. iii. 24. In this justification they have that righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, for it is the perfect righteousness of Jesus their Redeemer. This justification is by virtue of their birth, and not attained by their works. Hence, it is impossible that any sinner can do anything to secure the salvation of himself or others, since it is still true that the blessing of faithful Abraham is confined to his seed, and that seed is Christ, including the Head and all the fullness of his body. The members of his body are manifested by being born of the Spirit; which birth proves them to be the children of promise, and reveals their unity with Christ, who is the seed to whom the promises were made.—Gal. iii. 16. There is no promise of eternal life to any created being except that which is given to the saints in Christ. All that the Father giveth him have that life in him. But those who still look to their own works for justification do not enjoy that liberty to which the saints are called. Such seem to prefer the bondage of Ishmael rather than the freedom of Isaac. Whether naturally of the seed of Abraham or Gentiles after the flesh, if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed; and without that freedom which is the heritage of the children of God, no earthly advantage of parentage or education can give liberty to the servants of sin. Those who are born of God are heirs to the heritage of righteousness in Christ. This is freedom from the yoke of bondage under the law of sin and death. There is no condemnation to them. Yet when they look to their own works for righteousness, they are robbed of that rest which is their birthright. This often brings the saints into trouble and perplexity. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."—Heb. iv. 1. This heritage of rest belongs to every one who loves righteousness and hates sin. If any would continue in sin from the fact that the grace of God secures the final salvation of all who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, the evidence is that such still love sin, and to them it is not a burden. But all who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall certainly be filled, for such are already blessed.—Matthew v. 6.

FOREKNOWLEDGE.

"PLEASE give your views on Jeremiah xix. 5. This passage was quoted by a learned man to prove that God did not foreknow all things. 'They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind.'

J. M. W."

REPLY.

The latter clause of this verse does not refer to the sin which is charged against the Jews as being something which the Lord had not known; but the declaration is that the Lord had neither commanded nor spoken to authorize their wicked idolatry, neither had it come into his mind to speak such command as would authorize that idolatry. The same form of expression is used in chapter seven, verse thirty-one, where it is written *heart* instead of *mind*, as in this text and in chapter thirty-two, verse thirty-five. The clear import of the expression in each passage is that the Lord not only disclaims most emphatically that he had commanded the wickedness denounced, but he says that it had not come into his mind, or heart, to give such command. This understanding is confirmed by the express injunction which forbade the very idolatry denounced in these passages, recorded in the law of God as given to them. "And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord."—Lev. xviii. 21.

That a professedly learned man was obliged to resort to so evident a misapplication of Scripture as in this case to sustain the absurd theory on which all antichristian religion is founded, is conclusive evidence that he can find no support for such doctrine in the Bible. But if he could prove the falsehood to be true, what would be the necessary consequence? If God does not work all things after the counsel of his own will, and declare the end from the beginning, then there can be no assurance that he will finally succeed in saving any sinner, however he might desire to do so. If this perversion of the text could be sustained, it would therefore only prove that there is no certainty of salvation for any sinner. This horrible falsehood could yield no comfort to the learned man, even if he could sustain it. But thanks be to his unfailling purpose of grace, the immutable counsel of God is confirmed by his own direct assertion, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. While there is no power but the omnipotent word of the Lord which can make the sinner rejoice in this unchanging truth, it is well for the saints to remember that in the immutability of the purpose of God their salvation is secured. No truth is more clearly written in the Scriptures than the unlimited sovereignty and infinite knowledge of God, who is not subject to change, and who inhabiteth eternity. He "dwells in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the

contrite ones."—Isaiah lvii. 15. His dwelling with the poor ones described is as permanent as his abode in his own eternity. Since the serpent beguiled Eve it has been the characteristic mark of all false doctrine that it denies the certainty of the fulfillment of the word of the Lord. Then, he admitted to the woman what God had said, but denied the truth of that word. So all opposers of the doctrine of God our Savior still follow that pattern. But the dear tempted saints ever prove that God is true, in that he still dwells with them, and "is a very present help in trouble." If it could be shown that even one event had happened without the control of God, the foundations of the hope of every saint would be destroyed, and then "what can the righteous do?" But for their assurance it is written, "The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men."—Psalm xi. 4.

It is not strange that even those enemies of the truth who boast of their great learning should display such folly in endeavoring to prove that the word of God is false, for their system of religion cannot stand in the light of revealed truth. Therefore, they are compelled to contradict the revealed testimony in order to build their false theory. Doubtlessly this "learned man" sincerely described the god he serves when he said that he "did not foreknow all things." Those who worship such idols do not know the only true God. And Moses wrote, "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."—Deuteronomy xxxii. 31. As none but our Lord can reveal the knowledge of God, which is life eternal, it is vain to argue with those who worship idols, trying to make them see the truth. Their sophistry may be exposed for the benefit of the children of God whom they have entangled in their nets; but it is not profitable to engage in discussion with the blind, hoping to convince them even that light is clearer than darkness, for they can see no more at noon than at midnight. No reasoning can enable them to see the truth of God; but when God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, then they will be qualified to testify to the truth of his infinite glory. Until they are thus taught they are as destitute of power to receive the truth as those naturally blind are powerless to see the beauty of the rainbow. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."—1 Cor. ii. 14-16.

MARRIAGES.

ON March 6, 1884, by Elder William J. Purington, at the residence of R. M. J. Blackwell, Mr. Jacob P. Golden and Miss Ann E. Drake, both of Hopewell, N. J.

FEBRUARY 21, 1884, at the bride's home, by Elder William Grafton, Mr. Edgar Moon, of Cecil Co., Md., and Miss Maggie J. Daverport, of Lancaster Co., Pa.

FEBRUARY 27, 1884, at the house of the bride's cousin, J. N. Henderson, Towsentown, Baltimore Co., Md.; by the same, Mr. Wm. H. Tucker and Miss Georgiana Grafton, both of Harford Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request I send you for publication a notice of the death of **Deacon Isaac Meredith**, who died at his residence in Knox Co., Ohio, Feb. 11, 1884. He was born in Licking Co., Ohio, Jan. 25, 1809, which made his age 75 years and 17 days. He was married to Miss Margaret Clark, March 22, 1832, with whom he lived a most exemplary life for forty-eight years and nine months. Since her death he has remained a widower. I cannot name his disease, as there seemed to be a complication of diseases, which has caused him much suffering at times for many years. But his children, all being situated near him, were ever ready with their untiring efforts to administer that oil of kindness which soothes the palpitating heart and warms the chilled and aching body; more especially his youngest daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Davidson, with whom he lived. Their kind hospitality shown to the many visiting friends, (who came from far and near to see the afflicted father) will not soon be forgotten. The subject of this notice received a hope in Christ in the year 1845, was baptized by Elder James W. Biggs, and received into the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church called Hartford, situated in Dalaware Co., Ohio. In 1846 he was called to serve as deacon, and continued to serve until his health failed, always being faithful to his trust, and the duties that devolved on him. Many years have we looked upon him as being about ready to depart and be with his loved Jesus. We remember over thirteen years ago, he was brought very low on a sick bed, and to all appearance he was sleeping that sleep from which none ever wake to weep. But it was God's good pleasure to arouse him to consciousness. He told us he thought he had died, and was received into heaven. He said he could not describe what a glorious place it was. All was happiness and love. But Jesus took him by the hand and told him he could not stay, but that he should come after a while. He told him to go back to his church, and he would give him strength to go and tell his servant to preach from this text, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Unexpectedly to all, he was given strength to go to the church, when it looked like his bodily strength could not support him. He told what his Master had directed him to do, and the pastor, Elder Hanover, preached from the text with much power, to the great satisfaction of father Meredith and the church. Since that time he has been waiting patiently for his release, much of the time suffering very much, but ever rejoicing in hope, looking forward to that blessed rest that belongs to the people of God, always pointing to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. He engaged himself in setting his house in order, both temporally and spiritually, leaving nothing undone. He was a good adviser, being fully persuaded in his own mind concerning the things of the kingdom, and of a good hope through grace. His heart was enabled to sing praises to God in his hours of greatest suffering, and while he was in the agonies of death he sang the 1236th hymn, Beebe's Collection.

"When death appears before my sight
In all his dire array,
Unequal to the dreadful fight,
My courage dies away," &c.
He said to his children and friends around

his bed, "How glorious it will be to meet around that dazzling throne, to part no more." And reaching out his arms, with an effort to arise, he said, "Jesus, sweet Jesus, take me home." Thus he died; and truly I think we can say, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. Words fail me, to tell of his patient, peaceful, quiet life. He was known only to be loved, and those who knew him best loved him most. More than a year ago he selected the words, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power: but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Rev. xx. 6. He also requested Elder L. B. Hanover to preach his funeral, which he did, on Wednesday after he died on Monday. He delivered a very able discourse, dwelling more particularly on the first resurrection. Elder Powell was present also. The services were held in the Hartford meeting house, after which his remains were taken to the Trenton Cemetery, and laid by the side of his wife, to await

"Till that illustrious morning come,
When all thy saints shall rise,
And, clothed in full immortal bloom,
Attend thee to the skies."

May the bereaved and mourning family be comforted with the comfort wherewith their dear father was comforted, not forgetting his many good admonitions and counsels. May his words be as bread cast upon the waters, that may be seen and gathered up many days hence. And may it be our happy lot, when we come to the valley and shadow of death, to be blest with that abiding confidence that we can say, We know that our Redeemer liveth, and feel that we are falling asleep in Jesus, to awake in his likeness, is my sincere desire. Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

SARAH C. BOYD.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In compliance with the request of the bereaved wife, I hereby send you for publication a notice of the death of our beloved friend and brother, **Dr. A. F. Purvines**, who died at his residence in this place Wednesday evening, Feb. 13, 1884, in the 45th year of his age. Our departed brother was the son of John G. Purvines, who came to Illinois from North Carolina, and who was married January 1, 1823, to Miss Elizabeth Coleman. At the age of nineteen he united with the Richland Baptist Church, in Cartwright township, remaining there until the church was dropped by the association. He came to this place about sixteen years ago, where he was married May 7, 1863, to Miss Margaret S. Duncan, an estimable daughter of William Duncan deceased, formerly a leading citizen of this county. Dr. A. F. Purvines was a practicing physician, and for several years maintained a successful and lucrative practice. For the last two years he has led a devoted christian life. For several years previous he had been gradually drifting away from his early profession, and the hope of the christian had almost died in his bosom. But two years ago, during a revival meeting here, he renewed his covenant with his Master, since which time he seemed fully given up to the Lord. In fact, as health declined his devotion to the cause of Christ increased. No opportunity to talk of the goodness, love, wisdom and mercy of God was suffered to pass unimproved. No opportunity to "lift the heart and bend the knee" was slighted. The circumstances attending his death were very peculiar. During a recent holiness meeting in this place he became very much worked up over the doctrine of sanctification. He sought opportunity at different times to give expression to his views upon the subject, believing it to be a delusion; but, excepting once or twice, the privilege was denied him. He was prevented from giving his experience by certain stratagems. This, in connection with his own religious enthusiasm, dethroned reason, and brought him to a bed of affliction from which he never arose. During the three weeks of his illness his whole talk was on the Scriptures, the church, or religion. Much of his talk was absurd and incongruous; but oftentimes the touching thoughts and beautiful sentiments he uttered would

surprise his friends. Among the last things the writer heard him say was, "How sweet is the salvation of God!" "Watch and be ready." So passed into eternity our beloved friend and brother. He leaves behind a bereaved wife and an only son. They have the sympathy of the entire community. The funeral services were conducted by Elder H. P. Curry, of Petersburg, after which the remains were followed to the cemetery north of the town by a large concourse of people, and solemnly interred. Ever let us cherish his memory and follow his example.

A FRIEND.

SALISBURY, Ill., Feb. 25, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It becomes my painful duty to send you a short sketch of the life of **Elder E. D. Pettey**, of Clay Co., Miss., who departed this life on Wednesday, February 6, 1884, between seven and eight o'clock in the morning, with typhoid pneumonia, aged 67 years, 5 months and 3 days. Brother Pettey was born in Giles Co., Tenn., moved with his father when quite young to Pickens Co., Ala., on the 19th of May, 1836, and from Pickens Co. removed to Oktibbeha Co., Miss., in 1838, and was married to Miss Mary Cook. He obtained a hope in Christ about this time, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1840, called Little Vine. From there he moved to Clay Co., Miss., and continued to exercise his gift, and was loved by all who knew him. He was a great talker, and his theme was Jesus and him crucified. He put his letter in Emmaus Church, and refused to be ordained for years, until his impressions and burdens became so heavy that he went to preaching, and was ordained in May, 1852. He took charge of the several churches in the Little Block Association, and had all of his time engaged in preaching to and exhorting the brethren to the discharge of their duty. By his industry, energy and perseverance, coupled with an excellent judgment, he had accumulated a sufficiency of this world's goods to enable him to minister to the necessities of the poor of the churches. He was both gifted and blessed as a speaker and expounder of the Scriptures, and was loved by all who knew him. But the Lord has called him from us and the church militant, to the church triumphant, to realize the sweets of a home in heaven with his Savior he loved so much. He leaves an aged companion to mourn her loss; not, however, as those without hope; also a son and daughter, with a number of grandchildren and the church and brethren, who loved him very much. But we desire to submit to the will of the Lord, who has taken him home to himself. May the Lord bless and enable his aged companion to be resigned to his will, and may the God of all good bless us all, and save us, is the prayer of an unworthy servant, if servant at all.

E. DUKE.

CUMBERLAND, Miss., Feb. 7, 1884.

BROTHER **Bennett Posey** died at his residence in Comal County, Texas, Feb. 3, 1884, of typhoid pneumonia, with a combination of other diseases, aged 63 years and 2 months. He was born in Rutherford County, Tenn., Nov. 4, 1820, joined the Old School Baptist Church at Overalls Creek, in said county, and was baptized by Elder John Watson, in 1846. He moved to west Tennessee, and joined the Old School Baptist Church in 1852, and was licensed to preach during the same year. He moved to Texas in 1853, and joined the church at Plumb Creek. Some years afterward Yooks Creek Church was constituted with ten members. His wife, Catharine, joined the church at this place. Brother Posey was ordained in this church in 1864, by Elder C. Curry and Deacon Joseph Dunlap, and was a faithful minister of the gospel of Christ up to the time of his death, although he has been in poor health for two years past. He leaves a wife and four sons to mourn their loss. He lived an exemplary life, and the loss is great to the family, church and neighborhood. He was buried on Monday, after a solemn discourse by brother Pate, of east Texas, in the presence of a large company. May the God of all grace rest and remain with us all.

W. H. JENNINGS, SR.
MARTINDALE, Texas.

DIED—At his residence in Union Co., Ind., Saturday morning, Oct. 20, 1883, brother **Wm. Miller**, after a long protracted disease of the stomach. He was born in Hamilton, Butler Co., Ohio, on the 27th day of February, 1811. He joined the Old School or Regular Baptist Church called Bethlehem, in Franklin Co., Ind., May 2, 1846, and was baptized by Elder Daniel Robison. He served the church as clerk for a number of years, even up to the time of his death. The church mourns the loss of him who served it so faithfully; but we hope their loss is his gain. He often, during his illness, spoke of his hope in Jesus Christ his Savior. Thus he fell asleep, to awake in the likeness of Jesus, in the morning of the resurrection, with all who look for the glorious appearing of the great God, who is worthy of all adoration and praise, both now and forever. The writer tried to preach a funeral discourse on Sunday the 21st, to a very large and attentive congregation, from Acts xxvi. 8. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

JAMES MARTINDALE.

HAGERSTOWN, Ind., Feb. 14, 1884.

DIED—January 10, 1884, sister **Hannah Phillips**, wife of brother Delos Phillips, of Campbelltown, Lycoming Co., Pa. I think her disease was consumption of the lungs. She was received into the fellowship of the Particular Baptist Church at Cherry Flats, or a branch of the same, several years ago, and was baptized by Elder A. St. John, I think. In her death a husband is bereft of a companion, to travel life's uneven journey in sorrow; also an aged mother, sisters and friends are left to mourn, but not without hope for her, as she left a bright evidence that she was an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ to an eternal inheritance. She died in the triumphs of a living faith. Elder St. John was telegraphed for, but not being at home she was buried without preaching services. May God bless the mourning friends, for Jesus' sake.

M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, N. Y.

DIED—May 1, 1883, At the residence of her son, John S. Ackerson, in New York City, sister **Sophronia Ackerson**, aged 67 years, 11 months and 19 days. She was born in the city of New York, August 12, 1815, received a hope in Christ early in life, and was baptized in the fellowship of the "North Baptist Church" of this city, by its pastor, the late John Bronner. After walking with that body several years, she became dissatisfied, and in his own way the Lord directed her to his people in 36th St., where she was received in full fellowship about the year 1857, and ever remained a faithful and useful member until the Father in love released her from a body of sin and suffering, and took her to himself: Two sons survive her. In her, the church has lost one of its oldest members, and many will remember her presence with them when they have met with the favored few in this great city of idolatry.

On the occasion of her funeral, which was held at the meeting house of the church in 36th St., Elder W. L. Beebe preached from 2 Cor. v. 4-6, endeavoring to present the consolation of the gospel to comfort the bereaved.

"Peaceful be thy silent slumber,
Peaceful in the grave so low;
Thou no more wilt join our number,
Thou no more wilt sorrow know."

DIED—In Turin, N. Y., Jan. 17, 1884, **Miss Cynthia Woolworth**, aged 64 years, 9 months and 17 days.

ALSO,

DIED—In Turin, N. Y., Jan. 27, 1884, **Miss Almira Woolworth**, aged 71 years and 6 days.

Ten days from the death of the younger sister, Cynthia, the elder, Almira, followed to the spirit land. They had been subscribers to the SIGNS for a long time. I would like to have you publish their obituaries in the SIGNS. Yours respectfully,

A. R. WOOLWORTH.
TURIN, N. Y., Feb. 16, 1884.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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NO. 7.

POETRY.

PETITION.

O FOR a heart in meek submission clad,
Heart to rejoice in Jesus and be glad;
A mind to serve the holy Master's will,
And fervent prayer each duty to fulfill.

O that I could the path of folly shun,
Nor ever trust to aught that I have done;
Bear trials patiently, though I fail to see
One drop of mercy in the cup for me.

The way is dark, hedged in on every side;
Leave not my soul, O God; be thou my
guide;

Hear thou my cry, attend unto my prayer;
Turn thou my feet from every hurtful snare.

Alas! the fainting sigh I would suppress,
Of my own sinful, doubting fearfulness;
And look to him above, through cloud or sun,
And humbly ask, Thy will, not mine, be done.

May all the past omissions be forgiven;
My burdened soul at last find rest in heaven;
And through the warfare, may my hope be
stayed

In God alone, nor seek for other aid.

SALLIE A. NORRIS.

SALISBURY, Md., March 7, 1884.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SCIO, Linn Co., Oregon, Feb. 21, 1884.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—
DEAR BRETHREN:—I see a request in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of January 15th, 1884, by our dear brother, W. B. McAdams, of Sallis, Mississippi, for me to give my views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Malachi i. 2-5. The passage reads thus, "The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever."

Ever since the creation, and the entrance of sin into the world, there have been two classes or races of human beings in the world, and only two, religiously speaking; but nationally there are thousands, but the religion of all the nations is divided into but two classes, the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the religion of the world; and these two religions are set forth in the Scriptures under the emblem of types, shadows and figures, from the beginning of the creation of God. Now, before entering further upon this subject, I will state that I am called upon to give my (not another brother's) views on the above Scripture;

and were I to undertake to set forth another's views, perhaps I should displease as many as if I set forth my own views. I make these remarks because I am aware that I shall tread upon controverted ground, consequently may displease many brethren whom I dearly love for the truth's sake; but I trust you will all bear with my infirmities, and attribute the errors, if such there be, to the weakness of a poor, old, frail mortal.

But to the subject. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them [plural] have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over all the earth," &c.—Gen. i. 26. Verses 27 and 28: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it," &c. Verse 31: "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."—Chapter ii. 1. Now, at the end of the creation all things were blessed and pronounced very good. Now, the whole world of mankind are Adam multiplied; but here was a multiplication commanded and set forth in Adam and Eve while as yet they were one person, before the female was separated from the male, and that, too, before sin had entered into the world, while they were in a state of innocence, and also when God commanded his blessing on his whole creation. I believe that all those who were at that time commanded to be multiplied in Adam and Eve, were given to the second Adam in covenant before they were given to the first; and their names were all written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. They compose that great multitude which John saw, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues; and who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. These are the Lord's portion, his people, the lot of his inheritance, and the first fruits of his creation; and they are the Jacobs whom he loved with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness does he draw them.—See Jer. xxxi. 3. It is not possible for one of these to be lost. They are "the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Romans ix. 23. "For I the Lord love judg-

ment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed."—Isa. lxi. 8, 9. Now, lest I might be misunderstood, I will make a remark. These were blessed in Christ a spiritual Head before they were blessed in Adam an earthly head. They were blessed in Christ in the ancients of eternity in an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, without a condition on the part of man; hence the promise of an eternal inheritance in glory is sure to all the seed, they having been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.—Eph. i. 3, 4. And the Lord said concerning this people, "The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."—Isa. xliii. 20, 21. But the Lord blessed this people in Adam also in creation, when he blessed all the work of his hands, saying to Adam, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." This was a temporal blessing, in accordance with a temporal, conditional covenant. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 16, 17. But man failed to obey the stipulations of the covenant that he was under, and thereby brought sin and death upon himself and upon all his unborn progeny. And what a great blessing it is, that although "by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." That is, all men who are included in the first multiplication. "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."—Gen. v. 1, 2. Now, these were doubly blessed; first in Christ a spiritual

Head, and secondly in Adam an earthly head. But there is another multiplication, which are blessed in neither, but are cursed with the curse of God. After the disobedience of Adam and Eve we read, "And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Genesis iii. 9-19. Now these are the two races or seeds. The one is the children of promise, and the other is merely children of the flesh. The first was commanded in Adam while he and Eve were one individual person, and in a state of innocence, and also when God commanded his blessing on the work of his hands; while the other race was greatly multiplied in Adam and Eve after their separation into two distinct personages, and that, too, after transgression, and also when God pronounced his curse, first upon the serpent, and secondly upon the ground for man's sake, he being formed of the ground. Hence these are called "Cursed children."—See 2

Peter ii. 14. Again, "For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment."—Isa. xxxiv. 5. And again, "For I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes."—Jere. xlix. 13. Idumea and Bozrah were the dwelling places of the Edomites, who were the literal descendants of Esau, "the people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever."—Mal. i. 4. I have been thus particular in my illustration, because I am traveling upon controverted ground.

All will admit that Ishmael and Isaac are allegorical of the two races or families, and are a representation of the two covenants, because Paul has said so.—Gal. iv. 24. Yet there are those who deny that Cain and Abel are allegorical of the same things. It is, however, noticeable that in every case God has reversed the natural order of things, in regard to the children of the flesh and the children of promise, in giving the promise to the younger instead of the older. Hence we read, "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain." Now it is worthy of remark that this first conception of Eve by Adam was of the second multiplicity, which no doubt were far greater in number than the first; but each was definite in number, although as the sand upon the seashore, that no man could number. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."—2 Tim. ii. 19. John says of Cain that he was of that wicked one, and slew his brother, &c. Now, in what sense was Cain of that wicked one? Those who are called "Two Seed Baptists" say he was conceived by that wicked one. Well, I believe he was, indirectly, but not directly. The wicked one under God was doubtless the cause of his conception. If God had not permitted sin, through the instrumentality of the old serpent, to enter into the world, God would not have said to Eve, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception." Consequently Cain would never have been conceived and born into the world; neither would those Pharisees and Sadducees to whom John the Baptist said, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" nor those to whom Christ said, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"—Matthew iii. 7; xxiii. 33. Again, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do," &c.—John viii. 44. Nor those cursed children spoken of by Peter. So these were all directly the children of Adam by his wife Eve, but indirectly they were the children of the wicked one, he having been the instrumental cause, and not the action of their conception. So the whole world of mankind originally sprang directly from Adam and Eve. "And she [Eve] again bare his [Cain's] brother Abel. And Abel was

a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." And they were both religious. Cain's religion was of the earth; for he "brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord." Abel's religion was of God; for "he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof," (a lamb,) the emblem of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." (But I find that I must make my quotations short.) "And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand." Thus we see what a striking similitude there is between Cain and Esau. Cain slew his brother Abel; Esau sought to slay his brother Jacob. Cain and his progeny were cursed, and driven out of Eden, and were called cursed children, and dwelt in the land of Nod. Esau and his progeny were cursed, and called the people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever, and were driven out of the land of promise, and dwelt in Idumea, in the country of Mount Seir. And the Lord said, "My sword shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment."—Isaiah xxxiv. 5. So we see that Cain and Esau were both cursed and driven out of the land of promise, and are each a representative figure of the people of God's curse, or the rejected of the Lord. "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: for God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord," or, margin, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord."—Gen. iv. 25, 26. Now, as Cain and Esau were alike representative figures of the rejected of the Lord, or the people of his curse, so also in like manner were Seth and Jacob representative figures of the accepted of the Lord, "the Lord's portion, and the lot of his inheritance," (Deut. xxxii. 9,) "the seed which the Lord hath blessed."—Isa. lxi. 9. The inspired writer gives the genealogy of Cain first, because he is the elder son, to the end of his separate and distinct genealogy, and then brings up Seth's genealogy to the point where the two were united in one. Hence we read, "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God [the sons of Seth, who called themselves by the name of the

Lord] saw the daughters of men [the daughters of Cain] that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose." Now the uniting of the two families was a grievous sin, and formed an exceeding wicked generation, so that "the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days, [these giants were of the sons of Cain]; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God."—Gen. vi. 1-9. Thus the word of the Lord to mother Eve was abundantly fulfilled, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception;" for among the many tens of thousands of inhabitants, only eight persons were saved. Now in this, as also in all similar cases, the younger of the two was the child of promise, or a type of the church of God.

We will now pass on to notice the two sons of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac; but we need not dwell here, as Paul has long ago decided this case. He says, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."—Gal. iv. 21-26. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free."—Verses 28-31. Now here also, as in the case of Cain and Seth, the younger obtained the birthright, being the child of promise; and the elder being merely a child of the flesh, was cast out, became a wild man, and had his

dwelling in the wilderness. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."—Hebrews vi. 13-15. And what is represented in this case was also represented in the case of Cain and Seth.

We will now notice more particularly our brother (as I suppose) W. B. McAdams' text, Malachi i. 2-5. Now, Jacob and Esau were twin brothers, the sons of Isaac and Rebekah his wife. And the Lord said unto Rebekah, Isaac's wife, Two nations, and two manner of people, shall be born of thee; the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger. And they called the elder Esau; and the younger they called Jacob; and Isaac was three score years old when she bare them. "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: and Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright."—Gen. xxv. 23-34. "And there was a famine in the land." "And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed [Jacob] shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."—Gen. xxvi. 1-5. Now Esau, being the elder son of Isaac, according to custom in those times would have inherited his father's estate; but he sold his birthright to his younger brother Jacob, who in the stead of Esau heired his father's earthly inheritance, as also the promises. Paul, speaking of these things, saith, "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."—Heb. xii. 16, 17. Thus Esau was re-

jected, and had no inheritance in the land of promise, but had his dwelling in the country of mount Seir; as it is written, "The Horims also dwelt in Seir beforetime; but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the Lord gave unto them."—Deut. ii. 12. Again, "Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom: We have heard a rumor from the Lord, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle. Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord. * * * How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up! All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee; they that eat thy bread have laid a wound under thee: there is none understanding in him. Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter. For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever."—Obadiah 1-10. "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it."—Verses 17, 18. Thus you see that Esau with his progeny were called, "The border of wickedness, the people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever," and "The people of God's curse."—Isaiah xxxiv. 5. And Jacob, as the representative of all the children of promise, was called, "The seed whom the Lord hath blessed."—Isa. lxi. 9. Paul, speaking of the two families, the children of the flesh and the children of promise, saith, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this: but when Rebecca also had conceived by one,

even by our father Isaac; (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Romans ix. 6-13. I was conversing not long since with a Congregationalist preacher on this subject. He said that he was a Greek scholar, and the true rendering of the last quoted Scripture should have read, "Jacob have I loved more, and Esau have I loved less." I told him that his god was just like himself, and could love and hate by degrees; but the true God, the God of heaven and earth, could love and hate by one degree only, and that was the "superlative degree!" For he said, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isa. lv. 8, 9.

But to return. (Pardon this digression.) "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."—Deut. xxxii. 8-12. In the last quotation we see how strikingly, beautifully and forcibly Jacob represents the whole election of grace, the entire seed whom the Lord hath blessed. Now when Jacob, through the intrigue of his mother Rebekah, fraudulently obtained from Esau his father Isaac's blessing, he was nothing more than a natural man, consequently was no better by nature than his brother Esau; and though this thing was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, still it was very sinful on the part of Jacob.—Read Genesis xxvii. The only way in which Jacob was any better than his brother Esau was by the electing love and grace of God, so that there was no room for boasting on the part of Jacob. Now Jacob, as a type, was literally found of the Lord in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness, as the following will plainly show: "And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill

thee. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away."—Genesis xxvii. 41-44. And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and sent him away; and Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran, (which way led through a desert land, and a waste howling wilderness). "And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and beheld a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. * * * And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."—Gen. xxviii. Here is where the Lord found Jacob, and he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye; and it is where the Lord finds all his Jacobs, in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness of sin and transgression. As it is written, "Who his own self [*i. e.*, Jesus] bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."—1 Peter ii. 24, 25. Again, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."—Isa. liv. 13. Verse 17: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

I have been setting forth, first, Cain and Abel, or Seth, secondly,

Ishmael and Isaac, thirdly, Esau and Jacob, as types representing the two seeds or families, the children of the wicked one and the children of God, or in other words, the children of the flesh and the children of promise. I will now offer a few scriptural remarks relative to Jacob as the anti-type or embodiment of the church of Christ, or the church of Christ under the appellation, Jacob. Now we must understand, as already quoted from Paul, that they are not all Israel that are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children. For those who were of the natural seed of Abraham came to John the Baptist and claimed baptism upon the ground that Abraham was their father; but John called them a generation of vipers. And those to whom Christ said, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" were the natural or fleshly children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But Christ told them they were of their father the devil, and the lusts of their father they would do. So we see, as Paul said, that these were not the children of God, but that the children of the promise are counted for the seed. Now, we will speak particularly of Jacob, as the lot of the Lord's inheritance, and as the embodiment of all the promises; but we must not, in speaking of Jacob as the literal son of Isaac, for God the Father said to the Son, the Lord Jesus, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Psalm ii. 6-8. So the redeemed of all nations come under the appellation of Jacob; for Paul saith, "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. ii. 28, 29. Hence the angel said to Mary concerning the holy child Jesus, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."—Luke i. 32, 33. Thus we see that the house of Jacob consists of the redeemed of all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples. And the house of Esau, on the other hand, consists of all of every nation, kindred, tongue and "people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever." "They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end."—Isa. xlv. 16, 17. Verse 25: "In the Lord

shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."—Isa. xliii. 1-7. "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and I said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."—Isa. xli. 8-10. These are the Israel of God from among the heathen, or Gentile nations. Whenever the words, "ends of the earth," occur in Scripture, it has reference to the called of God from among the Gentiles. And with what loving-kindness and endearing words does the Lord comfort his poor, afflicted, Gentile children, that are called by the name of Jacob and Israel. "Fear not; [O those precious words!] for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall be called. [Yes, of the Gentiles also.] For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."—Isaiah liv. 4-8. "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy

sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."—Isa. xli. 21-23.

Dear brethren Beebe, I submit this lengthy and (perhaps) unsatisfactory letter to you for disposal, and if published, then to the perusal of all the dear brethren and sisters who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and especially to brother W. B. McAdams.

Your brother in Christ, as I hope,
JOHN STIPP.

LEESBURG, Va., Jan. 24, 1884.

DEAR BROTHERN:—I inclose you a letter for publication, if it meets your better judgment. It has been to me, and also to others to whom I have read it, of great comfort, and I feel to hope that it will be to all who love to hear how the Lord leads his little ones.

Yours in hope,

E. V. WHITE.

HERNDON, Va., June 3, 1883.

ELDER E. V. WHITE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I will endeavor to comply with your request, but I feel unworthy, and very incompetent to write anything. Unless my pen is guided by a higher power than my own weak arm, I can write nothing you would wish to read. This being the anniversary of the ever-to-be remembered day (one year ago) when I was made to see myself a guilty, helpless sinner in the sight of God, and also to feel my burden of sin removed, if the Lord will so direct me, I will try to tell you more fully than I have yet done, how I was led to ask a name and place with the people of God. I do not know that my mind was early impressed with the subject of religion, though I have felt a void in my heart from childhood, which the world never filled. I have thought until the past year that that feeling was the effect of the loss of my mother at an early age; but since that aching void has been filled, I have been led to believe that the longing desire I have so long felt was for something the world could not give nor take away. I was married in 1862. The year following it pleased the Lord to lay the hand of affliction heavily upon me, and for twenty-one years I have been afflicted. My sufferings at times were so great that I have felt my life almost a burden. I sometimes thought, Why am I spared to suffer so much? I had yet to learn that the creature should not say to him that formed it, "Why hast thou made me thus?" God's purpose in me was not yet fulfilled, for I was yet to rejoice in the midst of affliction, and sing praises to his holy name. I have attended the Old School Baptist preaching since my marriage, when my health has been such that I could. For the past sixteen years I have felt no desire to hear any other doctrine. About three years ago my health became worse. I was in such a gloomy

state of mind, I thought I would not live long. This feeling continued to grow worse. I could take no pleasure in anything; my household duties were neglected, and many hours I spent in weeping. While in this dreary frame of mind I would sometimes think it would be a great blessing to be a christian, but did not feel that I could do anything to make myself one. I joined the Methodist Church when quite young, and tried by good works to be a christian; but I soon found all my good works were as nothing, and I had my name erased. I attended the May meeting at Frying Pan, in 1881. My health was very poor. I suffered so much while there, I felt that I would never go to meeting again, unless I felt the need of hearing preaching. Although I loved to hear the preaching, I felt that it was not for me. In August I went to a burial at Frying Pan. I felt so burdened and miserable when I returned home, that I fell on my knees and wept. I thought I would never leave home again until I was carried out to be buried. Thus passed the fall and winter. When spring came, I continued to get worse. We had talked of building, and much as we needed a more comfortable house, I was glad it was postponed. I felt that I could not endure the confusion of building, and did not think I would live to see it completed. I have since thought it strange that while I thought so much about dying, I felt no dread of death nor fear of the future. Thus time passed until the third day of June. I had been more complaining than usual for two or three days, but was able to be up most of the time. I was at home alone. My husband thought nothing of leaving me, as I was never very well. But I felt so miserable I thought I could not live until he returned. I felt that my friends had all forsaken me. I was tired and dissatisfied with everything around me, and everything looked dismal and gloomy. About sunset, as I was lying upon my bed, mourning because I must die and be buried from such a small house, it seemed that I heard a voice say, Where was the Savior's birthplace? I felt condemned. I felt that I was murmuring and complaining, when I had so much to be thankful for. I had a kind husband, and suffered for nothing. My sins arose before me. I now saw that it was myself that was all wrong; that I was a guilty, helpless sinner in the sight of God. I could do nothing but cry unto the Lord for mercy. My first words were, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner; poor, miserable wretch that I am. What am I, that I should not be buried from this house? I am nothing, nothing, nothing." Then I prayed, as I never had prayed before, to be delivered from the burden that oppressed me; and when I gave myself up, and said, "Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done," in an instant my burden was gone, and I was made to rejoice with joy unspeakable. Such a calm, peaceful feeling came over me, and I felt that

I was ready and willing to die, if it was the Lord's will to take me. These Scriptures came to my mind; the first was, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;" and many others. After a while I arose. O how joyful and light I felt. My fretfulness and murmuring was all gone. I felt that I loved everybody. I thought I never had seen my little home look so bright and cheerful. I wondered how I felt so gloomy, when everything looked so bright and beautiful. As I walked out into the yard, my pen cannot describe the beauties I there beheld. The moon and stars were shining, and everything seemed to be praising God. As I stood viewing God's wondrous works as I had never beheld them before, my mouth was filled with praises and my heart was overflowing with love to God for his goodness to such a poor, sinful creature. I thought if I could see you and father Cockrille, I would tell you how I felt, and you would rejoice with me. Then the words came so plainly to my mind, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I thought it must be that I was born again, born of the Spirit. I would say again and again, Can it be that I am a child of grace? I felt glad that the time of meeting was so near, for now I wanted to hear preaching. That was the most joyful night I ever spent. I wept, but they were tears of joy. My husband told me I would make myself sick by weeping so much. I told him those tears would do me good; but it was nearly two months before I told him how I had felt. The next morning I asked him if he thought I had had fever enough to effect my head; for I had almost concluded it was a fevered imagination. But I soon found that the things I once loved I no longer enjoyed. Old things had passed away, and all things had become new. The Savior extended on the cross was presented to my view, and I wept to think that suffering was for me. But there lies my hope, that his blood was shed for me. For he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, of whom I feel to be the chief. I read a letter in the SIGNS written by Elder Chick, from the text, "Teach me thy way, O Lord: I will walk in thy truth. Unite my heart to fear thy name." It was well suited to my feelings, for I felt as a child just learning to walk, and could not take a step without a guiding hand. My prayer was, "Teach me thy way, O Lord." The next Sunday I went to hear you preach, and when you told my feelings better than I could have expressed them, and talked of the power and goodness of God, I felt my own nothingness more sensibly than ever. As time passed on, I sometimes felt lifted above all worldly cares, and at other times was ready to sink in despair; but the blessed Comforter would whisper, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." In September, Elder Smoot preached

at Frying Pan, but the inclemency of the weather prevented my going to hear him. In the evening, as I was feeling very much cast down, I thought I would go down and hear him and father Cockrille talk. Before I was aware, I was telling him about myself. He spoke very comforting, said I had an Old Baptist experience, and he thought I would soon be led to the church. When he mentioned baptism, I told him I felt too unworthy, though I had felt a desire to be baptized. At the September meeting I talked with you, still feeling my unworthiness. But when you told me what a dark season you had just passed through, I thought I could not feel the sympathy for you that I did, if I knew nothing of the same feeling. I could but repeat the words,

"Bless'd be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love."

Your words were very comforting. I thought if one who could do so much to comfort others had such feelings, I could expect nothing more, and there was still hope for me. But that hope at times seemed almost gone, yet "Let not your heart be troubled," was often whispered to cheer me on my way. Once when in great trouble, after being tried and tempted, the words seemed to be plainly spoken to me, "Lie down, thou weary one: lie down thy head upon my breast." And O, my dear brother, what a resting place for one so weary, "leaning upon Jesus' bosom." There the trials and troubles of life are forgotten, and the weary and heavy laden find sweet repose. My mind now became more exercised on the subject of baptism. On the third day of November I prayed that if it was right that I should go to the church, I might have a better evidence that I should go. The answer to that prayer was, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." I now felt that I had a command to go. I went on my way rejoicing, and thought I would go and tell the church what I hoped the Lord had done for me. The night before the meeting on Saturday, I concluded not to go, as my husband was not at home. Then darkness came over me, such as I had never before experienced. After spending an almost sleepless night, the next morning I was too sick to go. I went to father's in the evening to talk with you, but could tell you nothing. My dear brother, I could never express all I suffered during the next four months. I was made to feel at different times that that command should be obeyed, yet the tempter was ever ready to tell me I was deceived. In December, when you preached of the disobedient children of Israel, I felt that like them I was living in disobedience. I only felt the northern winds that day, yet I had a hope that I should again be lifted up. The next week, while in great distress of mind, I got the Bible and prayed to be directed to some portion that would

show me what to do, when I read, "There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God." I trembled with fear. I had felt that he was a God of love, but I now feared his anger. I felt that it was the words that had been given me that must be obeyed. But I was soon in doubt if those words were intended for me. I thought if I was deceived in that, I might be in all, and I did not wish to deceive the church. The agony of mind I endured can never be told. I feared to go forward and could not turn back. Before the meeting in January I was in so much distress that I again prayed to be relieved, if only in tears, for I could not shed a tear. I promised that if I should be directed once more, I would obey. I had said, "Dear Savior, make me believe alone on thee." The next words I found myself saying were, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." For a moment I thought the way was plain, and that was what I must do before I could find relief. But directly something seemed to tell me that I had only thought of those words to suit myself. Again I was in doubt. I became almost useless. My duties were neglected, while I would sit for hours with my hands clasped, wondering what to do. As I sat in that condition, I seemed to have a view of the church as they were assembled on the day I went before them. I was drawn with such love to that people as I never before had felt; such a strange love that I almost felt uncomfortable; yet I could think of nothing but that love which seemed to be drawing me to the church. And when I went on Sunday and saw them all so glad to meet, I felt that I was alone. I could take no comfort any where else, and I felt that I had no right to be there. At the February meeting, when too late for me to go, I attempted to repeat that oft repeated prayer, "Teach me thy way, O Lord," but I could not utter a word. I now felt that the hand of the Lord was upon me because I obeyed not his commands. I can better describe my feelings by saying that that day (and many others during the next month) was spent in groaning which could not be uttered. Yes, dear brother, I was made to feel the chastening rod before I was made willing to obey. You may imagine how glad I was when you were turned in your course, and so unexpectedly came in March. I felt that as you had shown me so much kindness in my troubles, that if I was found a fit subject for baptism I wished you to perform that sacred ordinance. When you said, "There is much water, what doth hinder thee?" I felt that I no longer had an excuse to offer; for like the disobedient children of old, I felt that I had been given up to take my own way. The next morning I was on my way to the church, thinking I would not be able to say anything; but when I got there these words came forcibly to my mind, "Let your light so shine

before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." I mentally said, "To him be all the glory given." When you buried me in the watery grave, I felt calm and peaceful; but not until the next evening, when the words, "My peace I give unto you," came in that still, small voice which none but those who have heard can know, was I made to rejoice. Since then, dear brother, nearly three months have passed, and that peace has seldom been withdrawn. I have sometimes wandered away for a little while, but have soon been drawn back to my Savior's loving embrace. Then I have been made to say with the poet,

"My willing soul would ever stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

Now, dear brother, I have tried to tell you, though in a very tedious and imperfect manner, why I came to ask a place with the people of God. I feel my unworthiness to be with a people who all seem so much better than I feel myself to be; yet, like Ruth, I would say, "Entreat me not to leave thee." "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Since reviewing my sorrowful life, and my happy deliverance, as I hope, from the bondage of sin, I was affected while reading sister Bessie Durand's letter in the SIGNS of June 1st. I felt that her thoughts of sympathy to the afflicted had reached one that appreciated it; one who would be glad to have so kind a sister near. I thought how gladly I would tell such a one, though it might be with a stammering tongue, the reason of my hope, how I had been found in a desert land and brought to a city of habitation; for he hath brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me is love. Please excuse this very lengthy and imperfect scribble.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
ALLIE V. COCKRILLE.

RIMER, Ohio, Jan. 1, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Was there ever a time when the truth was more openly set at naught by the unregenerate, or even by those professing the name Baptist, than at present? We know that in all ages the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. They ever have been foolishness to him, and they will always remain so. When we look upon the legions of antichristian churches established, we cannot wonder at their feeling secure, as there is a church for every creed and doctrine. This is a blessing to the Baptists, as they are thereby spared many invasions, but not all. I sometimes hear our brethren complaining of their fewness in number, and I sometimes find myself complaining also, when there are but few in attendance at our meetings. But when I take a more rational view of the matter, I know that all are present who are sufficiently interested to make the neces-

sary arrangements for that purpose, with but few exceptions. The Baptists used to have great revivals, or ingatherings, as they termed them, baptizing large numbers at each meeting, until their congregations numbered by fifties, and even by hundreds, which would shortly after go to the four winds. My judgment is that there were no more children of grace added to the church then than now. But as there were not so many antichristian churches for people to take refuge in, they would tamely come to the church of Christ, and mechanically sing the songs of Zion, supposing that would furnish them a safe retreat. The mechanical singers, of course, were largely in the majority. They desired to rule, which was very natural. Their object in uniting was to gain the favor of their imaginary god, whose displeasure they thought they had removed by this act. The song of salvation by grace alone was no longer appropriate, and in its stead was adopted, "A charge to keep I have." The children of grace then began to complain; but they were so in the minority that their cries could not be heard by their shepherds; for the largest number must be suited, of course, as their strength was in numbers. They were not willing, however, to lose the children of grace, for they counted something. They proposed to map out the gospel and preach it so as to suit even these children, by saying that it takes three things to constitute a gospel sermon, viz: first, experience; second, doctrine; third, practical godliness; all of which they proposed to preach. This is the power of man, instead of the power of God. The latter is foolishness to them, and it cannot be expected of them to preach what is to them foolishness; so the little ones can starve, without sympathy from such shepherds. But the good Shepherd, who has said that they shall not want, gathers together these little lambs in little flocks, which is best suited for the weak and little ones, and feeds them by themselves, choosing from their midst those that are very weak, and are not liable to trample them under foot, to feed them. Thus weakness is a blessing; for the weak cannot keep pace with the modern discoveries, and so are left behind. We feel thankful for such divisions. On the other hand, God has arranged earthly attractions to lead the nominal professors from you, by giving them shepherds like themselves, possessing great strength, claiming ability to preach the gospel at will, and that by such preaching dead sinners are quickened and made alive. After this is done, they pay but little attention to them, only that they warn them of the devil, and of some other things that their god has nothing to do with; exhorting them to look out for themselves, as that is their personal responsibility. Shall we complain because we are few, since we know that everything is apt to follow its own kind? If our congregations were large, (which they would be if it were not for these institutions), and only two or three of

those present had ears to hear, those two or three would compose our audience. Yet we are apt to feel better when many are present. It is only covetousness in us to desire more than God has seen fit to give us; and if this covetous desire in us were granted, we would swell our numbers to such an extent that the promises to the "little flock" would not belong to us. It is a good thing for us that by taking thought we cannot add one cubit to our stature. We are not weak from our own choice; but our merciful Shepherd is leading us out, and we begin to see our true strength. If we are the salt of the earth, the earth is not so highly seasoned as we had thought before the savor of the salt was tried. However it will compare with Sodom yet, if Lot remains in the city. It is heart-rending as well as church-rending, to pass through the ordeal which the church in many places passes through, about every generation, in order that she may be refined. Many yet remain who witnessed the division at the time the New School went out, and they are yet witnessing a repetition of the same in sentiment. Men have arisen who will not endure sound doctrine, and they are driving the wedge that has already entered as fast as they can. At the same time they are crying, "Mark them that cause division." At the end of such divisions the question always arises, "Who is the anointed of the Lord?" It always has been the "little flock," and will continue to be so; because no one will contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, except the taught of the Lord. Even at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace, who will endure sound doctrine, and will also advocate it, by ascribing all wisdom, power and majesty to our God. The faith once delivered to the saints hath implicit confidence in God, not being willing to limit him in any sense; therefore when speaking of him as being infinite, it desires the full sense of the word. The people who say that God foreknew only a part of things, or predestinated only a part, are classed with the legions, and are not a little flock, but are many, even the whole of Adam's race by nature. God created all things that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.—Col. i. 16, 17. Things created must be foreknown, and things foreknown must be predestinated, in order to bring to pass things foreknown. These are facts that cannot be refuted by mortal man. Now, since all things are created, it follows that all things were predestinated. And if there is anything not foreknown, predestinated, or created, it is not in heaven or earth, is neither visible nor invisible, is not even a thing, nor did it exist before or after God; for God is first and last. Yet we who advocate the above sentiment with all

confidence, are called heretics to our faces; but we choose rather to be called heretics by the enemies of the truth, than to withhold what God has commanded us to not shun to declare, which is all the counsel of God. Love to all the household of faith.

URIAH TRUMBO.

CHICAGO, Illinois.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The inclosed is from a dear brother in the Lord, and in his service in this western country. It having served as a sweet crumb to us, we hope it may suit as well some other lone and hungry pilgrims, cast as we are, on isolation's barren soil, where there is neither rain, nor dew, nor fields of offering. Nay, more, "the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away."—2 Sam. i. 21. Should it be agreeable with your judgment, may it find a place in our very valuable medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes to us laden with precious things dug from the precious hills of God's eternal truth, and which shall stand, in spite of all the isms approaching the "strait and narrow way," but which can never enter it; for, blessed be God, "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps," but is ever watching for the safety of his feeble little flock.

L. ALEXANDER.

GARDNER, Ill., Dec. 23, 1883.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER ALEXANDER:—Grace, mercy and peace be on you, through the abounding love of our all-glorious Head, Surety and Mediator. May the consolations of a free grace gospel be not small unto you; but may he who comforteth the afflicted, cast down and burdened, give you to enjoy everlasting consolation, as well as a good hope through grace. The word for you on my mind is this, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."—Isaiah lxiii 9. Ah, my dear brother and sister, he numbers and measures all our trials, and then bears our waywardness, sins, sorrows, burdens, cares, and us too. And when he gives us grace to be still and know that he is the Lord, it is

"Sweet to lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his."

You have my sympathy in your present trial, but be assured it is among the all things working together for good. We shall be very glad to see you at any time; for if we cannot profit you, I think your visit will be profitable to us. I have a sweet remembrance of the unction and power of your conversation when I was with you.

I and my daughter drove over to Verona on Saturday, the 8th inst. I felt shut up in mind, and cried to him who openeth and no man can shut. We had a little meeting on Saturday. I opened at hymn No. 505, Beebe's Collection,

"I'm in a world of hopes and fears,
A wilderness of toil and tears,

Where foes alarm, and dangers threat,
And pleasures kill, and glories cheat."

From the heading of the next hymn I was directed to Hosea xi. 4. Here the great, eternal Jehovah sets forth his dealings of grace and mercy to his son Israel and every Ephraimite. The first dawn of a desire in a quickened soul after the things of Christ is the result of God's eternal love to his people.

"No creature can be beforehand with thee:
My grace is almighty, preventing and free."

Yes, he draws his sheep by the power of his love. No man can come to him except the Father draw him. Divine love puts the prayer into our heart, "Draw me; I will run after thee." O, my dear brother and sister, how these cords of heavenly love have drawn us away from sin, self, the world and the flesh, to the cross, mercy-seat, Christ, heaven and our eternal home. Then the removing of the yoke. Says Paul, "That every mouth may be stopped." Here is the yoke on the jaws. "He hath put a new song in my mouth," says David.—Psalm xl. There is no singing that new song until the yoke be taken from the jaws. Dear friends, I sometimes think I can just chirp a feeble note or two; but my harp is much on the willows. I am one of the "weak in the faith." The remembrance of back-slidings and heart-wanderings, with unbelieving fears, causes me to walk much in darkness and heaviness. They have made me keeper in vineyards, when I have not strength or wisdom to keep my own vineyard. Being called to speak in public to others has, I think, made me see my weakness, barrenness, and altogether helplessness, more than anything else could have done. In the days of my pride and pharisaic self-sufficiency, I thought I could fill a pulpit; but the arrows of the Mighty have pierced the wind-bag of vanity, and I am often as a dried, shriveled skin-bottle in the smoke. O, I could write a book of complaints, but I will stop. If I were not a poor, dark, hell-deserving sinner, I should not need a rich, skillful Healer, the Day Star, to shine in my heart. Ah, dear friend, I cannot read a name, office or character of the blessed one, but what I can say, That suits me; that is just what I need. My eyes fill with tears as I write. It seems that I hear angelic voices singing in my ears,

"Come, then, with all your wants and wounds,
Your every burden bring;
Here love, unchanging love, abounds,
A deep, celestial spring."

Saturday night the last clause of the verse was with me, "I laid meat unto them." Yes, eternal wisdom has prepared a soul-reviving feast. Here is first our daily bread. He gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater.—Isaiah lv. 10. He multiplies our seed sown, and ministers bread for our food.—2 Cor. ix. 10. He feeds us with the finest of the wheat, and satisfies us with honey from the rock. He filleth the hungry with good things, saves the people, blesses the heritage, feeds them, lifts them up, and feeds them with the heritage of Jacob.—Psalm cxi. 5. He hath given

meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his covenant. Thus, take up whatever blessing we may, and trace it up to its source, we find it centers in and flows from covenant love, provisions, enactments and engagements, and is secured to the whole election of grace by the promise and oath of him who is faithfulness and truth.

"The covenant of free grace,
As made in Christ our Head,
Is stored with precious promises,
By which our souls are fed.

The solemn oath of God

Confirms each promise true;
And Jesus, with his precious blood,
Has sealed each promise, too.

Here all our comforts flow,

And balm for every fear;

Grant, Lord, we by experience know

How choice, how rich they are."

After our return from Chicago I went to Cincinnati for a short visit, and hence was from home when your letter came. Excuse my poor scribble. I hope your wife and son are better. My daughter joins in kind remembrance to you all, commending you to the Lord and to the word of grace. I remain your unworthy brother,
SAMUEL BRADBEER.

TOUCHET, W. T., Feb. 4, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed I send you a communication from our dear brother, Elder J. A. Bullock, written for the benefit of our little church at this place, and the brethren desired to see it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have obtained his consent to copy and send it to you to dispose of as you think best. Elder Bullock has a large acquaintance in Illinois and Iowa, as well as on this western slope, amongst the Baptists, who will be very glad to hear from him. Although he is well known among the Baptists, and is one of the ablest defenders of the truth as it is in Jesus in this western country, yet he is a poor scribe, and seldom writes for publication.

Yours in love of the truth,

R. CUMMINS.

GOLDENDALE, W. T., Dec. 23, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN HOPE OF A BETTER RESURRECTION:—I arrived home safe, and found all well, so I thought I would drop you a line to let you know of it. And while writing, I thought I would give a short sketch of my travels in my experience, and the reason of my hope of salvation by grace, if one so unworthy as I am may have such a thought.

In common with all of Adam's race, I was born in sin, and blind to its consequences. But I possessed a full supply of self-conceit, until I was in my twenty-fourth year. Up to that time I did not know the depth of sin. Though from my earliest recollection I had often had very grave thoughts of death and eternity, yet I believed that it was in my power to go about the work, reform my life, and pray to God, and he would hear and bless me with the pardon of my sins. But being young in years, I was not in a very great hurry about the matter, so I thought that when I got settled in

life I would engage in the good work in earnest. And I verily believed that when I should get religion I would know it, as I had heard Old Baptists say they were afraid they were deceived and had deceived the church. I was going to be better than the most of them; I was not going to do anything that was wrong, but I would live like a christian should, to honor God and my profession. While I was in my nineteenth year I married, and the next year emigrated to Illinois, seven hundred miles away from all my people, and settled in a Methodist community. Now, I thought, is a good time and place to begin the good work; and as I had not been very immoral, I thought I had but little to do. So I set out by engaging in Sunday School attendance and prayer. But my prayer was always in secret, after I had retired, for I was keeping the matter secret. I got along very well for about a year, when I concluded that it was not very important that I should have religion just then, so I laid it by until some future time. I was so blind that I did not know but what I had a just claim on God's mercy. This was my natural religion, so it did not last long, and I fell from works. I then emigrated to Iowa, in the winter of 1854, and in the month of October, 1855, one night while lying on my bed, as unconcerned about my future condition as I ever had been, suddenly and unexpectedly to me an impression was made upon my mind that brought with it an awful sense or feeling of condemnation. I was perfectly astonished. I could not account for such feelings. I felt within my bosom so great a sense of condemnation that it seemed like a pressure, the weight of which would certainly sink me to eternal woe and misery. Then all my former life, together with all my sins, and particularly my false efforts a few years before, came up before me. I did not know what to do. I was so distracted that I was afraid to attempt to pray; yet I desired to pray the Lord to pardon my sins. I felt so justly condemned that I felt it would add sin to my already over-burdened soul. I was so miserable that my little family was no company for me, though they were very pleasant. I felt like one alone and forsaken. Sometimes I would try to pray, but could not utter a word, nor get any relief from my trouble. I would sometimes think that if I were away off by myself where nobody might see me, that I could ask God to be merciful to me, a poor, helpless sinner. But when I would pray, it seemed like the very thought of such a sinner as I was, to try to pray, would be presumptuous. So I could not utter a word of prayer. Like the poor woman, instead of getting better I got worse. I finally thought that if I could get into wild company I could get rid of my trouble. So I went to a horse racing, where I expected to meet that class of men; but when I saw them and heard their profanity, I felt worse, if possible, than before I went. Then I thought that if I could see some of

the people of God, those that I thought were christians, they might give me some comfort. An opportunity offered. One of the Baptists had a house-raising, in the settlement, and I went to it and tried to work; but I was so sorely troubled in mind that I could not work. So I stuck my axe in the corner of the building, and told them that I could not work. I got down and went home, feeling that I was forever undone, and that there was no relief for me; that mine was a hopeless case. I knew not what to do. I could not see how God could be just and justify such a vile sinner as I felt myself to be. While in this agony of soul I concluded to go to a church meeting of the Primitive Baptists, to see if I could hear anything that would relieve my burdened soul. I went, and while lamenting my sad fate I cast my eye on a herd of cattle lying on the luxuriant grass, and it seemed to me that the brute creation were better off than I was. They had no sin to answer for; and were I in their place, when I died I would have nothing to trouble me. But I went on to the place of the meeting. It was held in a private house. In due time the preacher came, and he took his text from a chapter in the gospel by Luke. He had not gone far until I concluded that somebody had told him about me. I thought while he was speaking of the prodigal son in his deep trouble, and desiring to be as one of the hired servants, that it applied to my case. But when it came to the happy meeting of the son with the father, I was left starving. I went to bed, but not to sleep. I lay and bemoaned my sad condition until the clock struck twelve. I turned upon my face and cried, "God, be merciful to me, a poor, condemned sinner." At that moment my burden was removed, and I raised up in the bed, rejoicing and praising the Lord for his mercies towards me, a poor sinner. I felt perfectly happy, and it appeared to me that the whole creation was praising God. I then thought I could see how God could be just and the justifier of sinners. I saw it alone in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator. And I verily thought that I could make everybody see how sinners are saved. I thought I never should see any more trouble, nor have any doubts about my eternal happiness. But alas! it was not long before doubts came, and I was made to fear that I had missed the substance and caught the shadow; so I resolved to never say anything about the matter to any one. But it was not long until my mind was impressed with a desire to follow my Lord and Master in baptism; yet I felt so unworthily that I feared to mention it to anybody. The cause was so sacred to me that I feared I would disgrace it, and I would not do that for the whole world. It was not long before the members found out my secret, and would talk to me, and tell me that it was my duty to go to the church and be baptized. But I would plead my unworthiness. I would go to meeting and wish that they would

not open the door of the church for the reception of members, for then I would have an excuse for not offering myself. Sometimes I would go and think that I would offer myself; but when the opportunity was given, I could not venture. Thus I went on for thirteen months. And the day that I went forward, it was unexpected to me, until the very moment I was on my feet and talking to the church. I was received without a question being asked, and was to be baptized the next day. But alas! the tempter came in less than an hour, and said, "Now you have deceived the people of God. You are not fit to live in the church." Then I cried, "Lord, help me." I then received a little strength, and was baptized the next day, and have ever since been a monument of mercy, living in "Doubting Castle." I am in debt to grace for all the blessings that I enjoy, together with the preparation of the heart to receive them. You can see that I am not able to walk alone, therefore I have to trust in the grace of God, and lean on the eternal arm of my heavenly Father. Dear brethren and sisters, please remember me when at the throne of grace.

J. A. BULLOCK.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 19, 1854.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I desire to add my mite, however small, to the contributions of our brethren and sisters to the household of faith, through the medium of our family paper. I have put together a few rambling thoughts on the experience of the saints, &c., which, if you see fit to publish, please do so.

All the written and unwritten experiences of the saints in Christ Jesus are but the different individual channels by which his chosen ones are led by the Spirit into the way, of which Christ tells us. He is the way, the truth and the life. They are all led into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; and the life is made manifest by the power of his love shed abroad in their hearts, setting forth the evidence that they are vessels of his mercy, chosen in him even before the foundation of the world. The travel of the saints out of darkness into his marvelous light is indeed through the valley of the shadow of death. They stumble by the way, being heavily burdened, and know not which way to look for succor, feeling their burden of sin to be greater than they can bear; yet having a sense that the decrees of God are just, even if he dooms them to destruction. Their prayers, if they dare make them, seem to rise no higher than their heads. Then they cry out, in their fear and anguish, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" and, "Lord, save me, or I perish!" They are led by ways they know not, into the knowledge and conception of their sinful nature; seeing for the first time that they are desperately wicked, and in them there is no good thing, and realizing that they are helpless, miserable sinners, unable to do anything for themselves, and believing if they are saved at all, it is

by the grace of God alone. In their great distress of mind the divine hand of the Savior of sinners is stretched out, lifting their feet out of the miry clay, and setting them upon a rock; guiding them to the foot of the blood-stained cross, where the burden of sin is removed as in the twinkling of an eye, the blind eyes are opened, the deaf ears unstopped, a new song is put into their mouth, they sing praise to the Lord of hosts, and possess a longing desire to follow in the footsteps of the meek and lowly Jesus. Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life. The lusts of the flesh and the follies of the world are left behind them, and their whole desire is to enter into the fold and be numbered with the redeemed. They rejoice in and rely upon the promises contained in the divine record. They are lifted up, and all nature casts a bright halo around them. The noonday sun is brighter, the birds sing sweeter, and heaven's blue canopy casts a brighter hue over all the earth. The soul is full of rejoicing, and they feel that their time of sorrow, tribulation and anxiety is at an end, that their hope of eternal life is too deeply rooted to be disturbed by any worldly cares or fleshly lusts. But ah! too soon do doubts and fears arise, and they discover that continual warfare going on within them, the flesh warring against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; that they are prone to run into all manner of evil, daily and hourly doing those things which they ought not to do, and leaving undone those things which they ought to do, and they are led to exclaim, Am I really a child of God, or is it all a delusion, a fancy engendered by a diseased mind? or is it but other wiles of Satan, leading me further on in the road to destruction? Again the outstretched hand of the Comforter comes, bringing precious promises of sacred truth. The dark clouds are cleared away, and our eyes again behold the glorious light, recognizing heavenly gifts of precious love bestowed on sinful man. With winged feet we climb the mountain of God's holiness, rejoicing in the wonderful love wherewith he loved us, giving unto us his only begotten and dearly beloved Son, to suffer and to die an ignominious death upon the Roman cross, that we might through his sufferings be redeemed from the law of sin and death.

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

hiding his wonders from the worldly wise, and revealing them to babes. Our blessed Lord declares that we must all become as little children before we can inherit the unsearchable riches of Christ. His grace is sufficient for them, and they care no more for worldly pleasures or lusts. They love the dear brethren and sisters in Christ, and desire to meet often together, and talk one with another of the riches of his grace. They have put off the old man with his deeds, desiring to be led by the Spirit. They walk in newness of life, humbly trusting in him who doeth all things right,

looking forward to the time when this mortal shall put on immortality. Yet while they sojourn here in the flesh, it behooves them to put on the whole armor of God, and wander not out of the strait and narrow way, but contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; relying for strength and guidance, not upon their own exertions or wisdom, but putting all their trust in him in whom we live and move and have our being; giving all the glory to our sovereign King, who feedeth us with the living manna, and giveth us to drink of the waters of life.

"Lord, 'tis enough; our souls are fired
With courage and with love;
Vain are the assaults of death and hell,
Our hopes are fixed above."

Yours in hope of eternal life,
B. F. COULTER.

WEST UNION, Iowa, Jan. 25, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have felt very lonely this winter, being quite unwell, and have not been able to attend our meetings away from home. But I have been much comforted in reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel to rejoice that I can write to you, and if I am a proper witness I feel to say that your correspondents have furnished you with much instructive matter for the SIGNS, which feeds and instructs the lambs of Jesus. O how it builds up and strengthens the poor, fainting lambs, when cast down and tossed with tempests, to know that they have brethren who have traveled the same road that they have. Then we can truly prefer our brethren before ourselves, and can say with the apostle that we are the least of all saints. We have hope which makes not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. This is the Comforter, which is to lead us into all truth. Without this truth we can do nothing, but are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. How can we preach Jesus unless we have been made a partaker of the divine nature? How can we preach unless the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us? These things are marvelous in our eyes. It is by faith that we go forward in the discharge of our duty. When we are weak, then are we strong in the Lord. They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. The gates of hell shall not prevail against Zion. Her walls are all of precious stones, most glorious to behold. Her gates are richly set with pearls. Her streets are paved with pure gold. There shall be no sorrow there, and death shall be swallowed up in victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. There shall be no more pain nor sickness, but one eternal day. Then, dear brethren, let us sing,

"Dear, dying Lamb, thy precious blood,
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

Seeing we have such precious promises, dear brethren, let us not fall out by the way, as we all agree in the fundamental principles of salvation

by grace. Let us make our calling and election sure, by an orderly walk and godly conversation. We each have our peculiar way of expressing our views on certain passages of the Scriptures, and we have always tried to so divide the word as to present harmony therein. We conclude that the Scriptures do not impeach themselves. In this matter we have done all that we can do, and to our own master we stand or fall. I am glad of this one thing, that God's children do not desire to do anything that is wrong. Let us say with the wise man, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."—Eccl. xii. 13, 14.

Now, dear brethren Beebe, may the grace of God be with you and guide your pen, to his own glory and to the comfort of his saints. In love to all the saints, yours to serve in gospel bonds,

HARRISON BUTLER.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 31, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—Having to write you on business, I feel to refer my dear Old School brethren and sisters to a few of our "Faults." Who of us has none? In writing on this subject I would willingly retire under some *nom de plume*, or withhold my name, for fear some brother might suspect that I was personal in my application of the subject. I will therefore frankly confess before all such that all truth is, and of necessity must be, personal. So let no one blame me if I am only led into the consideration of personal truth, for I wish every strange brother and sister to feel a personal interest in my thoughts on this subject, as well as those with whom I am familiarly acquainted. May the Lord grant us a spirit of sufficient humility to reason together, and to apply the results to our mutual and personal profit. It is not my design, however, to publicly expose my dear brethren and sisters' faults, for that would only add my fault to theirs; but if in the description of faults we may see our own, we may, under God's blessing, hide a "multitude of sins."

When writing, as I am, what motive prompts? Selfish desire to be personally noticed, or to call notice to truth? If the former, it is a fault; if the latter, a virtue, and worthy of a hearing, however humbly done. When hearing or reading, what spirit possesses? Envy, or simple desire for truth? If envy, no truth can be accepted, however well put, while under its baneful influence. If love of the truth possess us, no truth can be rejected, even though spoken by one who hates us; but envy would prompt us to hate even the truth held in unholy lips. Brethren, let us then throw away all preference for fleshly authors, for they neither add to nor destroy the intrinsic value of truth itself. All truth rests in its own

eternal worth, and even devils are compelled to believe it. Satan was convinced of the inferiority of his power over Jesus, but he could not love; he only trembled. When a brother presents his views, how do we receive them? If in harmony with ours, applaud? If at variance, denounce, without inquiry or examination? If so, it is a fault of ours. Or do we publicly, in the presence of the speaker, approve of his liberty, and when he is gone enviously denounce him as dangerous, and as advocating dangerous doctrine? A great fault! When the order of the church is presented do we begin to suspect the motive of the speaker, even when the true order is spoken, and thus bar our hearts against the wholesome lessons of profit that ought to have been ours in the spirit of prayerful inquiry, "Lord, is it I?" If so, the fault is ours. When the doctrine, or essential elements of the doctrine of Christ are presented, as the divinity of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the sovereignty of Jehovah, and the experimental points of necessary faith are shown in some limited expression, do we, instead of considering that only a part can be told, begin to demand that our own small views shall be all that can with propriety be proclaimed? This, too, is a foolish thought, provided absolute contradiction does not exist. Or, when others speak do we pervert their language to make apparent error out of their very truth, for fear their views may be said to be better expressed than ours? Alas! what bitter pangs are given by such faults, and it matters not whether they are knowingly or ignorantly done. Hence it were better to be thought a fool, than for vain glory to assume the role of such characteristic faultiness.

I hope brother Chick will not think I am reflecting upon his excellent article on "Faultfinding." I hope I have been well edified by its perusal. As ever, your little, faulty brother,
A. B. BREES.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 9, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—When the late lamented editor was taken away, I felt as though I never could write any more for our interesting paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He was so very kind to correct mistakes, so that the readers could understand my poor scribbles. Indeed he seemed like a father to me, for I had heard him preach for fifty years. The first text that I remember hearing him preach from was Rev. i. 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending," &c. And you know the last text he preached from, the day before his death, 2 Cor. v. 20.

His noble and exalted mind,
By sovereign grace was well supplied;
His blessed hand the pen did hold,
And left on record words of gold.

He truly loved the church as he loved his own soul. But few are left of that company which I met with thirty and eight years ago. Perhaps ten in number are now living in the churches that I mingle with. But many have taken the places of the departed ones,

who speak of the same things, and sing the same songs of Zion. We rejoice when any come inquiring the way to the house of the Lord, and we weep when they go hence. Truly we go forth laughing and weeping. Why is it that we have so many ups and downs, so many likes and dislikes? Sometimes we are so glad, and again we are so sad, and the burden of life seems so heavy. And then again we sing,

"Through duty, and through trials, too,
I'll go at his command."

Why do we cling so much to earth, with all its snares, sorrows, crime and shame; poor, frail beings that we are? But,

"Sometimes a light surprises
The christian while he sings;
It is the Lord, who rises
With healing in his wings."

Then we can say, in the language of the 515th hymn of Beebe's Collection, "Begone, unbelief, my Savior is near."

Please read the whole hymn. It speaks for us all. At one time I was very much troubled in my mind in regard to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also the church here and at New Vernon, when our aged editor and pastor was gone; but at the same time the Lord was polishing stones among us, without hammer or axe, making them meet for the Master's use. And I was made to say, with one of old, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." And now I can say that we have a faithful ministry, and the paper is as welcome as ever to me and my husband.

Dear brethren, I now send you this, hoping you will correct all errors. And O, dear brethren,

"May you have strength that you may run,
And keep your footsteps right;
Though fast you go,
And I so slow,
You are not out of sight."

When you arrive in worlds above,
And all their glories see;
When you get home,
Your journey's done;
Then look ye out for me."

From your unworthy sister,

M. CAREY.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 10, 1884.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In looking over my last article in the SIGNS, upon "Denying the Lord," on page fifty, near the middle of the third column, there is one thing which I wish to correct. I have there said, "For one, brethren, I must plead guilty to every one of the counts of this indictment." Upon looking back over it all I see that brethren might gain a false impression about one thing especially. I have spoken there of visiting bar-rooms, &c. I wish to say that this much at least I have not been guilty of, for which I desire to bless the God of all grace. I hardly know how I could have overlooked this when I said, "For one I must plead guilty," &c. But I suppose that in the haste of writing it was done. A sister kindly called my attention to this in a letter, else I might never have noticed it. Of course I did not in that article mean to charge that any one person was guilty of all these things, but meant to speak of them as things

in which we might all deny our Lord. And this one thing of visiting bar-rooms, and of drinking publicly or privately to excess there, or of drinking there at all, is a crying evil and shame. No one who does it need be surprised if his christian profession is made a jest and mock of by the very men with whom he associates. If he did but know it, his companions despise while they drink with him.

I wish also to say that I am glad at the stand which you have taken upon controversies. I believe the good of the cause is never advantaged by controversy. It never tends to righteousness, but evil, as generally conducted. I never knew anybody to be convinced yet by heated argument. I think your decision will tend to real edification.

As ever, your brother,

F. A. CHICK.

BLANCHESTER, Ohio, March 9, 1884.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Time still continues its regular course, with its return of days, weeks, months and years; and it not only admonishes me that the time has arrived to remit money for the SIGNS, but also that another year of my sojourn in this land of sorrow, affliction, temptation, disappointment and sin has come to an end. I find that after a continued struggle of seventy-two years, trying to do better, in order to be better, I am but as one beating the air. I find I am no better yet, which teaches me the force of that important truth, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Well, so let it be; for it is equally true, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Herein I find the continual conflict. In spirit I desire with all my soul to love and obey God and keep his commandments; but the flesh is corrupt still, and pleads its claims, and brings me very low, almost to despair, and with one of old I am made to call for help and deliverance from foes too mighty for me. Sometimes I feel to say, Is his mercy clean gone forever? I long to feel the answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee." But sometimes a little light is given, a little strength bestowed, the old man waxes more feeble day by day, and the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness, stands forth in the strength of Prince Immanuel, and says, in the language of inspiration, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Here I rest satisfied.

J. C. BEEMAN.

DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES.

By the time this number reaches most of our readers the book of the above title will be ready for delivery. The book contains nearly four hundred pages, and is printed on handsome cream-tinted paper. Those desiring to procure a copy can do so by addressing S. M. Carlton, M. D., Henderson, Rusk County, Texas, or by sending their orders to this office.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

AN esteemed brother requests that we should write on this subject, and asks if it is the duty of a member to reprove another who talks of a report against one who is in the fellowship of the church. In compliance with this request we submit the following thoughts.

The first point to be considered in this subject is the meaning of the term *discipline*, as applied to the members of the organized church. The word is not used in the inspired directions given by our Lord for the instruction of his people. It is found but once in the Scriptures, Job xxxvi. 10, and there it is evident that it does not refer to the government of church members. From the common use of this expression the idea may have been drawn that the church has a sort of authority over her members, as earthly rulers have dominion over their subjects. Instead of authorizing such discipline in the church, our Lord has expressly forbidden it.—See Matt. xx. 25-28. Therefore there is no such thing known to the law of Christ as that kind of discipline which implies authority over one another among the members of the church. On the contrary, it is expressly enjoined that all of the saints be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility.—1 Peter v. 5. This direction can be applied to no other organization except the church of Jesus Christ; but it is exactly adapted to that holy nation whose God is their Lord and King. In earthly governments the laws must necessarily rule over those who are subject to them. In the kingdom of Christ his law is in the heart of every member, and every duty is the highest privilege which can be enjoyed by them; for they love the law of their Lord, and their God works in them to will as well as to do of his good pleasure. So it is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." This kingdom being thus diverse from all others, the law is also different from other laws; and that order of the church which is commonly spoken of as discipline, is exclusively fitted for this peculiar people. Each provision of this heavenly order is a gate of pearl by which the fellowship of the saints passes from heart to heart; but if these precious pearls are profanely cast before swine, (that is, applied to those who love not our Lord,) they will trample them contemptuously under their feet, and turn again and rend the saints.

While the fundamental doctrine of the gospel is very generally understood, and maintained by the saints in the present age, the adversary has beguiled some in regard to the order of the organized church; substituting for the law of Christ, devices ap-

proved by human wisdom, which seem to be prudent and safe, but which practically result in confusion, and mar the sweet harmony and fellowship of them that are called in one hope of their calling. It is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity; but this can be experienced only in walking according to the rule which our Lord has given. A false appearance of peace may be temporarily maintained by force, where some have assumed authority over the church, while the little ones have quietly submitted to the usurpation; but this is not that peace of God to which the saints are called in one body, which rules in their hearts.—Col. iii. 15. The peace which is of God is not constrained by external force or rules, but flows freely from indwelling love, and its manifestation is joyfully free as the streams pouring from their fountain. Thus is fulfilled the promise of the Lord to Zion that he will make her officers peace, and her exactors righteousness.—Isa. lx. 17.

Offenses must needs come in the organized churches, and the perfect law of our Lord gives definite instruction in regard to the treatment of every case. Perhaps the saints may at times fail to understand just how to proceed with the case then before them; but the defect is not in the perfect rule. Our own blindness is the occasion of our trouble. Then it is safe to wait upon the Lord, and heed the direction written by the inspired apostle, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."—James i. 5. Carnal zeal may prompt us to be hasty, but the safe course is to act only as the clearly revealed word directs. More troubles are aggravated by undue haste than by prudent delay. When the Lord makes the course clear to the church, then they can act consistently with the rule given by inspiration. It is always important to examine ourselves in every case; for we are all in the flesh, and liable to be deceived by the devices of our crafty adversary, who is ever ready to suggest to us the wrong course. There is a vast difference between the grieving of the new man and the anger of the carnal mind, yet Satan will often tempt the saints to mistake the latter for the former. When we are thus bewildered, the wrong way appears to us to be right, and unless the Lord is pleased to deliver us from our delusion, we shall be entangled in severe trouble. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—1 Cor. x. 12.

As to the duty of reprovng a brother who talks of a report derogatory of another, it is not safe to decide upon so broad a question. If the talking brother is giving currency to mischievous slander, it would certainly be the duty of one who had love for him to persuade him to refrain from such talk. Sound discretion must decide whether this end can better be attained by entreaty, remonstrance or reproof. We have

known a brother to administer an effective reproof under such circumstances, by remaining perfectly silent until the talker was checked by his failure to respond. It is enjoined that all evil speaking should be laid aside, (1 Peter ii. 1,) but this injunction does not forbid the saints to contend earnestly for the faith, and to reprove the unfruitful works of darkness. The law of Christ deals with the motive rather than the act; and its transgression consists in the design more than in words or actions. So, one might talk of such a report as our brother refers to, when his design was to prove its utter falsehood, and in that case he would hardly deserve reproof. It might be well mildly to suggest that the more discreet course would be to let the slander die of neglect; but since the brother was meaning well, it would be better to treat him kindly, and endeavor to meekly show him the more excellent way.

In all cases in which it is needful to deal with either the faults or indiscretions of brethren, it should ever be remembered that "Love is the fulfilling of the law."—Romans xiii. 10. And John says, "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."—1 John ii. 10. Then, it is of the utmost importance that we be sure that this fruit of the Spirit directs our action, for such is the deceitfulness of sin that we are liable to suppose a critical or fault-finding disposition in ourselves is zeal for the order of the church; and when actuated by this false zeal we can readily discover serious defects in the conduct of our brethren, while our own errors are concealed from our sight. Under the guidance of this zeal our efforts to correct the errors of our brethren will be more likely to arouse carnal resentment than to attract brotherly love; therefore, instead of restoring order we shall aggravate the trouble, and confusion will thus be complicated. Where love rules in the hearts of the saints there will be no more effective officers needed for the execution of the law of the King in Zion than the Peace and Righteousness which the Lord has ordained for that work. These divinely established officers have power to search the secret recesses of all hearts where the light of life has shined, and to decide with infallible accuracy in every case. No artifice of crafty and designing selfishness can deceive these discerning officers; nor can the guilty escape the fruit of their transgressions by any such cunning devices as may baffle earthly courts. The same Lord who is the Lawgiver of Zion is also her Judge, and he has given these officers to execute his will in the church. Whenever the church or any of her members find these officers (Peace and Righteousness) insufficient for the accomplishment of the judgment which seems right to them, there is good reason to doubt the correctness of that judgment. The error may be hidden beneath the dust of old established customs and traditions accepted for ages, but it is not

the less error, and must be consumed by the fire of inspired truth before true fellowship can continue without interruption. Selfish pride may exult in the triumph of successful wrong; but to the true child of God that triumph must end in awful bitterness, when in the dungeon of his own secret thought these officers visit his iniquity with the stripes of divine chastening.

As the law of Christ is love, it is evident that no act can be consistent with that law when it is prompted by anger or revenge. Hence we are admonished, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Rom. xii. 19, 21. In obedience to the spirit of this rule, our brother will find the answer to his inquiry.

PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.

"For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."—Heb. vii. 12.

In the testimony of Jesus which God has given for the comfort and assurance of his saints, the Holy Ghost moved the inspired prophets and apostles to use appropriate illustrations to express to their faith the wonderful truth of the salvation which is given to them in their perfect Savior. Among the types so used the Levitical priesthood is very prominent. Those Hebrew believers to whom this epistle was written, understood well the office and service of the priests as ordained under the law of Moses literally; therefore it was very appropriate to call their minds to that familiar figure in presenting the glorious truth of the fulfillment of that shadow in the antitypical priesthood and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus. In all this letter it is important to consider the particular people to whom it was addressed; for to the Jews the types of their national law were familiar, while to Gentiles they might have been less clearly known; and the truth recorded by the types evidently required that the literal facts cited should be understood. In the foregoing portion of the letter is declared the infinite superiority of Jesus over Moses and all the angels (or ministers) of that dispensation, in that they never were revealed as higher than servants, while Christ is the Son of God, who is Lord over the house of spiritual Israel, which is the church, the temple of God. Under the legal dispensation the priesthood was appointed to the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron, while in the flesh evidently our Lord sprang out of Juda; "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." But there was in the typical record a priesthood superior to that of Aaron, and established before the law was given from Sinai. No record is given of the institution of this priesthood, but the first mention of it is that it was established in Melchisedec king of Salem, when he met Abram returning from the slaughter of the kings, and re-

ceived tithes from him after he had blessed him.—Genesis xiv. 13-20. Abram then confessed the superiority of that priesthood. Much speculation has been exercised in regard to this priest, but there is nothing known of him beyond the record. He is in this particular eminently the type of Jesus, the true Priest of the most high God. But the law of Moses, which confined the priesthood to the tribe of Levi, could not recognize Jesus Christ in that office, since he was of the royal tribe of Judah. Therefore, there was "of necessity a change also of the law;" for he must be both King and Priest, as ordained to both those offices by the supreme authority of the eternal God.—Psa. ii. 6; ex. 4; Zech. vi. 13. By his own word it is declared that "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."—Matthew v. 18. Hence it was necessary that the Lord should come in the form of a servant, and by perfect obedience satisfy the utmost demand of that law, and thereby blot out the handwriting of ordinances, and nail it to his cross. Then he manifested his triumphant glory in rising from the dead by the power of an endless life, having the keys of hell and of death; that is, having fulfilled the law and taken it out of the way, he had now, as the anointed Savior, "all power in heaven and in earth." Now the law is ordained in his kingdom by his sovereign authority alone, and as a lawgiver Moses is dead. It is now a denial of the perfect fulfillment of the law by our Redeemer, when any of his ransomed ones go back to that law for justification. So, Paul demands of the saints at Colosse, "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, [that is, the elements of legal bondage,] why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?"—Col. ii. 20. There is no unchanging royal priesthood under the law of Moses. Therefore, "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse."—Gal. iii. 10. That law is fulfilled in all for whom Jesus died by the one offering of himself, whereby "He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Not only are those of his people who were as Jews under the law of Moses, by this spotless offering redeemed from that hopeless bondage, but all his people were then ransomed from every demand of eternal justice, and in him they are free from all law which could condemn them to death. This is the "glorious liberty of the children of God."—Rom. viii. 21. The carnal enmity of the sinful heart would see in this "perfect law of liberty" a reason for continuing in sin; but Paul speaks for all the subjects of the grace of God when he replies to this caviling, "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"—Rom. vi. 2. Those who refrain from wickedness only from fear of punishment, give no evidence that they hate sin; but they who groan under the burden of that law in their members which brings them into

bondage to corruption, can say with Paul, "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."—Rom. vii. 16, 17.

There is nothing but condemnation and death in the law of works, for that law has no provision for repentance or mercy; but in that new law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus there is forgiveness of sins through the blood of atonement which cleanseth us (all for whom he died) from all sin.—1 John i. 7. In themselves the redeemed people of God see nothing but sin, and they are the only people to whom the reproach of it is a burden. Because they love righteousness and hate sin, they long for that perfection which is in the Lord alone. No others have that "hunger and thirst after righteousness" but those who are already blessed by the word of Jesus.—Matt. v. 6. Let such as mourn their own sinfulness remember that Jesus Christ is not a priest of the Levitical order, under the law of sin and death. "He is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Our Jesus, "because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Here is the strong assurance of consolation to all whose hope is in Jesus. So, it is written for the comfort of all who trust in this High Priest, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."—1 John ii. 1.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose a copy of the best photograph of father that we have, and from which I desire the steel engraving to be made for the Church History.

The severe illness of one of my children prevented me from working much on the History last month, so that it will probably be some time next month before I can send you the manuscript. It seems due to myself to say three things. First, that since I have been engaged on the Church History I have had more sickness in my family than in all my life before. Second, that I have so given myself to this work as almost to ruin my worldly business. And third, that having never before gone through the tangled maze, the thorny thicket, and the dark morass of several passages in mediæval and modern church history, I have been many times mistaken and disappointed in regard to the period when I should complete the long and difficult journey. All that I ask from my brethren is just a little more patience with me. Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., March 15, 1884.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Death has again entered our midst, and caused me to send you a notice of the death of my dear sister, **Laura Eugenia Ensor**. She was born in Baltimore Co., Md., Sept. 18, 1866, and died Feb. 5, 1884, aged 22 years, 4 months and 13 days. My dear sister had been afflicted for nearly two years with consumption, but she was not prevented from joining in our social enjoyments, and delighted in visiting her friends, and to have them visit her, and was always ready and anxious to attend the meetings as long as her strength permitted. Although she was not a member of the church militant, she has given you, as well as myself and others, the evidence that she had a good hope through grace. She often talked about herself. She did not think that she would ever be fully restored to health, but thought she might be spared a long time, and indulged the thought until a short time before she passed away. She was confined to her bed but a little more than three weeks. Her sufferings had been great at times, but all through the long months and weeks that she lingered, she was patient and cheerful. I do not feel like speaking of the many virtues and the noble character of my dear sister, as you have known her from childhood; but they are deeply impressed upon the minds and hearts of her husband, mother, sisters and brothers. She was the daughter of George C. and Ruth A. Ensor. She was married to Melville Ensor Feb. 16, 1882, and lived happy with him two years lacking ten days. How short the time! How great the change! He feels that the light of his once happy and pleasant home has gone out. About two hours before she died she looked at us all with her beautiful eyes filled with light that no earthly joy had power to call forth, and said, "Mell, darling, I am going to die." Then turning to ma, she said, "Ma, I am going to die. You are ready, ma, to die, and I am not afraid to trust the Lord." To me she said, "O Lila, you don't know how I am suffering, but I know, and none but the good Lord can relieve me." I said, "Your sufferings will soon be over," and she said, "Yes," and in a few moments closed her eyes, to awake, we believe, where suffering is unknown. I have written much more than I intended, and leave it all to your better judgment, to copy what you please for publication.

She passed away like a flower of May,

Without a murmuring sigh;
Her hope was in her Savior's love,
She did not fear to die.
Why should we weep for the loved one gone,
Whose sufferings now are o'er?
Her spirit from its chains has fled,
To be enthralled no more.

Yet why, O death, why seekest thou
The youthful for thy prey?
Why place thy hand on youth's fair brow?
Why pluck the flower in May?
Why pass the aged wanderer by,
Who waits thy call in vain?
Who often pray that they may die,
And free themselves from pain?

O Lord, how hard it is to part
From friends we love so dear!
It softens e'en the hardest heart,
And starts the silent tear.
Yet hope, sweet hope, still cheers the heart,
And says in tones of love,
Though here on earth death bids us part,
We'll meet in heaven above.

We'll mourn not that the Lord who gave,
Has bid her sufferings cease;
Beside her loving father's grave
She will repose in peace
Until Jehovah shall command
That time shall be no more,
When we shall meet at his right hand
Beyond this sinful shore.

With much love I remain your unworthy little sister,

LILA ENSOR.

BLACK ROCK, Md., March 5, 1884.

Joseph McAlpine died November 19, 1883, of consumption, aged 23 years and 10 months. The great and glorious God was pleased to give to our dear brother the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, about two years ago. For quite a long time before this

our brother was made to know the wretchedness and vileness of his state by nature. Often have the children of God who knew him heard him speak of his experience, when under the teaching of the Holy Spirit he felt the exceeding sinfulness of sin, his helplessness, and of his sighs and cries under the felt condemnation of the law, to the Lord to visit his soul in mercy. While his mother was lying at the point of death, the Lord was pleased to proclaim salvation to his soul, and this Scripture, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," was sent with most comforting power to his troubled heart. His burden of sin was gone, and in the midst of his natural sorrow at the loss of his dear mother, he was favored to experience precious peace and consolation in the salvation of the Lord. A short time before this he related his experience before the church in Duart, Ontario, and was baptized by Elder Pollard. The grace of God was manifest in our brother in his earnest, loving solicitude for the welfare of the church of Christ, which often made glad the household of faith who witnessed this in him. During our brother's lingering sickness, the Lord enabled him to be patient, and gave him sweet submission to the will of the Lord concerning him. He had seasons of heaviness, when clouds and darkness seemed to be round about; but the Lord again and again appeared to his relief, and with tears in his eyes at one time he repeated the words,

"In darkest shades if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun."

As he drew near his journey's end, he spoke of this world as being dark and vile, and that he would not live here. He longed to depart and be with Christ. Some little time before he breathed his last mortal breath, he commenced singing,

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal dwell,"
but could not proceed, through weakness of body; but his sister Barbara repeated the rest of the verse. Our dear young brother in his last moments was much distressed in breathing, but at the appointed time the Lord released him from his sufferings, and we believe that he is now with Christ, which is far better. At the funeral the writer tried to speak from Solomon's Song viii. 5.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NEWBURY, Ontario.

DIED—On the night after the 20th of February, 1884, of what was thought to be congestion of the stomach, in the 12th year of her age, **Linnie B. Lowe**, daughter of W. A. and Anna Lowe. Her sickness was of short duration, only about four days, and was not thought to be serious until a few hours before her demise. Linnie was a most kind, pleasant and interesting child, beloved by all who knew her, and is sadly missed by them all. Just before she died, as she was restless upon her bed, and her father was gently raising her head, she said to him, "Pa, if you will let me rest this way I will kiss you." And she kissed him twice, and a few moments later was gone. It was a sore trial to the heart-broken parents and all the family, but may the Lord comfort the mourners, binding up the broken hearts, and healing their wounded spirits. She leaves father, mother, three brothers and three sisters, grandparents and quite a circle of relatives and friends to mourn their loss, which was doubtless gain to her, and may the Lord make it gain (as he alone can) to those left behind.

"Come, ye disconsolate, wherever ye languish,
Come, at the shrine of God fervently kneel;
Here bring your broken hearts, here tell your anguish;
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal."

We believe that the Lord was pleased to give our dear, bereaved brother and those with him in affliction a token of good and a manifestation full of comfort in this time of sorrow and distress; for when we were returned from the burying ground his oldest daughter testified that on her way from the burying she had realized what she had been desiring for two years, that Jesus was precious to her, that he loved her; and it was a solemn, af-

fecting scene, as she went from one to another, telling of the loving-kindness of Jesus, and his wondrous grace, that had given her comfort in distress, and raised her above her grief for her sister's death.

"Why should our mourning thoughts delight
To grovel in the dust?"

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." Therefore,

"Awake, my soul, and like the sun,
Burst through each sable cloud;
And thou, my voice, though broke with sighs,
Tune forth thy songs aloud."

R. M. THOMAS.

NEW MARKET, Mo.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I am sad, and my heart is filled with gloom, for God in his inscrutable providence has called my dear wife from the cares of this life. **Hattie E. Beeman** departed this life February 4, 1884, after an illness of two weeks. She had been afflicted for several years at intervals with neuralgia, but during this time she had some relief from suffering, and her looks would indicate to a stranger that she enjoyed good health. The last four days of her life she had improved a great deal, and did not suffer any particular pain, and said she was a great deal better, and her friends remarked of her cheerful looks and manner. About one hour before she expired she was attacked with neuralgia in her left side, which increased with great violence and moved to the region of the heart, when she passed away in less than ten minutes. I had her sitting up in bed, when suddenly, without a word, she dropped on the pillow and never spoke more. The subject of this notice was born in Cumberland, Md., Oct. 12, 1846. She was the daughter of Travis Coppage. Her mother died when she was three weeks old. She was raised by Mrs. John Pownall, with whom, in October, 1862, she moved to Highland Co., Ohio. We were married Oct. 28, 1868. About this time, or earlier, she was exercised about the subject of religion, and called by some of her young friends an old foggy, for attending to the preaching of the doctrine which is everywhere spoken against, which did not daunt her; for she had felt a drawing to the cause which she could not explain. She was baptized by Elder J. C. Beeman, in the fellowship of New Hope Church, Warren Co., Ohio, on the first Sunday in June, 1869, since which time until she fell asleep she has contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. She made no compromises with error, and the writer has often been strengthened by her firmness in the doctrine of salvation by grace, without the least mixture of works. Her place at the meetings of the saints was never vacant unless providentially hindered, inclement weather being no excuse for her, as many well know. But she is gone, and the writer of this feels that he is afflicted, but that it is of the Lord. She leaves behind a good name, an afflicted husband and six sons, the youngest being fourteen months old. But we mourn not as those without hope, believing that for her to die was gain. O that God in his mercy may sanctify this sore bereavement to our good and his glory, and may the supplication of God's people ascend for us in our lonely condition.

Yours in affliction,
JEFF. BEEMAN.

TIPPECANOE, Pa., March 10, 1884.

DEPARTED this life February 23, 1884, **Sarah S. Rush**, who was born in Bedford Co., Pa., Oct. 25, 1814; removed with her parents (Henry and Rachel Stahl) to Darke Co., Ohio, while quite young; was married to Eden H. H. Rush Dec. 8, 1842, and upon profession of faith in Christ was baptized in the fellowship of the Regular Baptist Church of Greenville, Ohio, by Elder J. C. Beeman, October 10, 1854; moved to Olney, Ill., Nov. 1, 1865, and was one of the constituent members of Little Zion Regular Baptist Church, of Richland Co., Ill., (which church was mainly gathered and constituted under the ministrations of her husband), of which church she remained a worthy and highly esteemed member until her death. The funeral services were conducted at her residence in the city of Olney, by J. W. Wharp, assisted by Elders Gardner and Danberry. Text, (selected by herself), Psalm xxxi. 5, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." Sister Rush was indeed a mother in Israel, and her death was truly that of the righteous. During her protracted and at times intense suffering she manifested entire submission to the will of her heavenly Father. She was sensible to the last, and among her last expressions were, "He leadeth me," "In God is my trust," and "To him be glory, glory, glory." She leaves an aged husband in feeble health, two daughters, (both married), with many brethren and friends, to mourn their loss, which is her eternal gain.

"Dearest mother, thou hast left us,
Here our loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God who hath bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal."

DIED—At the house of his brother-in-law, brother George Jenkins, near Rock Springs, our esteemed brother, **Lewis C. Thomas**. He was born February 12, 1823, was baptized March 11, 1877, and died January 26, 1884. As he spent the most of his time in the neighborhood of Rock Springs, particularly the last years of his life, it gave me an opportunity of an intimate acquaintance with him. I knew him when he was very bitter in his feelings against me and others of the Old School, because of the doctrine held by them. We have also known him when no other doctrine would suit his case. When a sensible sinner, he was made to realize an interest in the Savior of poor, lost sinners. He became as decided in contending for the truth as he had been in opposing it. It was my privilege to baptize him in the fellowship of the church at Rock Springs, in whose fellowship and confidence he remained until his death. He was stricken down suddenly and unexpectedly, and was found in an unconscious condition. His disease was paralysis, from which he never recovered, although he lived for some time, but in a very helpless condition. Our little number is becoming thinned out, one by one being called away by death. His funeral was largely attended at Rock Springs on January 28. May the Lord sanctify this dispensation to the good of the relatives, and also to the church of which he was a member.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Harford Co., Md.

It becomes my painful duty to write the obituary of my dear brother, **Elijah Casey**. He was born in Marion Co., Ark., February 21, 1853, and died at my house in the same county, December 8, 1883, aged 30 years, 9 months and 17 days. He and myself were baptized by our father, Elder Elijah S. Casey, in the fellowship of Enon Church of Regular Primitive Baptists, on the fourth Sunday in July, 1876. He lived to the honor of the cause of Christ, and died in the triumphs of a living faith. His disease was consumption, caused by a hurt in the breast. He suffered a great deal, but bore it with christian fortitude. On the night before he died he requested brother Albritten to sing and pray, as it was the last opportunity he would ever have to engage in worship here. He chose the hymn, "The day is past and gone," &c., and although suffering very much, he paid close attention to the singing and the prayer, and said Amen at the close. He afterward spoke of the good prayer meeting we had that night. He leaves a wife and two children, (one by his first wife and one by his second), together with father and mother, three brothers, two sisters and the church to mourn; but we believe our loss is his eternal gain. May God sanctify this bereavement to our good and to his own glory, is the sincere desire of your unworthy brother,

WM. J. CASEY.

LEAD HILL, Ark.

It becomes our painful duty to send for publication in the SIGNS a notice of the death of our dear daughter, **Frances Mary Darnall**,

daughter of J. G. and Mary A. Steers. She was born July 14, 1863, was married to W. H. Darnall April 13, 1881, and died August 10, 1883.

Frankie was always healthy up to the time of her sickness which ended in death. Her disease was blood poisoning. She was confined to her bed some eight weeks, and was a great sufferer during that time. She was not a member of any visible church, but the evidence she gave of being a child of God was such as no one should doubt. Her funeral was attended by a large congregation, when a sermon was preached by Elder Wm. A. Thompson. She leaves a young husband, one little son, her father and mother, two brothers and five sisters, with a host of relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, but not as those having no hope.

J. G. STEERS.

FAIRBURG, Ill.

DIED—In Bath, Maine, February 25, 1884, brother **Oliver P. Scollay**, aged 58 years and 9 months. He united with the Bowdoinham Church about twenty-five years ago. He loved the truth, and had no fellowship with the works of the natural man, but had been taught that salvation is of the Lord. He enjoyed reading the SIGNS until his mind failed so that he could not understand what he read. He was confined to his bed but a short time, and was unconscious. We know our loss is his gain.

Your unworthy sister,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

BATH, Maine, March 10, 1884.

DIED—At Fort Scott, Kansas, Feb. 23, 1884, **Mr. James T. Chancellor**, in the 55th year of his age. He leaves a wife and eight children to mourn their loss of a kind husband and father. He was a man of sterling worth, strictly honest and honorable. May he who never slumbers nor sleeps, watch over them and keep them in this evil world.

C. M. JOHNSON.

BELLEFAIR MILLS, Va., March 3, 1884.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Tuscarora Church, Schuylkill Co., Pa., to convene on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May (14th), 1884, and continue three days.
F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (21st), 1884, and continue in session three days.
B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 28th), and continue until Friday evening following.
G. M. FETTER, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Middletown & Walkkill Church, in the village of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (4th), 1884, and continue in session until Friday evening following.
BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association will be held, providence permitting, with the church at Riker's Hollow, Steuben Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (11th), 1884, and continue in session three days.
J. C. BEARD JR., Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

S P Rogers 2, Wm M Jones 2, Daniel Stark 2, B S Pate 2, Edward Wicks 2, Anderson Gordon 10, Mrs F J Sayle 2, A I Smith 2, Albert Corbin 2, Wm Miller 2, E C Smith 2, Daniel D Willard 2, Elder Sylvester Hassell 2, 438, Mattie S Derr 2, J B Dawson 2.—Total \$2,474 00.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1884.

NO. 8.

POETRY.

GOD IS LOVE.

(1 John iv. 16.)

WHEN all my springs of comfort fail,
And I no more can take delight
In that sweet name I love,
There's nothing I can do that's right;
My soul is sick, my spirit weak and frail;
And yet I seem to rove,
As if hunting for a love
Once possessed, but lost in the depths
And wilds of man's perverted nature.
Ah! but love is not in such a creature.
"God is love," and far, far above the heights
Of man,
Where human eyes can never scan;
For human eye cannot behold the Deity.
He dwelleth in resplendent, dazzling light,
Which would destroy our feeble sight
And dash us to the pit of woe,
Where none redeemed shall ever go.
And now my eyes turn from within,
For there is but the pit of sin;
I turn, with patience to await,
Till God shall change my mortal state.
I soar on wings of faith to realms above,
The Spirit whispering, saying, "God is
love."
And in his sweet embrace,
O! there, yes, there, by faith I trace
That everlasting love
Which dwells in God above,
Who laid such help on one,
E'en his own begotten Son,
Mighty and able to save;
That I might have free access to his grace,
Where "God is love," and joy, and peace,
And where I get a sweet release
From trouble, sorrow and my trials,
And cheerfully submit to self-denials.
And as by faith I take this flight,
And enter the portal of sweet delight,
My mind in such a happy frame,
Can now rejoice in that sweet name,
Jesus, the fount, the spring of all my joy,
Unmingled with the earth's alloy.
Beside still waters I am led,
In presence of my enemies fed,
And made to rest in pastures green,
As on my Savior's arm I lean.
The world's reproaches I despise,
And scorn the invention of infidel lies.
'Tis spiritual wickedness in high places,
Teeming with the devil's graces.
Our Master bore the same sore trials,
From many a son of old Belial,
And taught us, for his own dear name,
That we should suffer the very same.
But God, who works his counsel still,
Will surely do his sovereign will.
The wrath of man shall praise his name,
And what remains he will restrain.
Our loving God has once declared
That all his glory shall be shared
By those his counsel has decreed,
And numbered as the holy seed;
That counsel held in climes above,
Where all is God, and "God is love."

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., March 14, 1884.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GHEENT, Ky., Sept. 14, 1883.

BRETHREN G. BEEBE'S SONS:—
While attending the Licking Association last week, sister Annie Porter, of Union, Kentucky, requested me to write for publication in the SIGNS some thoughts upon what is taught in that part of the sacred volume in which is recorded the sending out of the dove by Noah from the window of the ark, recorded Genesis viii. 8-12. Realizing as I fully do my ignorance and incapacity to write anything upon that sacred narrative, or any other part of divine revelation, that would in any wise edify or instruct any of God's dear people, it is with feelings of regret that I attempt it; regret that sister Porter had not called upon the editors of the SIGNS, or some of the other faithful servants of the Most High, to present to her and the readers of that most excellent paper the sublime and glorious beauties contained in that sacred narrative. It is written, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." With what deep emotions of gratitude should the hearts of the saints pulsate when they are enabled to realize that their Lord hath provided a bountiful supply for all their needs, both temporally and spiritually, while sojourning here below. That Scripture is a part of that supply, and is left upon record for you, dear sister, and for all the saints who may by grace divine be enabled to gaze upon its sublime beauties, and rejoice in the power and wisdom of God made manifest to them by the wonder-working power of his Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." But it will be remembered that the Scripture referred to presents the closing scenes of the flood, that awful manifestation of God's wrath against sin. Sin and iniquity had spread wherever man was found upon the earth. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord," and he prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. That ark was a figure of our Lord, in whom all fullness dwells. In it the family of Noah were saved from the awful scenes of that tempo-

ral destruction. They were chosen of God, and the ark prepared under his divine direction for their salvation from impending ruin. In our glorious Lord are all his chosen people, for they are elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and were chosen in Christ before the world began, and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. While that ark was riding upon the foaming waves of that mighty deluge, it and all the elect of God within its walls were as safe from harm and danger as when it rested upon the summit of Ararat, for God is a present help in every time of need. "A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." That man is he who was prefigured by that ark, and all his chosen people are saved in him from the direful consequences of sin as fully and as completely as were Noah and his house saved by that ark from that utter and complete destruction which overwhelmed the antediluvian world. That ark rode on those mighty waters, and rested safely on the summit of the mount, with all whom God had chosen to be delivered from that flood which was sent by reason of sin. But the ark of our eternal safety must also pass through the deep waters. He says by the mouth of the psalmist, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." In the same Psalm he says, "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." While upon earth he said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" He also said to the unbelieving Jews who asked for a sign, that no sign should be given them but the sign of Jonah the prophet, thus referring to his resurrection. Jonah says, "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God." The psalmist, in prophesying of his resurrection, says, "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." And the apostle says, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." When he arose from that mighty flood of death, his elect family were as safe from the consequences of sin as were the family of Noah when the ark

rested on Ararat. The family of Noah had to go forth from the top of that mount to till the earth. Not so with that redeemed family of our Lord; they stood on Mount Zion, the glory of the whole earth.

When the ark rested, Noah "sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth." "And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more." Luke says, "And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Mark, in recording the wonderful works of our Lord, says, "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Mark well this language. He saw the heavens opened, and a voice from that most excellent glory proclaimed that he is the beloved Son of the everlasting Father. The Spirit like a dove rested upon him. Upon none of those who were present at his baptism did the dove descend but Jesus. It was a messenger from on high, like those who appeared to the shepherds. They all brought to earth a message from the eternal throne, and that message proclaimed the advent of him who was to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. At that period his work was before him. When Noah sent out the dove the second time the waters had begun to abate; and when the dove descended upon him, the darkness of the legal dispensation had begun to recede, and the rays from the glorious Sun of righteousness were seen lighting up the gospel heavens. Old Simeon saw that light, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant

depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." The dove brought to Noah the first evidence that the waters of the flood were abating; an olive leaf plucked off in her mouth was that evidence. Mark well the language. It was plucked off. It was no stray leaf found by her floating on the mighty waters, nor did she make that leaf, or obtain it from some expert in the manufacture of artificials, as do some of our modern clergy obtain their evidences of the truth of the glorious gospel from some learned "D. D." within the walls of a college. An olive branch is an emblem of peace. When the dove brought that olive leaf to Noah, it was an evidence to him and to all within the ark that no more were they to be disturbed by the mighty roar of forty days of rain. No more were they to be wearied by close confinement within the ark, but they were to go forth, freed from confinement, and grow up upon what then appeared to them to be the new earth; like those who are freed from sin, and fear the Lord, of whom the prophet speaks, saying, "They shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Zechariah, in his vision, was shown a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which are upon the top thereof; and two olive trees by it, one upon the right of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof. The angel which talked to the prophet, when speaking of the two olive trees, said, "These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." They stand by the Lord of the whole earth in his reign in his kingdom here below. They are witnesses of the great and glorious truths of the gospel of peace; one declaring by the prophets and the types and shadows of the law that he would come to his temple, and the other that he had come and finished the great work given him to do. When the saint has revealed to him the testimony of these two witnesses, he sings with rapture and delight the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." His is a reign of peace. He says, "My peace I give unto you." While he reigns in peace, yet his is a triumphant reign. He says, "My peace I give unto you." He gives them eternal life, and in that gift is that peace which surpasseth knowledge. No more the thundering of Sinai sounds in the ears of those to whom that life and peace is given, for they are made to lie down in green pastures, beside still waters.

The dove bore the evidence to Noah of the passing away of the waters from the face of the earth. None can doubt but that dove was a messenger controlled by omnipotent power in carrying to Noah that evidence; and

none can doubt that the Spirit descended upon our Lord in the form of a dove at his baptism. In the first case, Noah had an assurance of his complete safety and triumph over danger through the power, goodness, mercy and wisdom of his adorable Lord. In the second case, spiritual Israel had an assurance that he who was born in Bethlehem was the Messiah that had come, and that his mission was to redeem his people from all iniquity. He of God is made unto them redemption. In that ark Noah was redeemed from the deluge of waters that destroyed the life of every living thing that was outside of the ark; and in Christ was plentiful redemption from the flood of sin and iniquity that overwhelmed all who were not chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Then we find that the dove was a messenger to bear good tidings of great joy, a messenger chosen of God for that great and glorious purpose. The words *angel* and *messenger* are often used as synonymous terms. He that held the seven stars in his right hand said to John, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." The angels of those churches were the ministers of the everlasting gospel, called of God to bear to those churches the messages that God intended for them; messages of warning, as well as messages of joy, peace and rest in their adorable Redeemer. John received and recorded a message for each one of them. It was their imperative duty to bear those messages to the churches, with all the solemn and fearful warnings which they contained. Paul said to the church at Corinth, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Paul was a minister of Christ, and his mission is here declared, "Be ye reconciled to God." The dove had its message to bear to Noah, and about the certainty and truth of that message he could not doubt. It was an olive leaf plucked off, plucked from its native tree. In that tree was the life of that leaf; and all the true messages borne by God's ministers have their origin and power in Christ, and hence are true. Then was not that dove a figure of the true minister of the gospel? She could not bear the olive leaf to Noah until the waters had abated; nor can the ministers of Christ proclaim the good news and glad tidings of the gospel until they by faith are enabled to realize that their adorable Redeemer has by his omnipotent power abated the deluge of sin with which they were overwhelmed. It is then that they have a message to bear; a message of complete and everlasting delivery, a message of eternal safety in our glorious antitypical Ark. They in holy triumph can then point to the bow of promise in the gospel heavens, made vivid by the showers of redeeming and regenerating grace sent down to water the plants in the garden of the Lord. They can then proclaim

that the floods of wrath against sin will never overwhelm God's dear people; for he who guided that ark safely while riding upon that mighty deep, has in his own glorious person abated those waters, silenced the thunderings of Sinai, and brought in everlasting righteousness and redemption to his people.

If these rambling thoughts should be published, sister Porter will please accept them as a token of my christian love for her, and for all the dear saints who may read them. And you, brethren editors of the SIGNS, will please dispose of them as you may deem best, and believe me affectionately yours,

H. COX.

OCCOQUAN, Va., March 19, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I returned to my home the 14th instant from a visit among our brethren in the south. By request of brethren, as well as to satisfy an impression of my own mind, I desire to make some reference to this visit through the SIGNS.

I was absent from home fifty-two days, was called upon to speak publicly fifty-four times, and traveled over twenty-one hundred miles, a large part of which was by private conveyance. I left my home the 23d of January, and spent the following Saturday and Sunday at Wilson, N. C. It was near Wilson that the late Elder R. C. Leachman, of Virginia, found refuge during the recent war. I was reminded of him frequently while there. I enjoyed the visit here very much, meeting with Elders Gold, Hassell, and others, whose company and conversation was comforting and instructive, and at whose houses I found a comfortable home. I will mention here, that if some have become restless because of what might seem to them a delay in the publication of the Church History, such a feeling must arise largely from inattention to the fact that it requires time, and patient, laborious investigation, to collect the material for such a work. Elder Hassell has made a considerable sacrifice in preparing this work, which I hope the brethren will remember, should its sale fail to amply compensate him. Leaving Wilson I proceeded to Atlanta, Ga., via Wilmington and Augusta; and after spending two days in Atlanta, to Cusseta, Ala., filling my first appointment near there with Hepzibah Church. At this place I met with Elder Wm. M. Mitchell and the pastor of the church, Elder Hurst. Elder Mitchell continued with me three days in a pleasant and profitable intercourse. I continued to fill appointments in Alabama until February 25th, meeting a number of dear brethren, including several preachers. The kindness and attention of the dear brethren and friends of truth I hope never to forget. Among the preachers with whom I became acquainted I will mention Elders Henderson, Jawers, Lively, Satterwhite, Shurley, Thomas, Bussey, Norman and Cleveland. I enjoyed the opportunity of forming their acquaintance.

Elder J. E. W. Henderson continued with me a week, much to my enjoyment. Our journey was exceedingly pleasant to me, and formed in many respects one of the most interesting parts of my visit. Elder Taylor, of North Carolina, was with me at Mt. Olive. February 19th a great storm swept over Alabama and adjoining states. Through this storm two great cyclones ploughed their way, leveling forests and towns in their destructive track, destroying a number of lives and a large amount of property. To one unacquainted with the power of these cyclones, the accounts sometimes sent out regarding them might seem incredible. I was forcibly reminded by these storms of the power of that exalted and omnipotent One whose way is in the whirlwind, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. Among the many interesting seasons I will refer to my visit to brother Holloway, of Alexander City, to Bethel, (near Brooksville,) where I met with Elder Benjamin Jawers, at Tallassee, at Mt. Gilead, where I formed the acquaintance of Elder Lively, at Brownsville, and at Mt. Olive, near the home of Elder Mitchell. Arriving in Covington, Ga., the 25th ult., I remained in the state about fifteen days. I enjoyed the pleasure of meeting in Georgia with Elders I. Hamby, John G. Enbanks, J. T. Jordan, Wm. Adams, Wm. D. Almand, J. H. Cook, J. A. Jordan. I also met with brother Lee Hancks, a young and interesting brother, a licentiate, formerly of West Virginia. It would not be of general interest to your readers to refer to the many places visited, and the numerous acts of kindness received from dear brethren and friends, nor would it be possible in a single communication. I would refer particularly to my visit to brother Wm. S. Montgomery, and with him for several days. Brother Montgomery has always been a very dear brother to me since my first acquaintance with him several years ago, and his comfortable home is ever open to brethren and friends who have opportunity to partake of its hospitality. Through his kindness, and that of Elders Mitchell and Henderson, my visit south was arranged. Leaving Atlanta the 11th instant, I spent near two days in Petersburg, Va., and the closing appointment of my trip was in that city, at the residence of brother J. T. Wright, 463 Bollingbrook Street. This was an interesting season. I met at brother Wright's and spent the day with Elder J. G. Woodfin, an aged minister, living not far from Richmond, Va., whose company I enjoyed very much. The weather during my stay in Alabama was at times delightful; but the latter part of February and during March, while I was in Georgia, it was very unpleasant, cold and rainy. The Lord, however, graciously sustained me during the journey, and I received many evidences of his tender care. The south in many respects is a highly favored land. Perhaps in no section of our country are our people as numerous, I mean in the number of churches and their

aggregate membership; and nowhere in my knowledge is there more of a self-sacrificing spirit on the part of our ministers in their arduous labors in the cause of truth. During the last quarter of a century the southern states have been called to pass through fearful scenes, of war, of famine, of pestilence, and of war's fearful consequences. I am assured that these scenes of distress will work for good to our brethren there as well as in all parts of our country. It is for the church's good. Above the awful flames of war and the battle's deadly roar, the God of heaven sits enthroned in sovereign power, working "all things after the counsel of his own will," and all for the good of his children. The end of these things is not yet. How comforting it is to know that the "Lord God omnipotent reigneth." There is reason to suppose that the religious fanaticism of the present day, emboldened by its success in the recent war, is making a mighty effort to spread its poisonous teachings through the south. I saw a number of evidences of this. I sympathize with the people of the south, after having endured the horrors of war, famine and pestilence, now to be flooded with antichristian tracts and preachers, and to endure the foul odors of Babylon! Stealthily as creeps the serpent upon its prey, this fanaticism works through the mail, the press, the pulpit, everywhere working to revolutionize our country and undermine the foundation of civil and religious liberty, upon which all our happiness as a people rests. In the forefront of this storm of fanaticism stands New England Puritanism and Brooklyn theology. Great God, what a combination! Ye grim phantoms of war, of famine, of pestilence, welcome to our shores a thousand times in preference to such religious fanaticism! It must have been such a sight that disturbed poor Eliphaz's dreams, and made all his bones to tremble and the hair of his flesh to stand up. Lamblike in its appearance, but with the venom of the viper concealed in its work, this fanaticism respects no right of the people, civil or religious, which stands in the way of its advancement, and will hesitate to use no means within its power to accomplish its designs. We are living in the midst of important events. It is comforting to know that our God has churches and ministers who stand like Gibraltar for truth, "set for the defense of the gospel." They are in all parts of our country, in the south as in the north, in the west as in the east. As I look back over my journey I feel to thank God and take courage; and as I look again over my journeys of past years in different and distant places, I rejoice in evidences of the same blessed truth. We cannot temporize or yield a single principle of gospel truth. Divisions may come again and again among those who wear our name; but "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," the church of our God must forever stand

immovable and secure. I hope that I was enabled upon my journey to walk about this heavenly building, to "walk about Zion, and go round about her," to see her lofty towers, her beautiful palaces, and her impregnable bulwarks. Of these things I would write, and of the holy and blessed company that bow in her sacred tabernacles, and of the dew that descended upon her beautiful mountains; "for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore." Glorious consideration! Blessed people! Whether in the snow-girt regions of the north, or in the "sunny south,"

"The same their joy, their song the same." The lines that divide sections and nations cannot divide them.

"One army of the living God
To his command we bow;
Part of his host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now."

"I will make them," saith the Lord, "one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all."—Ezekiel xxxvii. 22. Again, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."—Zeph. iii. 9. In the love and fellowship of that holy nation, and the precious consolation of this blessed service, may we spend the remnant of our days, speaking to each other in that pure language, and telling of the wonderful works of him "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

I remain, as ever, yours in love and gospel fellowship,

WM. M. SMOOT.

ALBANY, Mo., Feb. 17, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have had some comfortable thoughts to-day on the words, "And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking."—Mark viii. 24. By your permission, I feel a strong desire to have a fire-side chat with the dear members of the household of faith, though not to the exclusion of better matter.

The wonderful miracle wrought upon this poor blind man attested the omnipotent power of Prince Immanuel, Jesus, the Savior of sinners. In him, and him alone, existed that virtue sufficient to open the eyes of the blind, demonstrating by this exhibition of power the all-sufficiency of that grace treasured in him before the foundation of the world, unto the complete salvation of those whose sins he bore in his own body on the cross. This blind man was brought to him by the disciples, and they besought him to touch him. "And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town." How wonderfully illustrative is this of that which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah concerning the mission of our divine Redeemer, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known."—Isaiah xlii. 16. Surely this blind man had not before

this been so led; truly his feet never trod the path that the Savior was now leading him in. Without eyes to see, how could he perceive the hand that was leading him forth? The words of Jesus are, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—John iii. 8. The irresistible power of the unknown hand directing the steps of this blind man to the place out of town where sight was given him, illustrates the effectual working of God's mighty power in us, fulfilling his divine mission, "To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."—Isa. xlii. 7. How hopelessly lost in sin does the awakened sinner feel! The terrible darkness of the prison house is alarmingly and vividly impressed upon his mind, when he remembers that his punishment is just, and it certainly occurs to him that if there is any hope for him it must be in town. But no; he must be led forth, not knowing whither or where or by whom. He "cannot tell whence it cometh." This Jesus, the Christ, is leading him out of the town.

"And when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught." The blind man had no agency in the work; his privilege was to follow where Jesus led. His joy was to receive the gift of sight, independent of any instrumentality, only that which Jesus ordained to the opening of his eyes. Even so the anointing is of God, our Savior. The effect of his hand touching the eyes of the blind is set forth when he said, "Let there be light." God's word is not to return unto him void, but it shall accomplish that which he please.—Isa. lv. 11. How complete is the work of God! Jesus does not say, "Poor, blind man, I can do no more for you. I have led you along; now complete the work." O no. His hand is put upon him, thus pressing him down like a cart under many sheaves. Weary and burdened one, the prophet spoke of your deliverance when he said, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing."—Isa. x. 27. This anointing is that work that the apostle John says "abideth in you, and teacheth you of all things, and is truth," &c.—1 John ii. 27. Verily, to those on whom the hand of Jesus has been put, in whom this power has been displayed, the question asked this poor blind man, if he saw aught, is applicable. The answer, as he looked up, was, "I see men [or things] as trees, walking." The enraptured vision beholds the wonderful works of God in creation. How changed is now the condition of the prisoner, as he escapes by divine grace from the prison house! The grace of God in Christ in all its effulgent glory shines forth in his salvation. Eyes opened, with

telescopic powers to see what previous to this had been hid, to which he was blind, but now revealed in Christ. This grace is in Christ, existing there as a fountain to wash away sin, experienced by the blind, the lame, the halt, when applied to them by the divine anointing. The light existed before the blind man's eyes were opened; so, even so, our High Priest, by the cleansing virtue of his own blood, "entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."—Heb. ix. 12. This wonderful view of God's love and mercy and grace in Christ, in its unclouded vision, remains but a short time, for Jesus put his hands again upon the eyes of the man, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. Here we experience clearly the existence of things as they really are. How often it is the case that the heaven-born soul soon loses the wonderfully enlarged view of his deliverance in Christ, and bethinks himself, yes, reviews with sorrow that he is yet holden to sin in the flesh. He needs the hand of Jesus to restore him, to witness for him and in him that the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. O the bitter trials of life, the sorrows and afflictions which he is heir to in the flesh, restore him, and he sees clearly that the things of earth are earthly; but with the light which God giveth his eyes to behold, he learns obedience by the things which he suffers. Precious truth! This man saw Jesus, experienced his power and mercy, now Jesus sent him to his house, and forbade him to go into the town, to the many; so you, dear sorrowing one, have a house appointed of the Lord for your resting place. "Go home to thy friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee."

May the Lord give grace and glory, and save to the uttermost all that come unto him, is my prayer.

Yours in a feeble hope,

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

NORCROSS, Georgia.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having been requested to write a few lines for publication, I will again make the feeble attempt, trusting that all I may say may be to the honor and glory of God.

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us."—Eph. v. 1, 2. This is the Scripture that I shall try to offer a few weak thoughts upon. It is always well to notice the person speaking, and the one addressed, lest we darken counsel by a misapplication of the Scriptures. The above language was spoken by Paul to the church at Ephesus. But no doubt there are many who throw such Scriptures as the above broadcast to everybody. We do not think he had reference to those who are dead; for if they were only in possession of the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, they would have no desire to follow Christ; for they would love darkness rather than

light, because their deeds are evil. Hence they cannot follow God and walk in love. They are not capacitated to follow the admonition of our text. Hence we conclude that the apostle was speaking to a living people, who had been quickened into life by the power of the Holy Spirit, for he says, "You hath he quickened," &c. And in the beginning of the epistle he says, "To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus," &c., all of which is sufficient proof that they were a living people. Therefore he exhorts them to be followers of God; not followers of Sunday Schools and inventions of men. Inasmuch as the Lord has done so much for them, it is their duty to take up their cross and follow him. The christian is not blessed for his obedience, but he is blessed in his obedience. Hence Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls." There is a given rest and a found rest. The found rest is found in following Christ in his laws and precepts. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."—John x. Their knowing his voice is the cause of their following him. They would not follow him if they did not know his voice. The tree bears good fruit because it is a good tree. The tree would not bear good fruit if it were not a good tree. Then, how should we follow Christ? By keeping ourselves unspotted from the world, and following him in all his ordinances. If one has a hope in Christ, it is his duty to follow Christ, by coming to the church and telling what the Lord has done for his soul, and follow him into the liquid grave, in baptism, for the church is a home for God's children, and we should admonish them to their duty. No doubt we have been so fearful of being like the Arminians, that we have failed to discharge our duty in this respect. We should never fear to do right, but fear to do wrong. We should tell them of their duty and of the sweetness there is in following Christ in baptism. I shall never forget the day that I was baptized. I had a sweet, calm feeling that I cannot express. All was peace within, and my soul was filled with joy. Then it is our duty to follow him to the communion table, to commemorate his death and sufferings. That is one of the most solemn of ordinances to me, and I have experienced much comfort in it. I have been made to feel while at the communion table that I could view Jesus by an eye of faith, hanging upon the cross, spilling his blood for me. Hence we find a sweetness in communion. We should follow him in meekness; for he is "meek and lowly in heart." We should follow his footsteps, and then we would have peace within; we would enjoy our christian comforts, and be united, and not be striving about words to no profit. Paul admonishes us to follow God, by avoiding all uncleanness and covetousness. Let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthi-

ness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which is not convenient, but rather giving of thanks. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not partakers with them. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. He further admonishes us to follow God by speaking the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in the faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness; not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things, that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded. In all things showing thyself to be a pattern of good works, in doctrine, gravity, sincerity, &c. We find plenty taught in the Bible to instruct the child of God how to follow him under all circumstances. In following Christ we work out our salvation (time salvation) with fear and trembling.

"As dear children." So we should follow him, as (or in like manner) children would follow their father. A natural father has a certain amount of work that he wants his children to do. He will call them together, and assign each his portion of work, and give them the tools, or tell them where they can get the tools, and sends them forth to the portion assigned them. Bear in mind, he does not call any children but his own. It is not their business to inquire if their father is going to pay them a large sum of money for their work, for they and their work both belong to their father. But no doubt there will be some who will not go to their work until they are driven to it. Sometimes the father has to whip his child severely before he will obey. Others, where their work is assigned them, go forward in discharge of their duty, and receive no such punishment. They will go on and work awhile, and after awhile they will become hungry. Every one will go to their father's table to eat, for they all look to him for their support. They look to him for clothing, and they look to him in the time of danger. If the father sees his children going wrong, he will correct them, because he loves them. So it is with our heavenly Father. He has a work for each of his children to perform. They all fill the places that he has ordained that they shall fill. They all occupy their places in the building, and they are spoken of as lively stones, not dead stones, built up a spiritual house, &c. He assigns to each their work, whatever it may be. If it is to pray in public, exhort, or fill the office of a deacon or minister, that is the work God has assigned them, and he has a use for every one. But some are very disobedient, and try to keep out of it; but

they receive severe chastisement; while there are others who will take the yoke of obedience, and go forth in the discharge of their duty, and are greatly blessed. They learn that to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. When they become hungry, they go to their Father's table and always find it filled with everything they need. They become thirsty, and drink of that fountain which never runs dry, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. They have no where else to look. Their Father is their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. He is their meat and drink. The children always look to their Father, head and protector for every needed blessing. Jesus says, "Except ye be converted and become as little children," &c. Just think how helpless and dependent a little child is.

"Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us." It is very necessary for the people of God to walk together in love. That is, those who have been born into his spiritual kingdom, where there is joy, peace and love, and have been given eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. They have had the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and are now capacitated to walk together in love. They belong to the same family, and are all children of the same parents. God is their Father, and Jerusalem which is above is their mother. They are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. In order to walk together they must be of the same mind one toward another; "for how can two walk together except they be agreed?" They must agree in experience, in doctrine and in practice, then there will be love existing among them, and they can walk together in love, and bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Then they can keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

I would like to write more, but I am compelled to close. Examine these feeble remarks of a young boy, and if they are sound words, receive them; if not, reject them. May the Lord sustain you in the future, as he has in the past, that in editing our paper you may have nothing in view but the honor and glory of God, and the good of his cause. Remember me in your prayers when it is well with you.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
LEE HANCKS.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 4, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose you the experience of our highly esteemed brother, James F. Grimes, which, if it meets your approbation, please publish in the SIGNS.

Your brother in Christ,
E. V. WHITE.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Jan. 6, 1884.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have been thinking for some time that I would write you a few lines, (the Lord willing) and try to tell my little experience of grace, if I have any; but my

unworthiness has kept me down very low, which I think is the place for poor, unworthy me. I have attempted several times to write of my little hope, but could not finish it, for I felt that I was not doing right to let any one know how bad I felt. I do not think that I ever hated the Old Baptists. I was raised by Old Baptist parents, and often went to meeting with them to hear our much loved brethren, Trott and Leachman; but I never felt much concern about my own welfare, until during the late war. I then lived in Lynchburg, and very seldom went to any meeting. Sometimes I would go to hear the New School Baptists, but only when I felt that I was a lost and ruined creature, and that God might peradventure look upon me with mercy. But, dear brother, what trials I went through. Many nights would I lay on my bed, afraid to go to sleep, for fear that I would awake in everlasting torment. One night I remember that I called my dear wife and told her that I was afraid to go to sleep, for I thought I would surely die if I did. I sincerely thought that I was the vilest creature on earth, and that hell was my portion, for I saw no relief for me. It was the darkest night I ever experienced in all my life. Shortly after this my wife went into the country to visit some friends, whom we thought were Old Baptists, and while she was gone I do think that if I ever tried to pray it was then, for I never had been in so much trouble in all my life. I hope I was brought to see

"That if my soul were sent to hell,
God's righteous law approved it well."

I tried to ask God to have mercy on me, for my burden was about killing me. I felt that I was in his hands. But the more I prayed the worse I felt. Thus it continued for some time with me. I could work but little. My folks thought I was sick. And I hope I have found out since then that I was sick. Shortly after this I was walking out near my home, (I was still asking God to have mercy on me, a vile sinner), when I felt that I was relieved of something. A most beautiful light appeared to shine around and about me, and everything appeared to give God the praise. Everything was praising him. I felt happy, and my whole thoughts were that "His praise shall be continually in my mouth." After this I went often to the New School Baptists' meetings, (for they had what is called a revival), thinking that I could find something there to feed my soul; but I soon found that their "new lights" were something that the Bible does not speak of, such as Sunday Schools, Bible and class meetings, tract and missionary societies, and such things as the world likes to talk about. I could not find anything in them for the edification of the children of God. That pot was filled with "wild gourds." I stopped going to their meetings, and tried to study my Bible the more, which was a great comfort to me. But, dear brother, it was not long before I was taken from the mountain top to the depths of the valley, and I

began to think that something was wrong with me. Reading appeared to do me no good, and I began to think that I must be mistaken in what I had seen and felt. One day I was reading the 1033d hymn of Beebe's Collection, and read to the fourth verse, which reads thus:

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is dark, and vain, and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

I thought it suited me exactly, for I was now beginning to doubt. I now went to my father and talked to him of my feelings, and he gave me great comfort. Some time after this we moved to Alexandria, Va., and in the Lord's own time he brought me before the church. I must confess that I was completely shut up, but they received me, and for what I cannot tell even to this day; but I was received, and baptized by Elder Wm. J. Purington, in 1865. I was happy for a while, and inside of one month my mother, my wife, her mother and father were received, and baptized by the same. I assure you it was joy to me, and I was foolish enough to think that it would last all the time. Since then I have had many ups and downs in my travels, and I can say that the Lord is good indeed. Dear brother, there is one thing which gives me a great deal of comfort, and that is, I do love the brethren, and it is a love that I cannot control. It is lasting and sure. It is written, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I moved from Alexandria to this place in 1869, and here we often have refreshing seasons. With brother Smoot amongst us, I do not see how it could be otherwise, for he always has a word of comfort for the dear children of God. But after all, what are we, that God should show love for us? "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him."

I have written more than I intended. I feel that it is not worth reading, for my unworthiness most of the time keeps me so low that I feel that I could kneel at my brethren's feet and say, It is enough for one like me. Now, dear brother, if you think best, please throw this aside, and it will please me just as well.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,

JAMES F. GRIMES.

EASTON, KANSAS, March 17, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been a reader and a regular subscriber of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for about thirty-one years, during which time I do not remember seeing another correspondent of my name and initials in full, until the number for March 1st, present volume, page fifty-eight. It there appears that a brother bearing my name had subscribed for the Church History, and afterwards requested his subscription thereto transferred. According to brother Hassell's statement, he was one of three who had ordered his subscription money returned, or applied otherwise, and two of them because of poverty and need. Doubtless all who see brother Has-

sell's statement under my name, who know of my circumstances, will think I have misrepresented my situation; and others who know me, but not acquainted with my circumstances, will be writing to me and desiring to assist me. If we are in need it is according to the Scriptures to make our wants known to our brethren, that there may be equality among the saints.—2 Cor. viii. 13, 14; ix. Paul made known his wants to his brethren. He said, "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labor, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted we suffer it."—1 Cor. iv. 11, 12. And in the fourteenth verse he says, "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you." But notwithstanding he made his wants known to his Corinthian brethren, they did not supply his wants. He said, "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man; for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied; and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself."—2 Cor. xi. 8, 9. Dear brethren, what a pattern of liberality were the churches of Macedonia; liberal beyond their power; yea, willing of themselves; not begged, teased, coaxed, scared nor deceived by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.—Eph. iv. 14. They were willingly liberal of themselves beyond their power.—2 Cor. viii. 3. And it was those liberal brethren that Paul robbed, taking wages of them to do the Corinthians service. Paul asked his Corinthian brethren if he and Barnabas did not have power to eat and drink, and to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as others, and to forbear working.—1 Cor. ix. 4-6. He said to them, "For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong. But be it so, I did not burden you; nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile."—2 Cor. xii. 13, 16. I was once asked to explain the text, "I robbed other churches." Well, sum up all the above quoted Scriptures, and it is explained, I think. He took wages from brethren or churches that were liberal beyond their power, to do service to the Corinthians, who did not bear their own burden. That was wrong, and Paul asked them to forgive him that wrong. He said to them, "If we have sown to you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"—1 Cor. ix. 11. In this text he reasoned with them craftily. He did not speak right out, (they were not able to bear it—1 Corinthians iii. 1-3), as he did to the Galatians, saying, "Every man shall bear his own burden."—Gal. vi. 5. I fear it is sometimes the case now that some ministers have

not only to work to support their own families, but also bear their own expenses, or rob other churches, like Paul, and resort to craft and guile, to get to preach to other churches, which, like the Corinthians, cannot believe that it is their duty to communicate to him that teacheth in all good things.—Gal. vi. 6. About one year ago I heard an old brother about eighty years old say that he had seen some brethren in his time who were willing to live with the Old Baptists if they could have the honor of keeping up the churches and associations at the expense of their brethren. I partly believe it. It was about that way with the Corinthians. I have no fellowship with the modern missionary society, nor any of its kindred men-made institutions, which have neither precept nor example in the New Testament; but I do believe that it is the duty of the ministers of Christ to seek first the kingdom of God, and to provide for their own houses.—Matt. vi. 33; 1 Tim. v. 8. And if they do that, God will put it into the hearts of those they teach to communicate to them in all good things, such as they eat and wear. God's word for it, "all these things shall be added unto you." I know of one who has proved it. He came to this country nearly thirty years ago, has raised a family of ten children, (seven girls), has undergone all the privations of this country, and the most of that time has had the care of four churches, who were barely able to support their own families; and if that one should quote the text, "Ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me," doubtless all who are living in those churches would say, I know it to be true. That one began poor, ignorant, and full of doubts and fears; but the Lord said to him, about thirty-three years ago, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi. 33. And for the special benefit of younger ministers, this one would say that he has seen the Lord's word fulfilled, in that all things which were needed have been added; and as he looks back beyond thirty years, he can say,

Blind unbelief did surely err,
And scann'd his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he has made it plain.

Who but such an one can say,

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home?"

Brethren Beebe, I thought when I began to write that I would not write on any particular subject; but the circumstances have drawn out my mind on this subject. What I have written is what I believe the Scriptures teach the household of faith, that if needs be the saints should sell their possessions and goods, and part them to all men, as every man hath need.—Acts ii. 45. I call to mind that this is the first I have written since you have been editing our dear family paper, although my name has often occurred in the SIGNS since

then. I ask you to say through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I have not subscribed for the Church History, from the fact that I could not read it if I had it. Two years ago I had a stroke of paralysis in my left ear, and I am deaf in that ear, with a continual roaring, so that I can read but little. Had I subscribed, I surely have too much confidence in brother Hassell to become impatient. As to poverty and need, that would have suited my case many times in the past, but not now.

You can do with the above as you think best, and all will be right with me.

WM. F. JONES.

BENTLY, Ill., Feb. 13, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have had considerable reflection lately on the subject of Noah and the ark, its building, its object, and the final result, and I have concluded to write some of my thoughts about it.

I believe that Moses was inspired to write the history of the creation, and also of the ark, as found in Genesis vi. "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me." "For all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations." God told Noah to build the ark, and of what material to make it, and what should be the length, breadth, and height of it. It should be lower, second and third stories, with window and door. Now, if the mere history is all that is intended, I do not see wherein any of the present generation will be benefited by it. But I conclude from what other inspired writers say of it, that God intended thereby to shadow forth his covenant of salvation, from first to last; for the whole matter was of God, and not of Noah, only as God caused him to do the work of building it. And Paul says of this matter, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, [or family], by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." And the Lord, by the prophet Isaiah, describing the wonderful work of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, says, "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so I have sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."—Isaiah liv. 9, 10. Also, hear what Jesus says about it, when answering the questions of his disciples about the destruction of the temple, and of the signs of his coming, and of the end of the world, which we understand to be of the Jewish or legal dispensation. He told them to

watch. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."—Matt. xxiv. 37-39. We will also refer you to 1 Peter iii. 18-21. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient; when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Thus we have the certainty of the figure of salvation set forth by or in the ark; and in it Noah and his family were saved, not from the curse of the law, but from the awful deluge that swept away the world of the ungodly. So it sets forth baptism, as figuratively showing his salvation. For baptism sets forth the faith of the subject baptized. He is therefore buried in baptism with Christ. "Wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Here, then, God is known as the operator, in raising Christ from the dead, as also in raising the sinner from his death in sin, unto newness of life, as expressed in Romans vi. 4. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Here we have in baptism the faith of the candidate set forth; that Christ died for our sins, and arose for our justification; and also our acknowledgement of a hope of our resurrection from the grave, as set forth in the figure of the ark, and the salvation accomplished by it. Now, I believe the ark accomplished all that God intended by it; for the record does not show that he ordered or commanded any but the eight souls to go into the ark; and it saved every one of them, who were a type of

"A new, regenerated race,
To praise the glory of his grace."

I will only add that as a type or figure the ark could not be more perfect than that which it represents, that is, the covenant of grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; consequently it was without our knowledge or consent. And it shows that God had determined to save his people from a world of sin and misery, without the aid or assistance of any; for his own arm brought salvation when there was none to help. So Jesus says, "For I came down from heaven, not to do

mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 38, 39. Bless his holy name. I know there are many who say that this doctrine leads to licentiousness, but I know of nothing that could bind my wandering soul so strong in love to God's dear name as the belief and hope that he has certainly secured my everlasting happiness and home in heaven with him, where I shall be like him and behold his glory. Then will I be satisfied.

Dear brethren, I have only written a short sketch, a mere skeleton, hoping thereby to draw out some of the abler correspondents of the SIGNS on the subject. I never before, as I have this winter, felt so much interested in this subject. Perhaps it is because of my age and affliction, which keeps me mostly at home, and I cannot do much else but read and meditate on the Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and compare them. It is true, there are many things too deep and mysterious for my limited capacity to comprehend, yet I find in the different correspondence much of the precious word and doctrine of God our Savior expounded and applied to my own experience, so that it is a great solace to me in my declining days; so much so that I have a great desire to see the writers and form a more intimate acquaintance. But this privilege will not be granted me in this world of sin and sorrow. Yet I hope that when we shall be done with the trials of this mortal state, we will awake with the likeness of our blessed Lord Jesus, and see him as he is.

Then shall we meet, and be complete,
And long together dwell.

Pray for me in my afflictions.

JACOB CASTLEBURY.

MADISON, Lenawee Co., Mich.

DEAR BRETHREN IN HOPE:—As I sit here to-day, looking out of the window, and see the dark clouds looming up in the distance, it looks dreary to me, and a deep sense of loneliness steals over me, and I am thinking of the dear one who but a few short weeks ago we carried out of his old home and laid him in his last resting place. I refer to my father, Deacon George Livesay, whose obituary, written by sister Sarah Wyman, you have published in the SIGNS of March 1st. I cannot tell how much he enjoyed the two visits that Elder William Beebe made to the Fairfield Church, (it would take him to do that), nor how disappointed he was the first time; for it rained almost incessantly for two days, and he could not go to the meeting. But on Saturday the rain slackened up a little, and he said he would drive over to the meeting house, and see if there was any one there. When he came back he had you, Elder Beebe, with him. It was a cold, chilly rain, and when you came in by the fire you said, "Well, this is pleasant." And truly it was a great pleasure to

me to do the least thing for your comfort, as it is for all of those dear ones whom the Lord has called to stand on the walls of Zion. For "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." And they do indeed look beautiful to me; for they do not preach the terrors of the law, but peace and good will unto men. O, I never shall forget, as long as reason remains, the first sermon that I heard you preach in the old Fairfield meeting house. It was most grand and sublime, and the glory of the Lord filled all space. It seemed as though my mind was caught away from all cares, and the world was put under my feet, and I felt truly sorrowful when you said Amen, and I had to come back and again grapple with the world. I sometimes think, Can heaven be much sweeter than it is here, when we sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus? How often do I think of that day, and compare it with those that have passed since then. Most of my time I am in darkness, doubt and fear, and sometimes it seems like presumption in me to think those glorious things are for such as I. I often ask myself the question, What am I, that God should be mindful of me, or the son of man that he should visit him? For I am most ungrateful, unthankful and cold, and have to say, My leanness! my leanness! I hope against hope, and it seems at times that I hardly dare claim a hope, it seems so small. But a dear brother said to me, "Why call it small, if you have a hope at all? It is Christ within, the hope of glory. Is not this a great hope?" When I think of the glory and majesty of the great I AM, and of his power to save, I am lost in wonder and admiration. And though I may be a castaway, I rejoice that the Lord has a people who are saved with an everlasting salvation; and I defy men and devils to pluck one of these little ones out of his hand, for whom Christ died; for their life is hid with Christ in God. To my mind they are just as safe as though they now surrounded his throne in heaven. But I did not think, when I commenced to write, to say anything, but to simply ask you to publish these lines, composed on the death of my father, which contain a few of the many things he said to us while on his death bed. If you can spare a little space in our dear family paper, insert them; and if not, it is well.

We stood around his dying bed
And clasped his icy hand;
He said, "I leave you soon, and go
To the far off spirit land."

He told us he was going home,
Free'd from all earthly pain;
And, "I am not afraid to die:
For me to die is gain."

We look upon the vacant seat,
And tears unbidden flow;
We know he ne'er can come to us,
But we can to him go.

Father, we miss thee everywhere,
Where'er our eyes may rest;
But we believe that thou art gone
To dwell among the blest.

No more shall tears bedew his cheek;
His weary eyes are closed;
And naught but the last trump shall break
His last, his sweet repose.
The Lord shall with a shout descend
From the bright realms above,
And bring him forth as gold well tried,
To sing redeeming love.

H. TUTTLE.

MARGARETTSVILLE, N. Y., Dec. 22, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—In reading the SIGNS of late I have felt as if I wanted to cast in my feeble testimony for such blessed truth. I have felt to say, Surely the Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; for he is alive forevermore, and has the power of eternal life. I thought how consoling and comforting it is to a weary pilgrim, or to Zion's children, to think that God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and changes not. Yes, I do verily believe that if a person is born of the Spirit, of that incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever, he is always in grace. We, the Old School Baptists, have been charged again and again with believing that if we are the elect, or the chosen of God, we may do what we wish; for if we are once in grace we are always in grace. That doctrine of grace is a delightful theme for one to dwell upon, to think that God's people are always in grace; for they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. We are informed that they were ordained to eternal life, and called to be saints, not according to our works, but according to God's own abundant mercy and goodness. He has begotten us to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. I do rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent reigns in righteousness, and he will do all his pleasure. The children of God have nothing to fear, for his promises are immutable. Their life is hid with Christ in God. That life is eternal, and is hid from the wise and the prudent, and revealed unto babes, for so it seemed good in his sight. Dear brethren, I do rejoice that there is a remnant yet in Sardis who blow the gospel trumpet and proclaim liberty to the captives; for whom the Lord makes free is free indeed. I have found that the word of the Lord is true, that the gospel of Christ is a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks; but to them that are called and saved it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. I could not help admiring the faith of the saints, while reading their testimony, from the north and south, from the east and west, and how their faith has triumphed and gotten them the victory; and again it has proved to me that the word of God is true. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. God's people are called in one hope of their calling. Dear brethren, after reading Elder Purington's communication in the SIGNS for October,

I experienced such an emotion of soul, or thrill of joy, that I felt to say, As the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up. It is evident that Christ is the way, the truth and the life, and the resurrection and the life of his people. And it is evident that the Lord has chosen his people out of the world, and the world hateth them because of the truth.

Dear brethren, I wrote the above after reading Elder Purington's communication in the SIGNS for the last of October, but did not send it. I did not know that it was best to trouble you with it, or trespass on your time and patience. I often think of your father, and of his labor of love in publishing the SIGNS. The editorials were always welcome messengers to me. His views were agreeable with mine on the Scriptures, especially on the death and sufferings of Christ, and the resurrection and the baptism of his death. I have felt much edified in reading Elder Bee-man's writings of late, and of his early trials. It is evident that the Lord is raising up more witnesses to declare his glory among his people, in this crooked and perverse generation. I do feel to rejoice that the Lord reigns in righteousness, and will do all his pleasure. My mind is often impressed to write for the SIGNS, and I have been requested by the brethren and sisters of different churches from time to time to write. They say they long to see my name in the SIGNS again. It seems almost as if your father was living, as the SIGNS comes so laden with the precious fruit of the gospel. May the God of Israel ever be with you, to defend his cause, maintain the honor of his word, and the glory of his cross.

I have written these few lines to you to testify to the truth. My motive was to reply to one remark of Elder Purington's, where he said the Old School Baptists were charged with believing that if they are once in grace they are always in grace. I have read Elder Purington's communications over and over again. I can say in truth that I was highly edified and comforted, and I trust my hope is founded on that Rock which he spoke of. May the God of peace be with you.

LUCY C. WHITCOMB.

MASON CITY, Iowa, Jan. 23, 1884.

G. BEEBE'S SONS :—As it is time for me to make my remittance for our family paper, I would like, by your permission, to write a few lines to the brethren and sisters through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as many have requested me to do so where I have traveled in Wisconsin and Illinois the past summer. I wrote a short sketch of my life about one year ago, which you very kindly published in No. 8 of last volume. When that article was written my health was very poor. I was suffering much from heart disease. My name appeared in that article as Newton Jeffers. It should have been Nelson Jeffers. I receive several letters from Kentucky and other states addressed

to Newton Jeffers. This will inform the brethren and friends that my health is very much improved, for which I try to feel thankful to the good Lord. I returned home on the 19th of August, found all well, and my health very much improved. On the 22d of the same month I went to Illinois to attend some associations, reached Freeport, Illinois, spent two days very pleasantly visiting relatives and friends, and then went to Lena, Illinois, where I met many of the brethren and sisters on their way to the First Northwestern Association. From there we were conveyed to the house of Elder E. H. Gillett. There we listened to a very able discourse from Elder Smith Ketchum, and the next morning pursued our way to the association, where I met my old brethren once more. I have met with them nearly every year since 1847, when our little church first united with them in associated capacity; and I think I shall ever remember with emotions of joy the interviews I had with the brethren and sisters of the Northwestern Association in Wisconsin and Illinois. But the best of all was the harmony and love that seemed to pervade the meeting and social circles during my entire visit, both in Wisconsin and Illinois. The speakers in attendance at that meeting were from four different states of the union, whose residences were far distant from each other; yet not one conflicting sentiment, so far as I was capable of judging, was heard at any meeting while I was gone on that visit. The Old School Baptist Church, or church of Christ, knows no north or south, but are all of the same precious faith, having one God and Father, who is over all, and through all, and in all. While I was with them, if I am not a poor, deceived being, I had a refreshing season from the presence of the Lord, and peace seemed to flow like a river among them. May the good Lord still enable all his dear children to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. O what a theme! How admirably calculated to brighten our prospects, inspire our hopes, encourage our faith, and sustain our dejected spirits, while exposed to trials, conflicts, persecutions and tribulations of various kinds, to which we are incident while passing through this unfriendly world. When we witness the banner of his love over us, playing and streaming in the sweet breezes that cheer us, his fruit is sweet to our taste. Then we are happily and forcibly constrained to love him, because he first loved us, and gave himself for us; and consequently we love one another with a pure heart fervently, when vitalized by his Spirit, which pervades and actuates every member of the body, whether located in the east, the west, the north, or the south. All are called in one hope of their calling, in the fellowship of the saints, having one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

On Monday morning after the association was over I went to Wisconsin

to my old neighborhood, where I formerly lived twenty years, and spent a few days visiting with kind friends and brethren. On Thursday, in company with Elder B. Sallee, I went to the Spoon River Association, which was held in Knox Co., Ill., where I met many brethren and sisters I had never seen before, as it was my first visit to that association. To me this was a pleasant meeting, and one long to be remembered. During my short stay I really thought I never saw so much love and fellowship manifested among brethren, and never while memory lasts can I forget the kind treatment I received at that meeting.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Here I met Elder I. N. Vanmeter, whom I hold as my father in the gospel. In all my afflictions in the gospel, which have been many, he has been my earthly friend and instructor. He has written me many letters of wholesome instruction, for which I shall always feel to thank him. May the light of inspiration shine along his pathway, down to the tomb. I also met Elders L. Dark, H. Humphrey, E. Ping and J. Brown, who are all able ministers of the New Testament, and others in the ministry whose names I cannot remember. Here we had speakers from three different states, all preaching the same thing. Salvation by grace, and grace alone, was the only theme. Surely we had another feast of fat things. The ministers all seemed to be laden with precious food for the hungry children. It seemed to me to be the very gate of heaven. I had been so long at home, suffering from disease of the heart, of course I was very hungry; but I found at those two associations that the good Lord sent me rich supplies. I tried to ask him in my lonely hours last winter, if it was his will, that I might go to Wisconsin and Illinois and see my brethren once more, and he did grant my request. What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me? My dear brethren and sisters of those two states, and of other places, among whom I traveled so extensively in years gone by, and with whom I have so frequently mingled, when and where we have taken sweet counsel together, and walked in company to the house of God, I scarcely know how to guide my pen while my overflowing mind refers with sad and fond memory to the scenes of trial and joy through which the Lord has brought us. Though many miles lie between us, I know we cannot forget each other. My roving thoughts are daily running and ranging through your social circles, and I long to be with you, and shall again visit you, if the Lord will. However that may be, it is a consoling reflection that through the glorious Mediator our prayers are permitted to meet for each other's welfare at the common throne of grace. But the circumstance of my being either here or there, is but a small item in the vast empire of our God. When I consider the magni-

tude of his person, the brilliancy of his glory, the infinity of his wisdom, and the greatness of his power, I am lost in insignificance, and am made to exclaim, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" And when I think of the millions upon millions, that cover the whole domain of God's footstool, and that will continue to inhabit it for all time to come, what am I, and who am I? Why should I even hope to attract the slightest notice of the great Jehovah? But when I remember that two sparrows are sold for a farthing, and how they are cared for by our Father, worthless as his children may feel in themselves, they are not only cared for by him, but even the hairs of their head are all numbered, and they are precious in his sight. But why are such polluted rebels as we, when considered in our totally depraved nature, precious in his sight? Yes, that is the question. But the problem is solved. "He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." And again, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Let it not be forgotten that we have a higher and a holier relationship, a spiritual one, aside from a natural one. Our God is a Spirit, and his children are born of the Spirit. "Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." He is their Father, and they are his children. He is an unchanging Father. "I am the Lord, I change not." Therefore, having loved his children once, he never has nor ever will cease to love them. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." God is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin. That sin was the transgression of the holy law, and therefore made us amenable to its curse. The law is holy, and the commandment just and good; but we are carnal, sold under sin. Had we all been sacrificed upon one altar, carnal as we are by nature, that holy law could never have received the offering, and, as a matter of course, we must have remained under its curse forever. But that loving Father would not have it so, but laid help upon one that was mighty. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." In this our Father not only exhibits the immutability of his love, but a wonderful commendation of it to us, even when we were dead in sin. Here we have a most glorious portrait of the condescension, faithfulness and love of our adorable Mediator, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

In conclusion I will say that it is my intention to visit my friends in Kentucky this coming summer or fall. I have received several letters from them, and would be glad to receive more. Farewell, my dear brethren. Love one another. Love, praise and serve your highly exalted Redeemer.

Live in peace, and may the God of peace dwell richly in your hearts, is the sincere desire of your unworthy brother, pressed with many cares, who retains you in fond remembrance, desiring to be remembered by you at the throne of grace.

My aged mother is still living. She has now reached her eighty-eighth year. She resides with her daughter in Hampton, Franklin County, Iowa, and wishes to be remembered to all the brethren and sisters.

NELSON JEFFERS.

TOUCHET, W. T., March 1, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have thought for some time that I would write a short communication for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and give an account of the Old School Baptist Churches and their location in eastern Oregon and Washington Territory, so that Baptists who may be readers of the SIGNS, and who wish to emigrate to this country, may know where to find us. There may now be Baptists who have lately come into this country, who have not heard of us, and by this may learn of our whereabouts.

The Mizpah Church holds her regular meetings now near Touchet Station, on the O. R. & N. Railroad, about fifteen miles below Walla Walla City, and about twelve miles above Wallula Junction. The days of meeting are the fourth Sunday in each month and Saturday before. This church has a membership of fourteen. Should any one wish to know anything about this church, or the country surrounding it, they may correspond with Dr. R. Cummins, Touchet, Walla Walla Co., W. T.

The Big Spring Church is located in Grand Ronde Valley, Union Co., Oregon, and has a membership of thirteen. This church does not have preaching regularly, as there is no minister of our faith and order near them. Should any Old School Baptist preacher wish to emigrate to a new field, may they remember this little church in their destitution. They are a faithful little band of brethren. Should any one wish to learn anything about them, they can correspond with Joseph Harris, Summerville, Union Co., Oregon.

The Pleasant Grove Church is located near Goldendale, Klickitat Co., W. T., has a membership of thirty-one, meets on the second Sunday in each month, and has the care and labors of Elder J. A. Bullock. Should any one wish to know anything about them, or the country, they can correspond with T. G. Flanary, Goldendale, W. T.

Harmony Church has a membership of eighteen, and holds her regular meetings on the third Sunday in each month. The place of meeting is about five miles east of Dayton, W. T. This church has the care and labors of Elders I. N. Newkirk and A. H. Hagans. Should any one wish to know anything of them, they can correspond with either of the Elders, I. N. Newkirk, Dayton, W. T., or A. H. Hagans, Central Ferry, Garfield Co., W. T.

These churches are formed into an association, known as the Columbia River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists. The churches are widely scattered, the nearest churches together being about fifty miles, and one is no nearer than one hundred and forty miles. This church, to meet with the association this year, must travel nearly two hundred miles. This association meets this year with the Big Spring Church, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June. So you see, brethren, we are few and far between; but we are not discouraged by this fact, knowing that the promise is to the "little flock." We have not in operation among us any of the modern machinery to increase our numbers, as we know that the legitimate result of all such work has been, and ever will be, to bring forth mocking Ishmaelites.

We were well pleased with the views given on the sabbath by those dear servants of God, Elders Stipp and Purington, and I thought there would surely be no more doubt in the minds of the children of God on that point, that the sabbath under the law was only a "shadow of good things to come."

G. E. MAYFIELD.

GOLDENDALE, W. T., March 2, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have just finished reading a communication of Elder Chick's in the SIGNS on the subject of fault-finding. This subject has been on my mind for a long time, and I have hoped to see or hear some one's ideas of the wrongs that are sometimes wrought by this habit, especially where the persons travel and visit far and near, and spread their insinuations of hate, envy and jealousy. Possibly the person that is the object of their hate knows nothing of the seeds of confusion and strife until a case is made out, and a committee waits on them, in the spirit of strife and disorder. Perhaps you will find that brethren and sisters have traveled together to associations or other meetings, and the subject of their conversation has been your faults. Your brethren and sisters in Christ, whom you could not have believed would pervert judgment, have done so. Perhaps some have dropped in to see you, and to tell you that they know this one or that one was bribed by favors, either small or great, to do you evil amongst your brethren; or they know the committee that waited on you was "cut and dried," to make out a case to exclude you, before they had admonished you that you were in error. Perhaps you hear that this or that worthy old sister is striving to be looked on as a "mother in Israel," or spoken of in sarcasm as a "peace-maker." They will then go to another sister or brother, and ventilate your faults. Perhaps they will say that you are not much of an Old School Baptist, or will warn the brethren and sisters that you read our denominational papers, and can talk the doctrine, but it is only the form, and lacks the power. Perhaps if they find that you and another are truly compan-

ions, in spirit and truth, the "tale-bearer" will have his or her jealousy aroused, probably hinting that one is hypocritical and deceitful. But I think such are generally very kind in your society; and after they have prejudiced all against you they can, they will tell you how sorry they are for you, how they have wrung their hands and prayed for you, &c. Thus Satan goes about, seeking whom he may devour. When we are right ourselves, we see Jesus in our brethren, and that covers and hides a multitude of sins. When we get wrong, we see only the old man, or the flesh, and there is strife and confusion, and we become accusers of the brethren, doing Satan's vile work. "Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor has put thee to shame." Let us remember, brethren and sisters, that "Hatred stirreth up strifes; but love covereth up all sins." "A tale-bearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter." "Where no wood is, the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth." No matter how much we may have been wounded, nor by whom, whether many or few, (and a wounded spirit who can bear?) let us not make a great fuss about it, if it be a question affecting only our own person. If we have been unjustly condemned and wronged, let us take it patiently. All are liable to do wrong; the very best of brethren are not perfect. By patiently bearing it, it may be they will consider and confess; they surely will if God shows it to them, or else they will suffer far more than we will. We must feel that "Charity suffereth long and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." If we find that some cannot bear with us, and we cannot make them think we are what we profess, we should "Judge not, lest we be judged." Bear all wrongs patiently, and remember that the Lord is our Shepherd, and we have his promise that he will not leave us nor forsake us. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Finally, I will bid you all farewell.

V. CARRIE CROOKS.

"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."—Lam. iii. 22, 23.

The dear old prophet, notwithstanding the greatness of his sorrow, his deep grief and bitter lamentations for the great calamities which came upon the Zion that he loved, could still remember the power of the Lord's mercies and the greatness of his compassions, and understand that in faithfulness he afflicted and corrected. But we are often, if not all the time, dull of comprehension as to what the Scriptures teach of the design of our great tribulations, and slow to learn the lesson taught in the dealings of God with us, both in

providence and in grace. We are often brought low by reason of our own misdoings and corruptions, and when we are delivered therefrom, too quickly forget the hand that has raised us up; and instead of continuing mindful to praise the Lord and glorify his name, turn again to our folly and our fears, and relapse into doubts, darkness and gloom. The psalmist says, "The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me." Perhaps it is because we are so simple that we so often get into difficult ways, crooked paths, or horrible pits. Dreadful indeed would it be, were it true, that we must be our own preservers, simple as we are, and our own helpers, low down as we have fallen; or, on the other hand, if it was the wise that were preserved, or the strong, the rich and the good that were helped. If the Lord remembered Zion, or thought of Jerusalem, or cared for her children, only when they were in health, prosperity and ease, then some of us at least would be without hope or comfort. But it is when the ways of Zion do mourn that she needs to be remembered and comforted; it is when Jerusalem is in affliction and reproach that she needs to be thought of and delivered; it is when the children are cast down, naked, wounded and helpless, that they need to be cared for, helped, clothed and healed. It is in such experience that the grace of our God, "that bringeth salvation," displays the wonders of his pity and mercy in their consolation and salvation, when it comes in sweetness, love and power. When they are brought out of their tribulations, delivered out of their afflictions, and saved out of all their dangers, they can look back and see the way the Lord has led them, and "Remember the marvelous works that he hath done: his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth." Then can they say, "I waited patiently for the Lord: and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Being in affliction and death off, they learn the value of that experience. "Troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

Yours in hope,

R. M. THOMAS.

NEW MARKET, Mo., March 25, 1884.

RANDOLPH, Miss., March 8, 1884.

ELD. SYLVESTER HASSELL—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just received the SIGNS for March 1st, and in it I find a letter from you to brethren Beebe, authorizing them to transfer my subscription for the Church History to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Now, dear brother, I wish to assign my

reasons for so doing. You say that out of fifteen hundred subscribers there have been only three who have requested the return or a different appropriation of their money, and two of them have done so because of their poverty and need. I do hope I am one of that two, for it was from no other cause than poverty that I wished the subscription changed. It was not, dear brother, because I was afraid of the book not coming. I was afflicted with a chronic congestion spring before last, which made me unfit for labor. And being often cast down with fear and trouble, one word from some good brother would give me new life. And the weather being unfavorable, we did not meet as often as I felt the need of their cheering words. As the book was not ready, and I had not the two dollars to pay for the subscription to the SIGNS, I fell on that plan; and O how glad I was when the first number came, laden with sweet comfort for the sin-sick soul. Sister Van Velsan said that she thought the sight of an Old School Baptist would be good for sore eyes. If it is not good for sore eyes, dear sister, the words are good to cheer the poor, little, down cast sinner, who is ready to give up all hope, and thinks that he is surely mistaken; that he has caught the shadow and not the substance. And O, I wish that every christian from Maine to Mexico, and from the south to the north, could read brother F. A. Chick's letter in the SIGNS for March 1st. O how much comfort I receive from reading such sweet communications as that. Some may say, "I thought you Old Baptists believed in the foreknowledge and predestination of God." So I do, with all my heart; but if we have no evidence that he confesses us before his Father, we would be without hope in this world, and without evidence of a future rest. I will close. I had no thought of writing so much. Brother Hassel, I think if I am blessed with the amount, I will get your book when completed.

Yours in much weakness,
WM. F. JONES.

CHESTER, Mason Co., Ky.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please say to our eastern brethren that we expect a goodly number of them to attend our association next fall, the Lord willing. It will be easy of access, and our brethren are ready and willing to convey them to and from trains. We trust we feel as did Lydia when she said to Paul, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." I have had the pleasure of baptizing several of the Lord's little ones since our last association. I hope the Lord will continue to add unto the church such as shall be saved. I am trying in my weak way to serve four churches, which are all in peace. If I know my mind, I do not desire to preach anything that is not sustained by the Scriptures and christian experience. We greatly desire our brethren in the ministry to visit our association next fall, which is to be held with the Mt. Gilead Church, of which I am pastor. We invite all sound Old School Baptists to visit us at any time that will suit their convenience.

As ever, your brother in the Redeemer's kingdom,
J. H. WALLINGFORD.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

DEATH AND JUDGMENT.

"AND as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."—Heb. ix. 27, 28.

This portion of Scripture has been repeatedly presented as the subject treated upon by able and gifted correspondents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the late editor wrote several articles on the text, yet it is still profitable for the consideration of the saints. In compliance with a request from our highly esteemed brother, Elder Thomas Cole, received several months since, we submit the following as our own understanding of the truth therein expressed. For what is written, however, we wish it clearly understood that no infallibility is claimed; nor do we wish any brother to accept our views without the support of the testimony of the revealed Scriptures.

The verses quoted are a portion of the conclusive arguments by which the fact is proven that the new testament has been revealed as the fulfillment of the types and prophecies of the old dispensation of Judaism. It should be remembered that the Hebrew saints to whom this epistle was addressed, were familiar with the law of Moses, and had been from infancy taught to regard that law with all its ritual as sacred and perpetual, because it was ordained by God to be observed by that chosen nation. Therefore the letter begins with a reference to the messages sent from time to time unto the fathers by the prophets, and asserts the higher dignity of the word spoken to us in these last days by the Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things. It is admitted that as a servant Moses was faithful in all his house, and in this is implied the truth of all prophetic types and messages under that dispensation; but the substance of this epistle is the demonstration that all those prophecies are fulfilled in Christ Jesus. He is shown to be that royal Priest who did not inherit his office from Aaron, but by direct ordination of God had an unchangeable priesthood, in which he ever liveth to make intercession for them that come unto God by him. This was recorded by David, and even the natural Jews could not deny that testimony. "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."—Psalm cx. 4. Having thus demonstrated the divine authority for the priesthood of Christ, it is shown that the law must of necessity be changed also; then follows the argument of which our text is a part, in which by the illustration of a testament the subject is still more clearly explained. Under the Mosaic dispensation the blood of perpetual sacrifices typified the death of the

true Lamb of God; but in all those offerings there was only a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things; therefore the law could never make the comers thereunto perfect. But the death of the divine Testator is shown in this chapter, by which the new testament is forever confirmed and irrevocably sealed. It is said in verse seventeen, "A testament [that is, a will] is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." This is true according to all civil law even among men. It is therefore requisite in the probate court to prove the death of the testator before the judgment giving force to the testament can be issued. From the argument both in the preceding and following connection, it is apparent that this is the judgment spoken of in the text. The commonly received idea that this expression refers to a decision of the final destiny of sinners to be determined after they have left this world, not only involves an entire change from the subject treated of in the context, but conflicts with the whole testimony of the inspired Scriptures. Our Lord himself has already announced the judgment of all the children of Adam. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John iii. 18; v. 24. There can be no need, therefore, of another investigation after time is finished to decide the final condition of either those who are already condemned, or of those whose freedom from condemnation is manifested by their believing on the only begotten Son of God as their only hope of salvation.

The word "but," which connects the latter clause of this verse with the former, indicates that the judgment referred to applies not to the men spoken of, but to the testament, which is the subject on which the writer was treating. If the idea designed to be expressed had been that the judgment was to try men after death, the meaning would have been more clearly conveyed by the word "and," instead of "but," as it is the popular idea that the judgment follows inseparably after death. This is the principal reliance of will-worshippers for frightening sinners into a hypocritical profession of religion. But the Scripture plainly declares that all men are already condemned, (Rom. v. 18,) and even the subjects of salvation were lost when the Son of man came to save them, (Matthew xviii. 11,) so that there was no need of a future trial for any sinner. But the judgment confirming the validity of the testament must follow after the death of the testator. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."

This last verse of the text confirms the view presented of the preceding

expression, and concludes the reference to the figure of a testament by declaring the death of Christ as the Testator, thus establishing the immutable validity of the new and last testament. Sealed with his own precious blood, this will is recorded in the eternal counsel of God, and no provision of grace can fail, because the oath of God, that cannot lie, secures the accomplishment of his purpose of love and mercy. Our Lord Jesus has declared his will that all his redeemed ones be with him where he is; and this is the will of the Father also, that the Son should lose nothing of all that the Father has given him, but that he should raise it up again at the last day. In fulfillment of this will Christ came in the flesh, and in his own body suffered all the wrath due to our transgressions, becoming obedient even unto death. This death seals the testament with that blood which was prefigured by all the sacrifices under the old testament, from the bleeding lamb of Abel to the last victim offered under the law of Moses. For all those sacrifices were but the shadow of which our Lord Jesus is the substance. In the infinite wisdom of God the death of Jesus, by which this testament is established, redeemed all his members from the curse and dominion of the law of sin and death; and in his triumphant resurrection they have the assurance by which they look for him to come in the glory of his power for their final deliverance from this bondage of corruption. This hope is their support under every trial, and by its unfailling confidence they are enabled to glory even in tribulations. As an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, it holds them secure in every storm which beats upon them on the perilous voyage of their journey through this world of sin and sorrow; so that they are saved by hope from sinking into utter despair. The great Captain of our salvation has sent forth judgment unto victory, and that victory he gives to his redeemed people.—Matthew xii. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 57.

The tried subject of grace does not find much trouble from doubting the perfect victory of the Lord Jesus over sin and death; but the question which gives him continual anxiety is whether he is interested in that victory. This causes "great searchings of heart;" and in view of the weakness that is in himself he would sink into despair but for the abiding hope which directs him to trust in the Lord. Feeling his own sinfulness, he is tempted to fear that all his trust is a vain delusion; and he cannot deliver himself, for in himself there dwelleth no good thing. Then comes the sweet comfort of the closing declaration of the text. The promise is not limited to those who are in themselves worthy. It is "unto them that look for him." This is the evidence that Christ Jesus is your Savior. He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation "unto them that look for him." None ever "look for him" but those to whom he has

appeared the first time to show them their lost and hopeless condition under the condemnation of sin. All others are looking to their own works for acceptance before the judgment of God. Only such as have been cut off from self-dependence "look for him," and none of them ever fail to receive the fulfillment of this precious declaration. He does appear to them again, not as the bleeding victim bearing their sins and yielding to death, but as the supreme Conqueror of sin and death, who was dead and is alive forevermore. Having the keys of hell and of death, he is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him. All these, and no others, "look for him," and they shall not look in vain. John includes all such with himself when he says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. This is the seal which God has set upon the chosen vessels of mercy. Loving him because he first loved them, they "look for him." He shows them the vanity of every other dependence, so that they "look for him" as their only refuge. How sweet to rest in the assurance of his word, that he shall appear to every one who thus looks for him, the second time, and that without sin unto salvation.

"Then shall we see and feel and know
All we desired or hoped below;
And every power find sweet employ
In that eternal world of joy."

The judgment of God is not dependent upon the developments of time. His just condemnation is already passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. His redeemed are not only chosen in Christ from the beginning, but preserved in him, and called in accordance with his purpose of grace and mercy, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. All this being unalterably settled in the wisdom of God, there can be no need for a future trial to determine it with reference to any sinner. When "judgment to come" is spoken of in the Scriptures, as in Acts xvii. 31 and xxiv. 25, the meaning is not a court of investigation, but the visitation of just condemnation upon all unrighteousness on the one hand, and the revelation of the perfect blessedness of the saints on the other. This clear manifestation of judgment is not revealed to the sight of the saints while they remain in this tabernacle. By faith alone they are assured of their inheritance in that life eternal which is now hid with Christ in God. Not until they are delivered from the body of this death can they see the unveiled glory of their eternal inheritance; but it is no less secure to those who now mourn under the bondage of corruption than to their glorified Redeemer, for it is secured to them by that unchangeable will of God which is sealed by the death of Jesus Christ, and confirmed by his glorious resurrection. Therefore they are free from condemnation, and shall be satisfied

when they awake with the likeness of their Lord, to be forever with him in the glory which was his before the worlds were made.

Hoping that brother Cole will pardon our delay in complying with his request, we should be thankful if he will give his own views on this text.

WIDOWS INDEED.

"WHAT is meant by the direction recorded 1 Timothy v. 16? W. T. M."

REPLY.

In this connection instruction is given to Timothy as an ordained Elder, in regard to the order to be observed in the church with reference to the various relations in life of the different members. The directions laid down cover the case not only of the distinct gifts which are set in the church as it has pleased the Lord to place them, but also the natural distinctions are all defined with special injunctions respecting the proper deportment of each member toward all others. The brevity of these comprehensive directions is such as could not have been dictated by natural wisdom, neither can they be applied to any other people but the church of Jesus Christ; for them the law of the Lord is perfect, being written in their hearts, so that they love it and delight in its precepts. The record in the New Testament only bears witness to the truth which is thus put in the heart of every one of that people who are made willing subjects of our Lord in the day of his power. So every duty enjoined upon the saints by the law of Christ is a delightful privilege, and not a grievous burden.

In the verse cited the duty of believers is enjoined to provide for such widows as have natural claims upon them, especially such as are specified in the fourth verse of this chapter. In the primitive age, by reason of persecution, there were many destitute believers, whose only dependence for necessary food and raiment was the fraternal liberality of the church. The fund laid at the apostles' feet, Acts iv. 32-37, would soon have been exhausted; but it was the duty of each one to labor, that he might have to give to the needy.—Eph. iv. 28. Helpless widows were especially provided for in the daily ministrations.—Acts vi. 1. This is "the number" spoken of in verse nine, that is, the number of those entirely dependent upon the church for support. But if any of these had children, or even nephews, (who were believers,) they were required to take care of them. This would leave the church in a condition to relieve those who being helplessly destitute were widows indeed. It is not only unnatural and unfeeling in those who have such dependent widows if they fail to care for their support; it is rebellion against the law of Christ. Of course, the helpless and aged widows should be cared for by the church in case their natural relatives neglect them; but the intimation is very plain that such neglect would be a transgression of the law of Christ, with which the church should not fail to deal according to his commandment. The speci-

fications in the preceding portion of the chapter do not imply that in the absence of any of the items mentioned the church may neglect such widows; for it is not probable that those mentioned Acts vi. 1 had these qualifications, yet they evidently were entitled to receive the care of the church. By the expression, "widows indeed," we understand not merely women whose husbands were dead, but such as were utterly destitute and unable to help themselves. These were entitled to participate in the common stock which belonged to the whole church; and it is still the duty of every church to minister according to the ability which God has given, to the support of all such as have need. "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."—Gal. vi. 10.

NOW READY.

THE book entitled "Diagram of the Churches" is now ready, and all orders sent us have been filled, and the book should reach such subscribers before they receive this paper.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ANY one knowing the whereabouts or present post-office address of the following named persons, will confer a favor by sending the same to this office:

Thomas E. Rhodes, formerly of Pine Hill, Texas.

W. C. Roberts, formerly of Westburg, Mississippi.

R. J. Turner, formerly of Magnolia Springs, Texas.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

We would call the attention of brethren throughout the country to the fact that we are prepared to print and distribute the Minutes of meetings as cheap and in as good style as any office in the United States. We frequently receive copies of Minutes printed by parties who do not belong to our order, and therefore have no idea of what is meant by the writers, and consequently frequent serious blunders are made. It costs but a trifle to forward the manuscript or return the printed Minutes by mail from any part of the country, and we therefore solicit our brethren to send us their Minutes for printing. We are but few, and our patronage should be kept within our own borders.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

We have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

MARRIAGES.

ON Wednesday, March 19, 1884, at the residence of the bride's parents, by Elder E. Ritzenhouse, Mr. John H. Truitt, late of Pittsville, now of Snow Hill, Md., to Miss Mary A., daughter of James B. Hastings, of Little Creek, Sussex Co., Delaware.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, (but her home was in Acton, and she was taken there for interment), February 18, 1884, **Clarissa Joy**, aged 66 years, 7 months and 6 days. She gave good evidence that she was a child of God by birth years ago, but she being in the midst of those that believed in the "do and live" system, she was decidedly opposed to what the Old School Baptists believe and preach, until a few years ago, at which time God opened her eyes and gave her an understanding of the gospel, as she never had before. She then saw clearly that if her eternal salvation depended in the least upon anything good that she must do, that she must bid farewell to all hope of ever being saved. In this furnace of affliction she came out as strong an Old School Baptist, seemingly, as ever lived here in the flesh, and our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, was next to the Bible with her. It was her request before she died that I should preach at her funeral, and I did so. It was a solemn meeting. She has left brothers, sisters and other relatives to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, March 7, 1884, **Jennie S. Guptill**, aged 31 years, 8 months and 11 days. She never made an open profession of her faith in Christ, but gave as good evidence that she was heaven-born, seemingly, as any one could while living in the flesh. It was her delight to hear the Old School Baptists preach that all of God's people are saved by grace, and not of works, lest any man should boast. She loved to read the doctrine of Christ and the experience of God's children in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. She was sick only six days. A little before she died she said, "I am dying; my breath is becoming shorter. Do not shed any tears for me. I have a good hope in Christ. Jesus makes my dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are." She had a gentle dismissal from time to eternity. She has left her husband, father, mother and others to mourn. I preached at her funeral to a large number of people.

ALSO,

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, March 17, 1884, **Mr. William Jones**, aged 86 years and some months. He never professed a hope in Christ, but some years ago told me that he had a hope in Christ. He was a kind husband, one of the best of fathers, and a good neighbor. He through life was not only kind to his family, but also to all that he had to do with. He has left a good record behind. He has left his aged companion, a large, respectable family of children, one brother and many others to mourn. I preached at his funeral to a large and attentive number of people.

WM. QUINT.

By request I write an obituary notice of the death of **Mrs. Cynthia Ann Patton**, wife of brother Samuel R. Patton, late of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, who departed this life January 9, 1884, aged 62 years and 16 days. The deceased was born in Fayette Co., Pa., and united with the Christian Church at an early age. At the time brother Patton married her she belonged to the Methodists, but after that she took an interest in Baptist meetings, going with him to his meetings and associations whenever it was convenient. Although they had agreed to go to each others' meetings before they were married, yet she paid but little attention to her own, and manifested a desire to go with him whenever she could, giving evidence that she loved the truth. The deceased had lived for many years in Mt. Pleasant, raising a family of six children, all married except her second son. Seven years ago brother Patton went from here to Iowa, and married her, and lived at her home until her death. Our dear brother sorrows not as others without hope, for he informs me that in her last sickness she gave good evidence that she was going "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." She was a kind and affectionate wife, a loving mother, and was universally beloved by those who knew her. Brother Patton has returned to Illinois, and will make his home with his son in Pontiac, Livingston County. May the God of all

grace and mercy comfort him now in his declining years, in this bereavement, and reconcile him to every dispensation of his providence, and enable him to say, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good."

"A few more days on earth to spend,
And all my toils and cares shall end,
And I shall see my God and Friend,
And praise his name on high.

"No more to sigh or shed a tear,
No more to suffer pain or fear,
But God and Christ and heaven appear
Unto the raptured eye."

JOHN DOWNEY.

VARNA, Ill., March 18, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to notice through the SIGNS the death of a young friend, **Mr. Lucien E. Davis**, which event occurred March 4, 1884, under the following sad circumstances: Mr. Davis was brakeman on the Va. & Midland R. R., and while standing upon a freight car was struck by an over-head bridge which the train was passing under, near Culpeper C. H., Va. He was thrown from the car upon the track, and seven cars passed over him before the train could be stopped. Mr. Davis was a young man of good moral character, a friend of the Old School Baptist cause, and beloved by a large circle of friends and relatives. He was 27 years of age, and leaves a widowed mother, who is a member of the Occoquan Church, also four brothers and two sisters, besides a large circle of friends to mourn his death. This death is an inscrutable dispensation of the power of God, and falls with crushing weight upon the family of the deceased. By request I spoke last Sunday at the meeting house of the Occoquan Church, at Oak Grove, in connection with his death, using as a text the closing six verses of the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis. I append a few lines from a favorite hymn of the deceased, sung upon this occasion, 700, Beebe's Collection.

"'Twas God that form'd me by his pow'r,
'Tis he sustains me every hour;
And all my times shall ever be
Order'd by his all-wise decree.

"Though plagues and death around me fly,
Till he commands I cannot die;
Though men or devils aim to kill,
They can't exceed my Father's will.

"May I at all times hold thy hand,
And still to thee surrender'd stand;
Convinc'd that thou art God alone,
May I and mine be all thy own."

May Israel's God graciously sanctify this dispensation of his providence to the good of all who mourn.

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCOQUAN, Va., March 21, 1884.

ON February 3, 1884, **William Canine**, aged 68 years, 1 month and 8 days, passed from this life to that bourne from which no traveler returns. He was born in Shelby Co., Ky., on Christmas Day, 1815. His father and mother, Ralph and Margaret Canine, moved from Kentucky to Montgomery Co., Ind., in the spring of 1825, when William was ten years old. He gained considerable wealth, which will make his family comfortable for life, as to this world's goods. His faithful daughter stood by her father while the gloom of death settled on his brow, and held his hand until the last faint breath was stilled. The loving wife stood by until completely exhausted, and was forced to seek her bed. The deceased was, from a lad, the very soul of honor, social and polite to every one, and was loved by all his associates. He was married to Celia McCord January 23, 1841. She was good, and beloved by all who knew her. She was the daughter of Alex. Elder, one that we loved to reverence in his day; but he is resting with Jesus, the one he loved to talk so much about. Celia was of one of the oldest and best families in Parke County; but in less than a year the dark shadow of the angel of death hung over this happy home like a pall, and the young wife was called, and her spirit returned to the God who gave it, Dec. 8, 1841. The husband and wife joined Union Church March 27, 1841. They were most devoted christians, always in their seats at the meetings of the church until separated by death. William was mar-

ried to Martha J. Ellis February 26, 1845. The fruit of this marriage was three children. Mary, the oldest, is now Mrs John L. Goben, and was a dutiful daughter, almost idolized by her father. The sons are good, true men. About four weeks before William's death he said to me and his wife that he could not live long, and felt that this was his last sickness, and that he did not want any of us to grieve after him, for he soon would be with Jesus. He grew steadily worse until death relieved him from his sufferings. He chose Elders J. J. Goben, P. P. Vanleave and M. M. Vanleave to officiate at the funeral, and requested that the text be taken from Ecclesiastes xii. 5-7. The hymn chosen was, "How sweet to reflect on those joys that await me." O how we will miss him! He was a true brother to me. He was my adviser and counsellor. He was always ready to give a reason of his hope, and gave very warm exhortations in the church. One week before he died we thought for about six hours that he was dying. In that time he said, "I saw such beautiful white angels, all clothed in their beautiful white robes. They did look so beautiful! I shall soon be with them in glory. I shall pass through the valley and shadow of death, but my God will be with me. His rod and his staff they comfort me. I shall fear no evil."

S. C. CANINE.

NEAR WAVELAND, Ind.

MY husband, **H. Hutchison**, was taken to his bed the first week in November, with nervous disease, and for three long months suffered the most extreme suffering I ever witnessed in my life; yet he bore it patiently, and prayed night and day for strength and fortitude to bear up under such heavy affliction. He seemed from the first to think he would never recover, and for a time refused to have medical aid called in; but his suffering increased until we thought he would go into lockjaw. He then consented to have a doctor called in; but nothing could be done for him, only to relieve the severe pain. He had never made a public profession of religion, but enjoyed talking on the subject as well as any one I ever saw, and there are few persons that are better posted on the Scriptures than he was. Were I able to write a volume, it seems to me the half could never be told. I have sat hour after hour, from dark to daylight, and listened to his petitions at the throne of grace; and never did I hear such prayers come out of the mouth of mortal man. He would often say that God was too good and just to inflict one pain on him that he did not justly deserve; that he had sinned all the days of his life against a just and holy God, and trampled his mercies under foot; yet God had been mindful of him. He was perfectly conscious all through his sickness, and his mind was clear enough to attend to any business affair that might come up. He longed for the time of his departure, but said he wanted to be patient and wait the Lord's time. As my oldest son and myself stood by his bedside, he asked how long we thought he would still have to suffer. We told him it would be but a short time. He said, "Glory to God," three times. He said we must not grieve for him. I never witnessed stronger faith. He would often say, "O, my faith is strong." He passed off very quietly. I never saw a more serene, peaceful countenance. While I feel sad and lonely, I would not have him back in this suffering world of sin and sorrow, for I do believe he is gone to that rest that remains to the people of God, where the wicked cease to trouble and the weary are at rest. I feel that the time is very short till I, too, will be called away from time, to that house not made with hands, to dwell forever with the Lord. O may I, when called away, have that faith that enabled my dear husband to pass through the gloomy ordeal and fear no evil.

LUCRETIA HUTCHISON.

MADISONVILLE, Mo., March 9, 1884.

BY request of our dear sister, Sarah Streeter, I send for publication in the SIGNS a brief account of the life and death of her husband, **James T. Streeter**, who departed this life at his residence in Griffin's Corners, Delaware Co., N. Y., December 26, 1883, being in the 74th year of his age. The subject

of this notice entertained a hope in the Redeemer when about seventeen years old, in the fall of 1827, and was baptized by Elder Hezekiah Pettit November 29, 1827. He was received by letter in the church now called Halcott, in 1845, and the following year was appointed church clerk, and served faithfully until May, 1861, when he asked to be released. He and another good brother, (Lewis Garrison), were appointed to prepare the elements for the communion, which office he filled for a number of years. He acted as agent for the SIGNS until called away. Some four years ago he had a slight shock, which so affected his ankles that it was very difficult for him to walk. A few days before his death he had a similar shock, when erysipelas set in, and his spirit soon took its flight to the God who gave it. He was firm in the doctrine of salvation by grace, that where the Lord begins a work he will perform it. I have often heard him say,

"Thus far the Lord has led me on;

Thus far his power prolongs my days."

And the hope that he received when young proved an everlasting consolation to him, which was a good hope through grace, and was to him an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entered into that within the veil. He leaves a lonely widow, three sons and four daughters to mourn the loss of a kind husband and father; also many relatives and friends. The funeral was attended at his residence, and Elder I. Hewitt preached on the occasion a very able and comforting discourse, from the words, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Psalm xlvii. 1.

Your brother, I trust, to serve in the bonds of the gospel.

JAMES MILLER.

HALCOTT CENTRE, N. Y., March 19, 1884.

DIED—On the 20th of February, 1884, at the residence of his brother, Thomas P. Mullins, in Anderson Co., Ky., **M. M. Mullins**, aged about 72 years. The subject of this notice was baptized by Elder J. H. Walker in the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church, in the year 1834, in June or July; therefore he has been a member of the church nearly fifty years. He has served the church at Goshen as deacon for about thirty-five years, up to the time of his death, and truly we can say that he has been a faithful servant during said time, always ready and willing to do his part in defraying the expenses of the church and our ministering brethren, and also attending to the needs of our pastor. After our dear brother lost his dear companion, which occurred about six or seven years ago, he commenced failing, and gradually continued until death relieved him of all his trials and tribulations; and we hope that he is now at rest in the presence of God. He leaves a brother and several sisters, together with relatives and friends, and also the church, to mourn; but we should not mourn as those without hope, for we believe our loss is his eternal gain. And now may the God of all grace reconcile us to his righteous will, and enable each of us to say, "Not my will, but thine be done," is the desire of your unworthy brother in hope of a better life.

A. J. BICKERS.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I am in receipt of a request from Mr. J. H. Bradner, son of sister **Julia A. Bradner**, to prepare a notice of her decease, for publication in the SIGNS. Her manifest friendship for me, and the comfort she received through my ministry at Warwick, during the eight years I tried to serve that church, is doubtless the reason why the request was sent to me. Since Eld. Wm. L. Beebe has been pastor of the church, ill health has kept her confined much of the time, and she has had but few opportunities of hearing preaching. Sister Bradner died near Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., Feb. 29, 1884, of paralysis, aged 65 years, 1 month and 11 days. She was the widow of brother Gideon S. Bradner, who died several years ago, (I do not remember the date), a much loved and esteemed member of the Warwick Church. Sister Bradner has long been a member of the church, and I have good reason to remember her as a sincere christian, zeal-

ous for the cause of her Redeemer, and sound in the faith, with an unswerving love for the truth. During the first troubled months of my stay at Warwick, she was one among the foremost who by words of comfort and encouragement, by counsel and by deeds, held up my hands, and her memory will always be cherished by me with emotions of the deepest gratitude. Her later years had been years of trial and suffering; but her God has been with her, her faith was unshaken, and now, we believe, all her conflicts have ended in everlasting rest. She leaves two sons, (with one of whom she has made her home for several years), with several grandchildren and other relatives and friends, and her brethren of the church, to mourn their loss. May God comfort them, and prepare us all who bear the Savior's name to endure the trials of life, and in death to triumph through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Affectionately your brother,

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Loudoun Co., Va.

ANOTHER faithful and long-trying member of the little band in New York City has been called home. Brother **Charles Scott**, having nearly reached the limit of years allowed to man, has left this world of sorrow. I am unable to learn the date of his decease; it was, probably, during the month of February, 1884.

PATERSON, N. J., March 16, 1884.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Tuscarora Church, Juniata Co., Pa., to convene on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May (14th), 1884, and continue three days.

The brethren and friends wishing to attend this association will take tickets for Mifflin Station, Juniata Co., Pa., where they will be met on Tuesday at all trains stopping there, and also on Wednesday morning. Those coming from the south will take the Baltimore R. R. to Harrisburg, and from thence the Pennsylvania Central R. R. to Mifflin, Juniata Co., Pa. A cordial invitation is given to all desiring to attend, and especially brethren in the ministry. The association will be held one and a half miles from the depot.

ARNOLD VARNS, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (21st), 1884, and continue in session three days.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 23th), and continue until Friday evening following.

G. M. FETTER, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, in the village of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (4th), 1884, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association will be held, providence permitting, with the church at Riker's Hollow, Steuben Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (11th), 1884, and continue in session three days.

J. C. BEARD JR., Clerk.

THE Turkey River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will be held at the house of Paul Sohner, five miles north-east of Waterloo, Blackhawk Co., Iowa, beginning on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1884, and continue three days, (being May 31st, June 1st and 2d), to which we cordially invite our brethren, especially our ministering brethren.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1884.

NO. 9.

POETRY.

HE LEADETH ME.

FULL often do I walk in darkened ways;
My stroke at times my groanings cannot
heal;
I labor forward, backward, but the days
Pass by, nor yet his presence can I feel.
Then I assay to walk by sight, but walls
Of gall and travail hedge me all about,
While grim despair from out some recess
calls,
And I am turned from self in utter rout.
Sometimes I see a lion in the way;
Or, lurking in low valleys most profound,
Dread forms of ugly shape cause me to stay
My trembling steps and fear at every sound.
Then reason for a time reigns all supreme;
Or, like the Pharisee of old, I'm proud
That I am not as other men, and seem
All strength, and my own praises sound
aloud.
Sometimes my strength appears so great I
say,
"Go to, I'll go to such or such a place,
And buy and sell, and get much gain, and stay
A year;" thus giving to the swift the race.
But as the proudest oak is often shorn
Of all its glory by the angry wind,
So, in my loftiest moods, I'm made to mourn
My locks as Sampson, and am weak and
blind.
Then am I led to put in him my trust,
Who heedeth even when a sparrow falls;
Whose law is perfect, statutes wisely just;
Whose name's a tower, and salvation, walls.
With such a hand to guide I cannot fail;
For glorious will he make the place I tread;
A blessing will I ask, and shall prevail,
And trusting in his bounty, shall be fed.
For he, within the hollow of his hand,
Holds all this mighty earth. He reigns a
King!
O may I in his presence ever stand,
And praises to his name forever sing.

H.

CORRESPONDENCE.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, Mich., Jan. 23, 1884.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have been trying to "keep silence," but the SIGNS has been so full of interest and instruction for me of late, I feel as though I could hardly refrain from speaking of it. It seems more precious to me this winter than ever before; for as I get weaker in the race, or more faltering in my journey, I feel more need of comfort and instruction. When some truth or doctrinal point that we love is assailed, we that are weak feel that we love the truth, but hardly know how to defend it; and how glad we are when some champion, who is valiant for the truth, comes forward in its defense. How acceptable it is, and how grateful we feel to him who gives us such good and able gifts. Truly God has been mindful of us here in our own land, and it may be that we feel just a little proud of them sometimes; at least we feel that when one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. We learn

doctrine by experience, but we are not all able, nor are we all expected to teach it; yet when the doctrine of God our Savior is taught, which agrees with our experience, we cannot help but rejoice in it. Although not able to understand clearly (and not much in part) the mystery of godliness, or the things pertaining to his eternal power and Godhead, yet I have had thoughts upon it, as a subject upon which I would fear to speak, and have read with much interest what has been written upon it. I also read with much comfort the letter of the brother who wrote so sweetly upon the words, "Then David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." They were much like the thoughts and exercises I had had, and had been trying to tell them to the dear brethren and sisters here, only I did not know how to tell it, and I was grateful that there were those who could. It required an effort to "keep silence" at that time. For I have seen times when all seemed to forsake me; yet, like Paul, I could say, "Nevertheless the Lord stood by me."

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving-kindness O how good!

"Though numerous hosts of mighty foes,
Though earth and hell my way oppose;
He safely leads my soul along;
His loving-kindness O how strong!"

"Loving-kindness." Many are the thoughts I have had upon this word. Not only pity, and sympathy, and kindness, but there is love in it, tender mercy and compassion. Though I am ever so afflicted, ever so troubled and chastened, yet it is of his mercy that I am not consumed. God is love; and he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "He is in one mind, and none can turn him; and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." When I think of that fixed, unalterable love, if it be placed upon a worthless one like me, who can turn it away? The more vile I appear, the more matchless and perfect that love appears. When I realize how wretched and wandering I am, in all the ways that a wicked heart can turn, in wicked rebellion, in vanity and folly, in weakness and foolishness, in all ways that could be mentioned, yet in all these his loving-kindness has not forsaken me, in that he has granted me repentance and sorrow, after bringing to my mind some portion of Scripture as being applied to me by reproof, instruction and correction. That is how I have ever come to write upon a portion of Scripture. I am only telling of the

things I have learned by trial and by sorrow. Of late, when I have felt so indifferent, so hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, and so backward, when I have thought of the assembly of the saints, I have thought that perhaps they would be better off without me. I may be only a spot among them. I go through much weakness and suffering. Perhaps it is not required; perhaps it would be more to God's honor and praise if I were to stay at home, and should never be seen by any one. In all this faltering, the words of Paul have been much in my mind, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." We have not only faith in God, but we have made a profession of it; we have upon profession of our faith been baptized in that great name, and are numbered with the children of God. Each and every one who has made this profession comes under this admonition. It is addressed as much to one as to another. Provoking one another to love and good works, and exhorting one another. Not that it be expected that two or three are to keep up the organization of the church, so that the rest may attend at their convenience; yet if there are but two or three gathered together in the name of the Lord, he has said, "There am I in the midst of them." There always is a blessing for the undefiled in the way. When this is the case, when we are but few, and feel the presence of the Lord with us, our minds go after the absent ones. We wish they were with us, to share the blessing. We wonder why they have forsaken our assembly. Can it be that they have gone on a visit, and not returned? Or are they turned to their merchandise? Or have worldly matters kept them away? Or are they sick? But impossibilities are not considered here. If it is not possible for them to attend, that is not "forsaking." To forsake implies willfulness; for the apostle in the same connection, and the next verse, says, "For if we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." It does not even imply

forgetfulness. We are not apt to forget the time appointed to assemble together. We can easily remember whether there may be something else we would like to do at that time, which perhaps would be a little more toward gratifying the flesh. Those who are generally absent the most, seem to love to come the best when there is something unusual going on, when there is expected more of a gathering than common. Then how would they like to be of the few to bear for the most part alone, even though the season should be sometimes dull? Is one better than another? Would it not be better to

"Share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear,"

even though all the desires of the flesh rebel, when the straight and narrow way is plain before us? If we please self, are we denying it? Did not the Master say, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me?" If all things should go to please our natural feelings, would there be any cross? Even though it be heavy and bitter, yet if any man will not deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Jesus, he cannot be his disciple. Then why should we murmur if we find a cross every day? We could not take it up daily if there were none for us. Or if we get offended at one or more of the members, and stay away on that account, we may be assured that we are the one who is at fault. We are not then manifesting that we love the truth, but self, dear self. It is self that has been slighted or injured. If the brethren sin against us, there is a rule given by our Lord for us to walk by. We are not to make rules for ourselves. Or if we think the brethren are not orderly enough for us to walk or meet with, again the fault may be in ourselves. Are they not just as they were when we made a profession of our faith? We loved them then; and does it not look as though our love had grown cold? If our ears have grown dull, and we are lulled to sleep by some delusion, it is not well to charge it to the brethren. It may be well to have "great searchings of heart" for ourselves. If the brethren sin against us, they may not be aware of it. They may not know how we feel towards them, unless we tell them of it. If they turn to us with the least sorrowful look, we should be ready to forgive them. We will not even presume that any who have professed the faith of God's elect are so worldly minded that they would not have the eyes of the world upon them, and are ashamed to be

seen meeting with a few despised followers of him who was despised and rejected of men. If in any sense we begin to waver from the profession of our faith, or draw back, or if anything else fills our minds more than the love of the truth, if there is anything we prefer above Jerusalem, we may know that we are wrong. We may grow weary of the service of the Lord, like those in ancient times, when they said, "The table of the Lord is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible. Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it." Please read Malachi. "Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought." There must be something to please self in remuneration. They brought of the poorest they had for sacrifices, such as they could conveniently spare; but the first and the best they reserved for themselves. But the Savior commanded, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." We are not only to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering for a little while, not only to meet with the assemblies of the saints for a little time, and think that will do for us, "but so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Not only bring the first fruits, which we must do, but "bring ye in all the tithes into my storehouse."

KATE SWARTOUT.

Ghent, Ky., Oct. 24, 1883.

MRS. G. W. BREHM—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—In the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of the fifteenth instant you say: "Will some kind brother give his views through the SIGNS on 2 Corinthians v. 1, 2?" Your request for the views of some of the brethren on the great, comforting and glorious truths presented by the apostle in the first and second verses of that chapter, is greatly gratifying to me, for when some of the able writers for the SIGNS have given their views on that subject I expect to enjoy a rich feast. But I thought this morning that I would talk to you and your venerable father for a little while upon some of the sublime beauties presented in that text.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." This epistle is addressed to the church of God at Corinth, with all the saints which are in Achaia. The apostle manifests his love for those brethren and sisters when he says, "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." The apostle, in the preceding chapter, says, "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." Here the apostle is calling special attention to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the power made manifest in his resurrection. The text quoted

presents in clear and forcible language the faith of the apostle, and of all God's dear people. He says, "For we KNOW that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." He was enabled by faith to look away through the mists and clouds of earth to his future and eternal home, and there to behold the redeemed disrobed of mortality and clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Yes, it is the faith of God's dear people that enables them to rejoice in a glorious hope of a blessed immortality beyond these scenes of earth. It is that faith, no doubt, which enables your dear father, now eighty-two years of age, to say with the apostle, "In this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." For the children of God are now walking by faith, knowing that their earthly house must soon be dissolved. Yes, it must soon crumble to its mother dust. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," which comes home to us day by day. But O how the saints rise high on the wings of triumphant faith when they are enabled to say, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Our glorious Lord said, "I am the resurrection and the life." You and I, dear sister, will soon lie in the dark caverns of the tomb, but O what rapture seizes you when you are enabled by faith to behold him as your resurrection and your life! He could not be holden of death, nor can the grave triumph over any of his people, for they are one with him. The prophet says, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Although his countenance was marred more than the sons of men, yet he rose a mighty conqueror; and in triumphant strains the prophet says, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." The word "Edom" means red, earthy, of blood; and the word "Bozrah," in tribulation or distress. Then the prophet beheld him coming from the darkness of Gethsemane, from that lonely garden where all had forsaken him, where he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. Yea, and he beheld him coming from Calvary's bloody summit; but he was traveling in the greatness of his strength, having obtained a great and glorious victory over death and the grave. The great and infinitely glorious benefits of that victory all inured to his redeemed. They can say, when beholding him by faith as their resurrection, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." When viewing by faith the glories that will be revealed in them, the saints break forth

in the language of one anciently, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." O what a victory, when they will be disrobed of mortality, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; all accomplished by their glorious Lord, whom the prophet beheld traveling in the greatness of his strength, "mighty to save." Yes, mighty to save from the consequences and pollutions of sin; mighty to save from the powers of death and the grave. O what a glorious and all-powerful Savior have you, my dear sister; and how you and all the heaven-born sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty should rejoice in the goodness and mercy of your dear Redeemer, when you and they are enabled by faith to behold him as the one who in his love and in his pity redeemed them.

But lest this train of thought might weary you, let us turn to the language of that text. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved." The word "for" relates to, and calls attention to that which immediately precedes it. He says in the preceding chapter, "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God." Here the apostle presents the resurrection of our Lord, as well as the resurrection of his saints, and that their resurrection is by him, for he is their resurrection and their life. Yes, and he declares that all things are for their sakes. Their eternal release from the power of death and the grave is a part of the all things which are for their sakes; and all redound to the glory of God, and show forth his power in the resurrection of the Lord of glory, and the resurrection of all his saints, and their complete and glorious triumph in that building of God, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The apostle uses the word "house," in the singular number. He does not say houses. If he had used the plural, some might have been larger and greater than others. But they are all one in Christ Jesus. They shall put on immortality. That immortality which they shall put on dwells alone in their glorious Lord. The apostle says, "He shall shew who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." That immortality is secured by the resurrection of our Lord. Contemplating that glorious truth, the apostle could appropriately say, "This mortal shall put on immortality." The word "mortal," as used by the inspired penman, conveys the same idea that is conveyed by the words, "earthly house of this

tabernacle." He uses the little word "if." If that earthly house were dissolved, we, the saints at Corinth, you, and all who have lived on earth in the past ages, have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Adam was made from the dust of the earth; hence he and all his descendants are of the earth, earthy, and must return to that state or condition from which they came. But that house not made with hands, being immortal, had its existence in God from all eternity; hence the apostle says, "eternal in the heavens." No man can approach unto that immortality, for God only hath immortality dwelling in the light. Then at that great and notable day of the Lord, "This mortal shall put on immortality." When that great and glorious day for which all other days were made has fully come, the saints that are upon the earth shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Their earthly house will not be dissolved by death; hence the apostle uses the word "if." If the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved. He shows that he had strong hope of witnessing that great day without his earthly house being dissolved. He says to the church at Thessalonica, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." O, my sister, how comforting are these heavenly truths to the poor, way-worn pilgrim. Amid the pains, sorrows, disappointments and bereavements of earth, how consoling to the mourning saints to be assured by the inspired penman that they have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The second verse of that chapter introduces the subject of the experience of the saints while in that earthly house. He says, "In this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." Sin has led to all the sorrows that have or ever will be experienced by the saints; hence they groan, and their language is, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Their language indicates that they are looking, yea, hoping for that delivery; but the dear saints can never be delivered from the body of this death while clothed with mortality. Daily experiencing that solemn truth, they earnestly desire to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven. But with a heavenly resignation, they can say with that ancient and afflicted servant, "If a man die, shall he live

again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Job was resigned to the will of his Lord; yea, resigned to wait all his days on earth, and all the days that he must lie in the silent tomb, till his change came. But his faith looked forward to that great change when this mortal must put on immortality. He says, "If a man die, shall he live again?" which, taken affirmatively, means that he shall live again; shall live when time shall be no more, clothed upon with that house which is from heaven, from that throne of eternal glory, where God reigns in his own superlative greatness and purity. All the redeemed around that eternal throne are clothed with that immortality with which he in his wonderful and matchless grace has clothed them, and fitted them to join in a heavenly anthem of praise to him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. O may it be our blissful lot to meet in that infinitely glorious and happy throng, and join in that sweet song of endless praise.

Please excuse these rambling thoughts from one who is a stranger to you in the flesh, and believe me yours in christian love,

H. COX.

BUTLER, Md., March 22, 1884.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—Recent events have impressed the subject of the washing of regeneration upon my mind. The apostle says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."—Titus iii. 5-7. The effect of this washing ought to shine forth in all that we do and say. In tribulation we should be joyful, having humility of heart and the most ardent love; reversing what we are by nature, and remembering that "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son."—Rom. v. 8, 10. This salvation is freely bestowed by the infinite God of love, and should be received and embraced with all readiness of mind and most cordial affection, and treasured as the richest blessing to lost, helpless, ruined sinners. But what is man, that God should be mindful of him? Possessed of a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, a wayward spirit, untamed, and leading into forbidden ways. Yet notwithstanding all the evils that beset us and allure us from the right way, God is unchangeable in his love, being the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Whom he loves, he will love unto the end. The stray sheep is sought for and brought back; the prodigal son is given a robe, and a ring is placed upon his hand; yea, while a great way off, his Father ran to him, fell on his neck

and kissed him. Though one of the dear disciples declared with an oath that he did not know his Lord, yet that disciple was specially named, and was told that he should see him. This should fully persuade us that nothing can separate the chosen, blood-bought sons and daughters from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. In the present age we find a profession of religion quite fashionable; therefore it behooves pastors and churches to beware that they receive none for baptism until they become dead to the law by the body of Christ. To bury a person before they are dead is horrible to think of; yet how much greater a blunder it is to baptize one before they are dead to the law; for then we have to live with one buried alive; and not only so, but we make that one guilty of having two husbands, in profession at least; professing to be married to Christ, while their first husband is still living. But if full evidence is given by the candidate of a death to the law by the body of Christ, and by this assurance we are knit together in the strong ties of spiritual love, it is the same love with which the Father loved us, and which caused him to give his only begotten Son, and which caused the Son to endure the sufferings of death, to redeem his loved ones from death. This spiritual love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. And when a loved one is drawn away and enticed by some of the many temptations which our weak flesh is liable to, and we are constrained to restore the loved erring one, in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted, we know that the love of God is then controlling us; for our love is not changed by the wrong doing of the erring one, even as the love of God is not changed, which remained as firm when we were enemies to him by wicked works, as it did in the time of our obedience to his commands; for it knows no change, nor turning from the object loved. May we, beloved brethren, admire and imitate this love, and use it as the only weapon in our spiritual warfare; remembering that though the King's daughter, the Lamb's wife, is all glorious within, and her clothing is of wrought gold, yet she is unhappily allied to a base, wretched, churlish Nabal, a body of flesh, in which dwells no good thing. Yet she delights in the law of God after the inward man, rejoicing in the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. May we take heed not to mix any of our own righteousness with that spotless robe wrought for us in Christ, and which we are partakers of by faith and hope, in the love of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, through the communion of the Holy Ghost. There is no boasting or merit to be ascribed to man for walking in the Spirit, for the apostle declares that "the love of God constraineth us." Then are we not holding up the untruthful idea of man's ability, in chiding and blaming an erring

brother for not so walking? And does this release us from watchcare over each other? It certainly does not; but it admonishes us that the spirit of meekness and love should actuate us, considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted.

Dear brethren, having received an excellent and instructive letter from Elder E. V. White, which was read to some of the brethren, and they being desirous that it should be sent to you for publication in the SIGNS, and heartily concurring in their opinion, I will inclose it, and submit it to your disposal. Brother White has truly laid the axe at the root of the tree of all creature merit, which cuts down the antichristian, Arminian notion that the Lord of heaven and earth is influenced or changed by the acts of his creatures. May the spirit of faith kill all legal hopes and self-righteous confidence, and make the finished salvation of the risen Savior the one object of each heart, as we read the grand truth presented in brother White's instructive letter; and may each believing heart cry out in rapturous joy, Lord, what rich grace is this, which thou hast hidden from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. We know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.—1 John iii. 24. May the spirit of love and mercy actuate us all, is the sincere desire of your unworthy brother.

THOMAS H. SCOTT.

LEESBURG, Va., Feb. 29, 1884.

THOMAS H. SCOTT—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your two welcome messages of christian love and fellowship came duly to hand. I reread your last letter this morning with unusual interest, and would like to send it right off to the SIGNS, for I would like all to see it. We can only give that which we have; hence I send to the SIGNS these letters, which I think ought to be published. I think that surely the Spirit of the Lord was with you when you wrote, especially the last letter. Many things that you said have comforted me, because of the witness within of the truth of them, and that they were wrought in me. "How can these things be?" is unexplainable, as well as unaccountable; but faith receives them as true. And they are the evidence of things not seen, and constitute the substance of things hoped for. My brother, we are not left without a witness, neither shall they be hid in a corner. Even the bread and water of affliction shall teach us. The terrible words quoted by you, which the Lord made a part of David's experience, (that is, "Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God,") bear witness of the gracious dealings of the Lord. It is when we are made babes and sucklings, that praise is perfected.—Matt. xxi. 16. I know of no invention, either modern or ancient, to reduce a man down to a babe, or to cause one who has been accustomed to feed himself, and on what pleases his fancy, to go back to the

first principles and draw his living from his mother's breast. But we read that this is "for the generation to come, and the people that shall be created shall praise the Lord." And we also read, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." This is that in which the workmanship of God is displayed. We are made that which neither we nor any man can make us. And yet there is not an incongruity, nor distortion, nor abortion, produced; only what man cannot produce, because of its consistency, simplicity, and perfection. That which the Lord makes us to be by faith, is not only what man would not be, but what he cannot be. For this reason, among the many, man cannot rid himself of external influence. It is impossible for any man to be impervious to the influence of the world. It acts by unseen laws and force, and is beyond any man's control. As long as this is so, there cannot be consistency, congruity or perfection about man. Consistency is a jewel found not in the earth. Perfection is an abiding sameness; otherwise it is not perfection. We are subject to changes, acted upon like the earth, by heat and cold, sunshine and rain. We are different in the same hour; therefore we cannot be perfect, holy, righteous, or like God; neither can we make ourselves so. But God has made us so, by faith in Christ Jesus. Now God himself is all this. Hence man cannot know him; for we cannot rise above our level. God is not acted upon, influenced, or changed by any outside agency or power. "I am God, I change not." And he gives this as the reason why the sons of Jacob are not consumed. This I conceive to be the pillar of truth upon which every child of God is grounded, as it is also the true idea respecting the attributes of God. Unlike us, he is unchangeable, unmovable, inflexible. I cannot therefore think that either our prayers or importunity, our sinfulness or depravity, ever changed or altered God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself; or his decrees, which he formed by his counsel. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." "For his great love," the apostle says. Indeed it was great. There was so much of it that there was not found sin enough to abound over it. Many waters could not quench it.—Cant. viii. 7. It was great, in that time affected it not. He loved us with an everlasting love. The same love which was with him in the beginning must be with him in the end, or else he will be changed; and that would destroy our idea of God, and would make him one like ourselves, liable to changes and subject to influences. If we have the faith of God, we must believe that we shall become like God, for we shall see him as he is. And that same faith furnishes us with the evidence that the work of God in Christ Jesus was to make us so. The substance is al-

ready obtained by faith, if it be the faith of God. And if God is an unchangeable God, and we are to be like him, can any faith be the faith of God which admits that this may or may not be? A changeable faith is not like God, nor can it possibly be of God, or born of God; for he is in all his attributes unchangeable, and cannot out of himself produce something different from himself; at least he has not, nor will he. Now, I have said that neither our prayers, importunity, sinfulness nor wickedness ever changed the eternal purpose of God. I know there is an example recorded in the eleventh chapter of Luke where a man's purpose was changed by importunity, and is cited to us for our encouragement; but it must be remembered that this man's purpose was wrong, selfish and devilish. Such as that is changeable. We cannot suppose that of God's purposes. But it is God's purpose to give, and his elect are for this very reason encouraged to importune him. No matter, therefore, how it may appear to us, "Ask, and it shall be given you." God is unchangeable, and he will give his holy Spirit to every one that asketh him. God knows how to give good gifts, but that unjust judge did not know.

Well, my brother, I am not weary of this subject, but I am afraid you will be weary before you find out how to read or how to understand this. This leaves us in usual health. My love to all the dear people at Black Rock, for they are a very dear people to me.

E. V. WHITE.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 5, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Agreeable to the suggestion in my correspondence some months ago, I will try to write a little respecting my call to the ministry. As I then referred to the fact that my labor in the ministry is not extensive, I will say, in that respect, I ought to be satisfied with the place that I believe God has assigned me, and with the gifts that I hope he has bestowed upon me; nor ought I to envy those more highly favored.

I remember that when I was first made sensible of my lost and helpless condition, according to the experience already written and published, I looked to man, to parents, to teachers, to preachers, to aid me in the work of self-correction and reform, so that I might feel at rest and be prepared to help others, and so not only benefit them, but also add some lustre to my own glory and ultimate reward. But after experiencing the loss of all this, and also a sense of the power of God's grace, I could not resist a weighty impulse to tell to others the harmony of Bible truth with my experience; nor could I be satisfied without some such expression of the power of God's grace. I recollect that while under the weight of spiritual sorrow for sin, I had many suggestions offered me, by way of compliments, corrections and encouragements, for my future prospects in life. I will only mention

some, to show how contrary nature is to God's work of grace and calling. When attending school, at about the age of fifteen years, I learned some pieces for rhetorical exercises. My uncle, then a professed Old School Baptist, desired me to speak for his entertainment. I complied with his wish, and received his compliments, in which he said I ought to learn well, for I might some day preach; and he suggested that I might improve, so as to help me. But I could not feel that that work was for me. At another time I attended a yearly meeting in Hillsdale County, Michigan, where I first met Elder John Fisher, (who afterward baptized me,) and he referred to me, as if to encourage me with the idea that I would some day preach; but it only grieved me. While attending school, at one noonday intermission I assumed the mock preacher, and personated the Methodist exhorter. This afforded me no satisfaction. At the close of one of the last school terms of my attendance, the paper of essays contained a prophecy of the future life of each scholar, under the title of "Twenty Years Hence;" and among the rest I was set down as a Methodist preacher. Now, in all these I place no confidence as to my call to the gospel ministry. I only refer to them as items amongst the absolutely predestinated events of all my life, by which I feel that God has given me to know how an Arminian preacher is called; and if I have no better call than these, I know by my christian experience and by the scriptural record that I have no part nor lot in the matter. These calls are tangible, prominent, and easily understood. But when I turn my mind to the mysteries of godliness, and to that higher, holier and more wonderfully manifested power of God's mysterious calling, I am made to discard every evidence derived from nature; and hence arise all the perplexities, tremblings, fears and sorrows on account of my part in that great and exalted work; great and exalted, because God alone doeth it. I will now try to relate such evidence as I rely upon in my own experience.

After I was made to see the majesty, glory and righteousness of God, I could not resist the expression and defense of that truth which had been revealed to me; and to prove that it was revealed, I tried to teach it to others, but failed to convince them. I remember one Mr. McClure, who labored for my father, whom I thought to convince of experimental and Bible truth, of the helplessness of man and the sovereignty of God. I read to him several proofs of the Bible doctrine of election and predestination, and so far in love and zeal was I imbued that I even wept; but I failed to impress him with the solemn and, to me, heart-comforting and cheering truth that I had learned, in opposition to all tradition and human effort. Thus I was taught that as I could not learn by study the sweet and holy influence of divine grace, so neither could I teach it; and yet I could not resist, in spite of all my

natural diffidence, the expression of that testimony wherever and whenever the subject of religion was introduced. But I sometimes met with some whose experience, like mine, led them to renounce the works of man entire. With such I had sweet comfort; but they were few then. So I often found myself holding lonely discourse on the theme of my heart, but whether vocal or not I dare not say; but so comforting was the holy reverie that I wished to be caught away from time's perplexities, annoyances and sins, and be fully blessed with the unmixed glory of so great and joyous a state. But I found myself still confined in a world of sin, and still amazed, annoyed and mourning on account of the oft-returning manifestations of an evil heart. So, in my deep anxiety to tell of the worth of Jesus, I found as much joy in the story of my own daily wanderings and sins. But I found the world as little inclined to hear approvingly of human depravity, as of the divine perfections and sovereignty. But none of these discouragements could prevent the deep ingrowth of personal interest in the daily experience of my mind, nor the oft-recurring expression of the same; in truth, I could not refrain. I did not choose to think myself a preacher; but I do not know that I have ever had brighter views, higher conceptions or holier thoughts since it has been my lot to bear that name. After uniting with the church I often felt a great relief while trying to relate to the brethren and sisters the exercises of my mind, in common with them all; but I did not presume to use a text, nor try to dogmatize, except as doctrine was connected with my experience. Indeed, I rather feared to express my views of doctrine in general discourse before the church, lest I should be set forward as a speaker, and in my privilege as a private member I felt ample liberty. I do not know that I ever had any desire for greater liberty. But in common also with experience and doctrine, the order of the church and the peace of God's people were wrought indelibly in my mind, and I was led to see that where God truly wrought the peaceful influence of his Spirit, it led his people to the peaceable fruits of repentance, and consequently of righteousness; and thus his peace prevailed and fellowship reigned as the heritage of his people. The influence of this feeling upon the formation of my views of order sometimes led me to act in cases of unfaithful members; but I then had no cause to bring any personal charge or grievance against any one. So weak and ignorant was I, that I could find no excuse to prevent me from recommending such to fill their places in the church, the place of my delight; nor dared I cease until they either resumed their walk, or else betrayed some hidden cause or error, resulting finally in their restoration to peace, or their exclusion from the church. In each ministerial service of my life, never have I felt to act in a voluntary or unimpressive way; but under a deep sense of weakness

and unfitness, so weighty were the matters of all church business and church service, that while looking at myself I dared not act. I cannot, therefore, give myself credit even for this precaution; for I was made to see that my natural temperament gave no explanation for the sobriety and weight of responsibility so impressed. This desire for true and unassumed peace has cost me many tears, so much so that when the doctrine, order or experience of God's people have been assailed, even by enemies, it has stirred the sacred emotions of God-given reverence within me; and when such as I had held as fellow-heirs would turn away for sensual gain, or cast opprobriums on the most consoling truth that had ever cheered my heart, I felt most keenly the bitter sense of all that those precious words and works of God would cost me to defend. Yet I felt that I must defend them by words of testimony and of truth, for on them alone I saw all my hope, and all the hope of man.

My calling, if God has called me to his service, is not only involuntary, so far as flesh is concerned, but compulsory. My pathway has not been of my own choosing, neither have friends often favored my prospects in the various changes of my life, neither have they been flattering for the future. I left my father's roof in view of all the consequences of the trials of his affection, and I have ever felt that the blessed privileges of the gospel of Christ are greater than all earthly enjoyments together. These things encourage me to hope that when I first began to bear my feeble part in the testimonies of grace, (and as those testimonies have never failed me,) my calling was of God. And as from the first the whole church sat in council at my ordination, and the whole church has thus far sustained my weak efforts in the gospel ministry, I am still occupying my little place as a witness of that sovereignty of grace that is just suited to my need, and to the need of every child and servant of God.

Dear brethren, you will see by this that I have dwelt more upon the power and effect of God's calling and grace upon my heart during the time of my early and later exercises in regard to the ministry, than upon the events connected with my public service. If you see fit to publish this, let me say to one and all that I have often been made to wonder why or how the brethren could endure me, since I am sensible of my own unworthiness and unprofitableness. I have nothing whereof to glory, save in the power and cross of Christ.

In humble gospel service,

A. B. BREES.

NEAR BENTLEY, Ill., Feb. 22, 1884.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose with this brief note a letter which I have just received from a dear sister, which letter speaks for itself. It afforded so much comfort to myself, I feel it should be published for the comfort and encouragement of others of the household of

faith. To me it is extremely interesting, from the fact that the writer was once a member of the same church (Providence) with myself, but has been absent from us in body, but not in Spirit, as her letter will show. I have not the sanction of the writer to have it published, but feel certain that she would not object, if you see proper.

Affectionately your brother in much affliction, but in hope of life eternal,
JACOB CASTLEBURY.

ALDA, Nebraska, Feb. 5, 1884.

JACOB AND PHEBE CASTLEBURY—

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your very welcome letter of September 30th came safe to hand. I was truly glad to hear from you, and to hear you talk of the immutable purpose, wisdom, love and power of our adorable Redeemer, all being engaged to save his people, the purchase of his blood. How it cheers our hearts, amidst the trials of this life, to hold converse with those who feel that on earth they have no continuing city, but are seeking one to come, whose builder and maker is God. Your letter was to me like a cup of cold water to a thirsty traveler in a desert land, for I feel the assurance that we have been taught by the same Spirit, even the Spirit that bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God. By this Spirit all the promises of the gospel are applied, through faith, which is given us, and we are for a time enabled to triumph over all our doubts and fears. But I am often walking in darkness, and my little hope seems almost gone. If I am indeed a child of God and a joint heir with Christ, it is not for any good in me, but all of free, unmerited grace, bestowed on one of the least of all. There are none near me with whom I can talk of things pertaining to the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for they do not understand the language of that kingdom which is a spiritual kingdom, and its subjects spiritual. The natural eye cannot see it. The natural feet cannot walk its highways, which are cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. The natural tongue cannot speak the language of that kingdom. I am surrounded by a people who bow down to their idols and worship the gods their own hands have made, ascribing salvation to their craft and their trade. A lying spirit is in the mouth of all Ahab's prophets. "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them." They teach that salvation is within the reach of every son and daughter of Adam, if they will comply with the conditions and accept of the terms offered in their gospel. It requires no grace or quickening power to enable the natural man to receive the doctrines of men; but the Spirit of truth the world cannot receive, for God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent of the world, and revealed them unto babes, for so it seemed good in his sight. How often since I have been in this far-off western home have I thought of the de-

lightful seasons which I have enjoyed with my brethren and sisters in Illinois, who contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Dear aged brother, it would be a great privilege to me to see you once more, and to hear your voice proclaiming the glorious truth of the gospel of peace. I love to contemplate the beauties and glory of the heavenly kingdom, which is not of this world; the perfect order of the church, the Zion of our God. All the materials of which it is composed are chosen and prepared by the great Builder. None are too long, nor are any too short, but every one is fitted to its place.

Dear brother and sister, we have many and severe trials and afflictions to pass through in our earthly pilgrimage, but they are all dealt out to us by the kind hand of our heavenly Father, who knows best what we need. Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." They are a part of our earthly inheritance. "We are troubled on every side, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I feel that I have great reason for thankfulness to God for the many blessings bestowed on one so undeserving as myself, in the years that are past and gone; especially for the sweet fellowship that I have enjoyed with his dear children for a little more than fifty-eight years, in all the different localities where I have lived in that time. When I look at myself, and remember my disobedience and ingratitude, and the many by and forbidden paths into which I have wandered, I am made to wonder why the Lord still so graciously remembers me. I have passed, through deep waters of affliction since I saw you. I have been called to part with my nearest and dearest earthly friend, my husband. He had not been able to do a day's work for three years before he was taken with his last sickness. On the ninth of August, 1876, he was suddenly deprived of the use of his mind. The doctor called it paralysis of the brain. He kept up for four weeks, but was not capable of taking care of himself. He was then taken down very sick, and for some days it seemed that each day would be his last; but he got a little better, and I began to hope; but the doctor said I must not hope, for he never would be up again. He lived in that helpless and suffering condition until the third of the next December, when he was called away, (in the sixty-eighth year of his age,) and I was left to bear alone the trials yet in store for me. That winter, after my husband died, I had a long spell of sickness, and was brought very low. I was not able to leave my room until the next May. I think that I was truly thankful to God for sustaining me, and giving me strength to take care of my husband while he lived. On the third of the next September my grandson

died, aged five years. He was very dear to me. I took him when his mother died. He was then seven months old. The next winter after he died I had another long spell of sickness (pleuro-pneumonia). I was brought so low that all hope of my recovery was given up by my physicians and friends. But through the mercy and goodness of God my life was spared, and I was permitted to return again to the walks of life, after being confined to my bed nearly four months. Then again, the next winter I had the lung fever, but was confined to my bed only five weeks. Since then my health has been very poor, and I have suffered much with sickness, but have been confined to my bed but a few days at a time. What is yet in store for me I do not wish to know, but I wish to leave all in the hands of God; for he is our refuge and our strength, a present help in time of trouble. I feel that I can truly say, in the language of the poet,

"Thy way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be;
Lead me by thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.

"Smooth let it be, or rough,
It will be still the best;
Winding or straight, it leads
Right onward to thy rest.

"I dare not choose my way;
I would not if I might;
Choose thou for me, my God,
So shall I walk aright."

I have not found any Baptists yet very near to me. I received a letter from brother Isaiah Waggoner, of Polk County, thirty-five miles south-east of Grand Island, stating that there are six or seven Baptists there, but no church. He preaches for them twice a month. I am eight miles west of Grand Island. I also received a letter from brother Eleazer Harryman, of Kansas, stating that there is a Baptist Church in Richardson County, Nebraska, near the state line.

Dear brother and sister, according to the course of nature our earthly pilgrimage will soon be ended.

"What are all our sufferings here,
If God shall count us meet
With that enraptured host to appear,
And worship at his feet?"

But I will close, trusting that you will pardon me for taxing your time and patience with so long a letter. May your last days be your best days. May your own souls be comforted with the same comfort wherewith you have comforted others. I am now in my seventy-fifth year. With much love, I remain your sister in hope of eternal life,

SARAH C. DODDERER.

OCOQUAN, Va., April 3, 1884.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—I have been thinking of a disease prevalent among our people in all parts of the country, and of which I have felt impressed, I hope of the Spirit, to write. The disease is called in Bible language *backbiting*; in modern language it can be called *tattling*, which is one of the mildest names given in our language for a dreadful complaint. I desire to write something of its symp-

toms, of its effects, and of the Bible remedies to be applied.

I will state, however, in the first place, that nothing in my communication is designed to refer to that proper and just criticism of the views and actions of brethren, when such criticism is clothed in gospel language, guided by gospel regulations, and directed for the good and welfare of Zion. The tattler, however, generally claims that this is his object. He professes great love and zeal for the cause, but unfortunately this profession is found mostly upon his tongue. James says, addressing the saints "scattered abroad," "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Again, "The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things." Solomon says, "Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips." I will now call attention to the symptoms of this dreadful disease, and will first remark that the disease is much more prevalent than some of us would suppose. A great many are afflicted with it who have no idea of the fact, for it is very deceiving. It is a contagious disease, and spreads rapidly. You are in danger, my dear brother or sister, of catching the complaint every time you listen to tattling. You go from it feeling worse for the interview. One or two tattlers can stir up confusion in a whole church. May the Lord deliver our churches ever from having more than this number in one church at one time. The disease arises from a poisonous condition of the tongue.—See James iii. 8. The tongue in a healthy state is a great blessing, but when in the condition described by James it is "an unruly evil." The symptoms of this disease are many. There is at first a restless disposition to attend to other people's business, to talk about the brethren. It is hard for him to keep silent under the circumstances. Insinuations drop from his lips. These symptoms are followed as the disease progresses by spells of vomiting, (*i. e.*, talking in an unguarded and improper manner about the brethren, or even about others). The individual is affected with a blindness of vision, which renders him incapable of seeing his own imperfections in their true character, and which magnifies the imperfections of others. Great pretensions of love for the cause of truth are sometimes made. The tongue seems to have entirely lost its balance, hung as it were upon a pivot, and running in every direction. It does not hesitate to obtrude itself into the most sacred things and attack the most honored character. I am writing now of the more advanced stages of this dreadful malady. The appetite for good gospel food begins to fail. Living on carrion destroys the appetite for more wholesome food. The imagination of the tattler becomes wonderfully excited. He imagines himself to be an individual of great business capacity, capable of attending to the business of a whole community at once. He

finds it a difficulty to retain anything that he hears; what falls upon his ear drops at once upon his tongue and out of his mouth. As this is a crooked path, it generally comes forth different from the way he heard it.

The effects of this disease are fearful, both upon the individual and upon the church. The whole church sometimes is in a fever of excitement, and no one can hardly tell what is the matter. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." There are envyings, debates, whisperings, tumults. The backbiter can never be a brother of much influence among the brethren. His wild, reckless way of talking, and defenseless positions, render him unsafe to counsel with or to confide in. This wild, reckless course of talking, if persisted in, destroys the force of what he says upon almost every occasion, and he soon finds that very little attention is paid by his brethren to his talk. Backbiting. This is certainly an unfair way of talking, to talk in the absence of an individual, to bite and devour the reputation and influence of a dear brother in such a manner, to unveil the most sacred things to the scrutiny of the ungodly as is sometimes done. The enemy of the cause rejoices, the brethren are made sad. Flee from such a course, my dear brethren and sisters, as you would from a viper. Truly it is "full of deadly poison."

But let us notice, in conclusion, the Bible remedies for this dreadful complaint. That dear old Baptist remedy, used with such great success among us in almost every other complaint, composed of everlasting love, grace and mercy, mixed with brotherly kindness, and tenderly applied to the part affected, does not seem to be the special remedy in some respects in this case. Too much tenderness in this disease is liable to fan the vanity of the afflicted one, because vanity is frequently connected with the disease. Besides, it is not easy to put a plaster upon the affected part, the tongue, nor yet upon the mouth. Paul, who is a very clear writer upon the nature and remedy of this complaint, recommends the rod under some circumstances.—See 1 Cor. iv. 21. Cleanliness is a great assistance in curing the complaint. Brethren and sisters should endeavor to be cleanly in their conduct and conversation. This is probably the reason that Babylon is never clear of the disease, because it is such a filthy city. Like some diseases that affect the body, it increases rapidly where there is much filth to feed upon. I do not think that I have ever known a worldly person to recover from this disease when it has once become rooted in the system. This is because of the pollution everywhere prevalent in the world, and which feeds the morbid appetite of the tattler. I have seen some poor, worldly creatures, in the last stages of this dreadful malady, who were pitiable objects. Shunned by all about them, they could find company nowhere. A vile flood of slander, envy and evil speech, which might be called "the black vomit," would stream from their

mouth at the least provocation. Of course no one would like to be in the way of such a stream. I am glad to know that the beautiful street of the new Jerusalem, "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," is kept clear of such company. But in noticing the remedies for backbiting, I would say that a rigid quarantine should be established against it among us. Brethren should use all possible exertions to prevent the disease spreading. Not only should this be done by pastor and deacons, but by any and all the brethren whenever opportunity offers. "The north wind," says Solomon, "driveth away rain; so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue." Faithfulness is one of the very best of remedies. The backbiter should be brought to see himself as others see him. He should be faithfully told of his fault. Perhaps this has never been done. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." Do not be afraid, my dear brethren, of being too faithful in this matter. Take the brother aside. Faithfully call his attention to his grievous sin. Do not allow yourselves to listen to backbiting without rebuking it; for in so doing are we not becoming transgressors? Let us watch over each other in this matter for good. Rebuke, good, faithful, gospel rebuke, is another excellent remedy. "Wherefore," says Paul, "rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith."

May grace, mercy and peace abound. The picture that I have drawn is of no fancy painting. I have written of stern, solid facts. I have written, I hope, in no captious spirit, but with the love of God in my heart, his solemn fear before my eyes, and the welfare of Zion the supreme object of all my labors. I feel to be a poor, helpless sinner, a "trembling wanderer in the dark valley of Achor." Grace alone can reach my case, and without it I am a wretch undone. "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Yours in gospel fellowship,
WM. M. SMOOT.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., April 10, 1834.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been thinking over some things connected with my early experience this morning, and feel like holding a few moments' converse with you about them.

As far back as I can remember anything, I recollect having an abiding consciousness of sin, and of my need of a Savior; but I did not, until after I was given faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, look upon these exercises of mind as belonging to christian experience. Since that happy day when Christ was revealed as the one all sufficient Savior, and my hope

began to rest on him, I have been led to think of many things in the experiences of my childhood as belonging to the way in which the Lord was leading me to himself. Those early exercises seem to me now to unfold into matters of greater meaning the longer I live. Many things which at that time I saw but little in, seem to me now to have been seeds of truth, which have since expanded and developed into abundance of fruit. I recollect looking upon christians as a happy people indeed. I used to read the narration of christian experience in the SIGNS, and a feeling almost of envy would be in my heart as I would contrast the happy state of the writers with my own; and I would think, Will such a happy lot ever be mine? I believe that I had mapped out the way in which christians travel, so that I thought I should know it as I traveled over it, if ever it should be my happy lot to do so. I had not known then that the blind must be led in a way that they knew not, and carried in paths which their feet had not known. I knew that I was not a christian, but I desired above all things to be one. I thought often if I should die I should be lost. Yet I believe that from the first I was more troubled about what I was than about what would become of me. I wanted to be holy. I believed that I could not change my own heart, nor beget righteous desires in my own soul; yet I felt that I wanted to be a good boy, to live like christians, even if I could not be one. I had a natural fear of lightning, and when a storm would arise I would cower and bow down in spirit, and grieve that I had been so bad, and promise God that if he would spare my life I would try to be better in the future. Yet I knew that outward correctness of speech and action was not sufficient, and that I needed a new heart, and so I was not satisfied with my own promises even at the time I made them. When some of my young friends would die I would think, I may be the next, and I am not fit to die; and so I would promise again to be and do better.

This state of things lasted up to the time when I received a hope, at sixteen years of age. There was also a feeling of hesitancy in speaking to any one of these exercises of mind; and in the two or three instances when I did, I was sorry enough afterward that I had done so. I have never been able to speak very freely of the exercises of mind that have seemed most precious to me. I cannot even now. And never have I been able to speak of any deep trouble or of any great joy at the time. Perhaps months afterward I could tell something about it; but seldom can I speak with freedom of them. There are hours of communion with God that I can no more think of telling, even if they were capable of expression, than I would think of telling abroad the endearments of home. I recall that once my mother asked me some questions as to my feelings religiously, which I could not avoid answering; but for months afterward

I would not allow myself to be left alone with her, lest she should question me again. I kept the Bible in my room and read it much, but if I heard any one coming I would throw it out of sight, and seem engaged in some other book or paper. I can to-day hardly tell why I should shrink from such conversation, but still it is true that I did shrink from it; and even after I had a hope it was long before I could speak freely of it. I think one of the many changing feelings of my heart was this, that every one at home, father, mother, brother, sisters, knew that I did not live like a christian, and if I spoke of those things I would seem to them like a hypocrite. They would stare and wonder to hear me speak of what I did not live out. In my early years, and it remains the same now, I could not disassociate a christian experience within and a christian life without; and I lived so little like a christian. I think this was one thing that kept me silent. And then the feeling of shrinking from exposing to the gaze of others my deepest, most sacred and precious thoughts and feelings, was in my way, and always has been since. I have always desired to express less than I felt rather than more. I never had the privilege of hearing the gospel preached until after I had a hope, except when so young that I could not remember it; and so I was alone in this sense also. I did not think any one was like me; and this, too, made me shrink from speaking of my experiences.

Yet in all these years I never had any doubt about the doctrine of grace, or as to where the church of Christ was to be found. I was surrounded with Methodists, Freewill Baptists and New School Baptists. There was no Old School Baptist Church within twenty or thirty miles. There were many who showed me kindness and attention in the years of my anxiety among all these above named people. There were some among them that seemed to understand my case, and that could tell the same things. A few I hold in dear and loving remembrance for their words of cheer and sympathy to this day, and yet I never for a moment felt that I could find a home among any of them. Grace kept me so entirely that I did not even desire to be among any but Old School Baptists. There were no allurements in that way to be overcome. Looking back over it all, I feel to-day like magnifying the grace that kept me, and finally gave me a home with the people that I love.

I remember, too, the feeling that led me to the church. I did not feel as some have felt, that I was compelled to come. I felt drawn, just as I would be drawn to an object that I love. I loved the people. I had a hope in Jesus. This I could not deny. I believed that it was the duty of all his children to confess him before men and to follow him in his ways. I had such a hope, and I desired to be his disciple; therefore I felt to go to the church. I was unworthy of a place among his people, and so I was

unworthy of the hope he had given me. I was and must ever remain unworthy of any good thing. This, therefore, should not furnish me an excuse for delay; yet I had many fears. I feared especially that I should fail to honor my profession. I might fail to live as I ought. I might bring some wound upon the cause. Sooner than do this I would never go to the church. But then was not the grace of God sufficient? If he had saved my soul from death, could he not also keep my feet from falling? And so I went forward, and was welcomed home to the church of God.

Growing out of all this past experience, I have had a tender feeling for the timid, the fearful, the weak, the ignorant. I have felt fearful of hurting one of the little ones that believe in Jesus. Though the reed be bruised and the flax smoking, I have desired to bind up and to heal. No one could well have life at all and be more ignorant than was I when I came to the church. How little I saw of the meaning of baptism! And I saw next to nothing of the meaning of the Lord's supper. I wished to receive these ordinances because Jesus had engaged in them, and had commanded them to be observed by his followers. I feel often as though I ought to be able to pity the weakest and most ignorant and erring; for none are more so than I. I have gone over this road halting, stumbling, falling, and yet the Lord has helped me, and I feel that to him all praise belongs.

I leave these thoughts with you, and remain as ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

FORGIVENESS.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Among other requests sent me by private letter of late, for my views on passages of Scripture, I received one during the winter from A. B. Lester, of Rock Falls, Iowa, for my views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Matthew xviii. 28-30. I have answered the most of such requests by private letter, but I shall try to comply with the above request through the SIGNS, by your permission.

The passages cited are a parable spoken by our Savior, or a part of a parable, setting forth the doctrine of forgiveness. Peter asked Jesus how often he should forgive a brother who had sinned against him; and Jesus said unto him, "Until seventy times seven." But we are not to suppose that our Savior intended this to be understood literally, as to the number of times we are to forgive the same brother, nor as excusing a brother for sinning; but to teach us to be ever ready to forgive the faults of our brethren when they confess them. He then puts forth the parable of the man who owed his king ten thousand talents, and had nothing to pay off any part of the mighty debt, amounting to two hundred and fifty million dollars in gold. The debtor does not

deny any part of the debt, or the just-ness of the claim, and the creditor orders him and his family sold, and the debt to be paid. As hopeless as the case was, the debtor in his deep distress did that which every poor, convicted sinner does, begs for time, with a promise that he would pay it all. He fell down before his creditor, saying, "Lord, have patience with me and I will pay thee all." The creditor, knowing the hopelessness of the case, and beholding the prostrate form of his servant, and hearing his pitiful case, was moved with compassion, and instead of executing the law in all its just rigor, and selling the debtor and his family, he forgave the whole debt, and released him from the legal claim. Thus, as an act of mercy and compassion, the king, of his own sovereign will, wiped out the mighty claim and loosed his servant from the debt. What joy must have filled the heart of that servant! The debt was so enormous, and so just, and he so poverty-stricken and hopeless, and to hear the words from his sovereign creditor, "I forgive thee all," was enough to fill his heart with the most profound gratitude. When our King presents his account against us, and begins to reckon up the claims of the divine law, and we are convinced of their justness and magnitude and our destitution of any power to satisfy its vast claims, we are ready to promise to pay all, and beg for time; but our case is hopeless in ourselves, and our Sovereign has convinced and humbled us. He, as an act of his own gracious will, speaks our pardon and sets us free. He forgave us for Christ's sake. He is just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus. A revelation of the pardon of our sins, and a manifestation of the compassion and mercy of the just and holy God, are calculated to melt the heart of the poor, guilty and enthralled sinner, and fill him with love to God and to his people; and a sense of the mercy and compassion of God to us, and the remembrance of forgiveness, should fill our hearts with tenderness and forgiveness toward our fellow-servants. "But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him a hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet and besought him, saying, Have patience with me and I will pay thee all. And he would not," &c. Instead of exercising patience with his fellow-servant, or forgiving the very small debt claimed, this ungrateful and unmerciful man heeded not the entreaties of his fellow, but cast him into prison till the debt should be paid. When the king learned of his unmerciful and wicked conduct toward his fellow-servant, he was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all his own debt. "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Here is surely a very important and solemn lesson for us as brethren and

fellow-servants of the King of saints. The first servant in the parable owed a mighty debt, and was penniless; and because he begged, the whole was forgiven him; but he would not forgive his fellow-servant the small amount he owed, nor shew him any mercy. And this will do well to illustrate the revengeful and unmerciful disposition of our fleshly nature. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matt. vi. 14, 15. The doctrine of forgiveness of sin, with respect to our guilt under the divine law, is a soul-enrapturing doctrine, as in this sense none can forgive sin but God only, and he can and does forgive for Jesus' sake. How forgetful of forbearance and love are we when we cannot forgive a brother his little faults, when we hope and pray God to forgive us all our black rebellions, and the sins of a lifetime. The apostle says, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. iii. 32. If a brother trespass against me, and says, "I repent," I should forgive him; but if his conduct has offended the church, or been of a public nature, so that the cause of God is reproached, or the church offended, he should go to the church personally and confess; or if too far away, or not able to attend in person, he should write to her; and if he give satisfaction she should forgive. But in every case of offense against the church, she must be the judge of the nature of the offense, and of the acknowledgment. There are sins that are unto death, (see 1 John v. 16 and 1 Cor. v. 1-5), and in such cases the offender must be cast out, but may after a time be restored.—2 Cor. ii. 6-8. But in all cases of church fellowship we should be kind and forgiving to one another, considering ourselves as liable to do wrong. A church may be remiss in the exercise of forgiveness toward a brother who has given offense, but she and her sister churches should be able to decide every matter. The spirit of forgiveness should be exercised by us as individuals and as churches as far as the Scriptures direct, and we should shew mercy if we expect mercy. I do not feel at liberty to judge the particular case in which brother Lester is personally concerned. These brief thoughts are submitted.

Your brother in Christ,
I. N. VANMETER.
MACOMB, Ill., April 9, 1884.

TRIVOLI, Ill., Feb. 23, 1884.

ELDER WILLIAM L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—When I met you at the Salisbury Association, in the year 1882, in our conversation I promised you that if the Lord enabled me to go to the church and tell of my hope, and be baptized, I would write and tell you about it. I will now in weakness try to comply with your request. I have often had a desire to write to you since I found a home among the Lord's people, but have

been kept from doing so on account of a feeling sense of my unworthiness and inability to write to the comfort of any one. I take up my pen now to write because I feel it to be a duty I owe to you, together with the little church of which I have become a member.

When I went before the church I was able to tell them but very little. It seems to me that I gave them very little evidence of a hope through grace, and I have often wondered why they received me. A few months after arriving home from our visit in the east, I wrote to you of some of my wanderings, and of the way I hoped the Lord in his mercy had led me, over the signature of "A Friend," which you saw fit to publish in the SIGNS for August 15th, 1883. I felt greatly relieved in mind after writing to you, although I put off writing as long as I could. It seemed to me that I must write or talk to some one of the state of my mind. These things were upon my mind continually. The more I tried to get rid of the impression to tell of my little hope, the greater my desire increased to do so. I had wandered, like the children of Israel, in the wilderness, for nearly eight years, and in all this time I never told any one of my feelings. I was often made to exclaim,

"Like one alone I seem to be;
O is there any one like me?"

Often I felt so low down in the depths of despair as to come to the conclusion that what I had experienced was all a delusion, or if what I had experienced was a hope at all, the way would be opened for me to make it known, or to tell it to the church; for I greatly desired to be numbered among the Old Baptists, which I regarded as the only true church. But I had not the faith given me at that time to believe that God would in his own time bring me to Mount Zion, to that land of promised rest. There were times in my wanderings when I was glad that no one had ever said anything to me in regard to these things, for I felt that I was deceived, and did not want to deceive others. I had come to the conclusion to keep all these things to myself as long as I could, and try and feel satisfied with the crumbs that fell from the Master's table; and I felt unworthy of this favor, of feasting upon the crumbs that fell from my Master's table. I felt it to be too great a blessing for one so vile as I. At times, while listening to preaching, I could not help but rejoice in the glorious truth set forth. It seemed to suit my case so well, and that alone was food to my soul. Thus time passed on for about two years after I received a hope, when I very often (and indeed most all the time) seemed cold and indifferent in regard to spiritual things. I could not realize the enjoyment that I once did. I mourned because it was not with me as in days past. My mind was most of the time taken up with the vanities of the world. I would often feel guilty and condemned for my waywardness. But the Lord suffered me to wander in this way, with only now and then

a ray of light to keep me from despair, until the fall of 1882, when the Sun of righteousness seemed to arise with healing in his wings, to renew my faith and strengthen my hope. My mind was again led to the church. My greatest desire was to go to them, and tell them that I desired a place among them. I prayed to God that if it was my duty to be baptized, he would open the way and give me strength to obey his commands.

Thus time passed on until the third Saturday of last October, the time of our yearly meeting, when I was enabled to tell the church of the way in which I hoped the Lord had led me. When the invitation was given for those who wished to talk to the church, I felt that I could not stay away any longer. I thought,

"I can but perish if I go;
I am resolved to try."

To my surprise I was received, and was baptized the next day by Elder S. Ketchum. The day I was baptized seemed to me to be the most beautiful day I ever saw; all nature seemed to be singing praises. At the water's edge I felt calm and happy. I believe the happiest moments of my life were when our beloved pastor led me down into the water; and I thought, What a blessed privilege, for one so unworthy to be permitted to follow the Savior down into the liquid grave, there to be buried with him in baptism. When I came up out of the water I felt as though I would never see any more trouble. It seemed as though my troubles were all ended. But alas! how soon doubts and fears arose in my mind. I feared that I had deceived this dear people; and I thought if they could see me as I saw myself, they could have no fellowship for me. But I feel, though unworthy a place among them, that I have found a home with the people I love. I am made to rejoice that I have been brought into the heavenly Canaan, the land of promised rest, after those weary years of wandering. I realize daily my inability to walk as a Christian should, and I know that unless the Lord keeps me I shall utterly fail; for in him is all our strength, and without him we can do nothing.

Elder Beebe, this is at your disposal; do with it as you think best, but do not publish it if it will be the means of crowding out more profitable matter. May you long be spared to stand upon the walls of Zion, to proclaim salvation unto her people, is the prayer of one of the very least of all, if one at all. Yours in hope,
JENNIE VARNES.

BATH, Ind., Oct. 12, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been on my mind ever since I was baptized, which was one year ago the first Sunday in this month, to write my Christian experience (if indeed I have any), and send it to you; and if you think it will not crowd out better matter, publish it; but if it will, lay it aside, and all will be right with me. It has rested very heavy on my mind at times, but more of late. I have tried

hard to banish it from my mind, but all in vain; so I thought I would write, and perhaps writing would relieve me. Yet I fear it will be of little interest (if any) to any one. I have read the experiences of some in the dear old SIGNS, who thought their experience was very small, but I feel that mine is still smaller. It does me good to read them, and it makes me feel that I would like to see them, and talk with them. Although they are strangers in the flesh, yet I hope we are not strangers in the Spirit.

I was born in Franklin County, Indiana, March 7, 1863. I have had serious thoughts, at times, about death, from my earliest recollection, and often wondered if I would go to heaven when I died, or what would become of me. And then I would think that if I would be a good girl I would go to heaven. I thought when I got older I would go to work and get religion, (but I thought I never would join any church), for I thought I had something to do. But these thoughts were only momentary until May, 1882, when I was at Indian Creek yearly meeting. Elder Harvey Wright was there, and on Saturday he said something (I do not remember now what it was) that seemed to rest on my mind, and I could not get rid of it. So I thought I would go to work and get religion, and at work I went with all my might. I got along well for two or three weeks, when it seemed my works all failed, and now what could I do? I could only cry to the Lord to have mercy on me, a poor, miserable, undone sinner; for it seemed that every evil deed I had done was ever before me, and O the anguish of my soul! I cannot find words to express what were my feelings. I lost my appetite for food, and I could hardly sleep or work. I verily thought I was doomed to die, and that hell would be my portion. The first Sunday in June following, my sister was baptized, and O how lonely I felt! I felt that I was left alone, without a friend on earth or in heaven. O how I did long to be baptized that day; but I felt too sinful and unworthy. I kept on in this way for some time, until I thought there ought to be a change; but I could not see any, so I came to the conclusion that it was all a delusion, and I would dismiss all from my mind and think no more about it; but all in vain. The more I strove, the heavier the weight. I then prayed that if it was of the Lord, that he would show me my true situation. I have since felt that he did, although it came in a different way from what I expected. But he says, "I will lead them in paths they have not known." I was taught to fully realize my situation as a sinner before a just and holy God. I almost wished sometimes that I could die, for I felt if I should offer myself to the church they would not receive me. Time passed on, and I kept looking for something great to transpire, that would make me feel sure I had received a hope. But alas! I found that I could not have things my own way, which is all well

enough. I lost all confidence in an arm of flesh, and left it all with Jesus to do his own will, and thought I would try and be content. But I still find myself out of the way, and wishing that I had a brighter evidence. I try not to complain, but I often find myself at it. I find that I cannot do the things I would; for when I would do good, evil is present with me. I finally made up my mind (the Lord willing) that I would go to the next church meeting, and tell the church what I hoped the Lord had done for me; and if they saw fit to receive me, all right; and if not, all right. I went, but when I got there it seemed I could not speak. They asked me a few questions, and I answered them as well as I could, and to my surprise they received me. O how my voice sounded when I did speak! It sounded almost like thunder in my ears. I then felt that I had got home; but after I came home I felt that I had deceived the church, for I had told them so little; but if I had deceived them, it was not intentional, for I do not want to deceive any one. But I could not help rejoicing, for it was a happy time to me. I have had many doubts and fears since, and I am so hard-hearted and sinful that I sometimes feel that the church would be doing right if she should exclude me. But I must say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I have written more than I intended, and trusting you will pardon me for intruding upon your dear paper, I will close by asking you to remember me, a poor sinner saved by grace, at the throne of mercy.

From an unworthy sister,

LYDIA BARNUM.

BLACKLICK, Ohio, Jan. 8, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—When I wrote my last letter, I thought I would never try to write again; but it has pleased God to spare my unprofitable life until this present moment, for which I feel thankful; and it has been on my mind for some time to try, with the help of God, to write once more. I feel at times very much cast down, and fear that I am deceived, and have deceived the people of God. I travel in darkness, and think it is almost mockery to try to ask God for mercy. But to whom can I go for help, but to Jesus, who hath all power in heaven and on earth? His arm is strong, and mighty to save. He died to save his people from their sins. But am I one of that number? This question often comes to my mind, and it sometimes causes gloomy feelings; but at other times I can rejoice in my glorious Redeemer, for his great mercy in calling me from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. All glory be to his holy name.

"While he affords his aid,
I cannot yield to fear;
Though I should walk through death's dark
shade,
My Shepherd's with me there."

Christ is the door, and also the good Shepherd. He says, "I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." Strangers may cry, "Lo here," and, "Lo there;" but we heed them not, for they are strangers, and we cannot understand them. We do not want to get before the Shepherd, but we want to follow after him. Strangers call us "Hard Shells," and many other names, but what need we care for that? for "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. viii. 31-34. May God help us to follow the good Shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep. He laid down his life that he might take it again, and he now liveth forevermore. Death has no more dominion over him. He once suffered, the just for the unjust; he was spit upon, smitten with a rod, mocked, wore a crown of thorns, was nailed to the shameful cross, and said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. The law's demand was satisfied, and all that he died for will be saved; not one can be lost, for his precious blood was never shed in vain. He said, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." His wills and shalls are as sure as the throne on which he sits; for he is God, and changes not. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." Bless the Lord, the power is his and the glory shall be his.

"Then give all the glory to his holy name,
To whom all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his
fame,
And crown him in each of your songs."

As ever, yours in hope,

LUCINDA ROCHELLE.

NIGHT AND DAY.

IN his epistle to the Thessalonians, the apostle presents the difference between the believer and the world, by the words, night and day, light and darkness. Addressing his brethren, he says, "Ye are all the children of light, and children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober: for they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. But let us who are of the day be sober." In the creation God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And in each of the six days there was an evening and morning; but on the seventh day God rested from all his work, and there is no mention of

evening and morning, it being typical of the rest that remains to the people of God, and represents an eternal day. The believer can sometimes say,

"Roll on, ye wheels of time,
Fast as ye bring the night of death,
Ye bring eternal day."

The night precedes the day. "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, is light sprung up." The legal night being past, and the glorious gospel day ushered in, the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in his wings. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The convicted sinner experiences a long night, in which he is trying to satisfy the law; but when he is enabled to look to Christ for all, light breaks in, and joy fills his soul, and adopting the language of the psalmist he can say, "Weeping may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning." "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee." "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." The word day has more than one signification: it may mean a dispensation, or period of time, as the gospel day. "Now is the day of salvation." "Abraham rejoiced to see my day." The blessed Saviour was betrayed in the night, but rose triumphantly the third morning. And the women came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Therefore deeds of violence are generally done in the night. Light maketh manifest. The evil hate the light, but the righteous cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest. May the Lord enable his children to walk in the light, and finally reach that heavenly clime where there shall be no night. "And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."

J. P. CONAWAY.

ARCADIA, Ohio, Feb. 12, 1884.

OATLAND, Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more I am permitted to address you through the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been most of my time in darkness, my life is so dark and gloomy.

"If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

The Lord has blessed me with many near and dear friends, and my home is a peaceful and happy one. But, brethren, why is it that I am made to mourn, and groan with unutterable groanings? The things of this world may do for a little while, but what are they to the poor, tried child of God? All is like man, vanity, and less than vanity. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye

shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," said Jesus to his disciples. O how different are the prayers of the poor, tried child of God, from the prayers of a natural man. A child of God is a poor, helpless one. He has tried all the help of man, and has exhausted all his strength, and is made to look unto God for help, and to desire the things which the Lord has already prepared for him. The Lord blesses his poor, ignorant creatures far above what they can ask for; for they are so little, and know so little, that they do not know what to ask for. The Lord's people are entirely in subjection to him. So, if you desire to pray, that desire is given to you by the Lord. Or if you desire to be reconciled to the Lord's will, or cease from complaining or murmuring, these desires are from God. The men of the world say that man has power to help save himself; but that is not so. My brethren know by experience that they have been brought so low down that if it depended on them to do the least thing, they would never be saved.

Brethren Beebe, if you wish, you may publish what I have written; if not, it will be all right. May the good Lord guide you, and strengthen you to perform all that he has called you to do.

Brethren in the east or west, north or south, I would say to you, Think it not strange if you have sore trials, troubles and afflictions to pass through; for God's people have to be tried in the furnace of affliction. You will not have one trial too many, but you will have trials enough to teach you that the flesh is weak, and that there is no good in man.

When it is well with you, remember a poor, weak and sinful one, as I know myself to be.

EPPA NORMAN.

BIRDSVILLE, Ky., March 31, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I wish to say to the brethren that I am, and have been for some years, scarcely able to go about. My present address is Ashley, Illinois, where I would like to hear from our dear brethren of the eastern associations and Canada, for I have not forgotten them, nor my visit among them which I enjoyed so much.

JOHN H. GAMMON.

J. F. JOHNSON'S WRITINGS.

THE plain binding of Elder J. F. Johnson's Writings is now exhausted, and therefore orders for that style of binding cannot be filled until further notice is given through the SIGNS.—ED.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of G. BEEBE'S SONS.

ELECTION OF GRACE.

"EVEN so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."—Romans xi. 5.

The principle which produces all manifest opposition to the truth of salvation by grace, is enmity against God. Proud carnal nature cannot admit the absolute sovereignty of the Creator, because it is impossible that God should be perfect in unlimited control of all things without necessarily denying that sovereignty to man which the natural mind claims to possess. In consequence of this fact the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God; and the eyes of reason are blinded by pride, so that it is impossible that the natural man should receive the things of the Spirit of God. Hence, the efforts of the carnal mind have been directed since sin entered into the world, either to overthrow the truth of divine sovereignty, or so to modify that principle as that the will of man shall be superior to the purpose of God. This is the basis of all false doctrines.

The doctrine of "the election of grace" is so clearly and prominently taught in the inspired Scriptures that it is not usual for it to be directly denied by those who claim to regard that testimony as true. The devices of the adversary are designed rather to pervert the truth, so that while seeming to admit what is plainly declared in the record, he would rob that testimony of its essential meaning, and represent election as depending upon the will or actions of the sinner, thus giving to man the sovereignty which that theory denies to his Maker. As in the deception of Eve the old serpent admitted what she knew God had said, but denied its truth, so he is ever ready to pervert the words which God has spoken, and by artful devices he seeks to overthrow the faith of the saints, and rob them of their rest in the sure mercy of God. Every one who has been taught of God the exceeding sinfulness of sin must know that there is no possibility of justification by any merit in himself. To all such, therefore, the sovereign favor of God is the only hope on which they can depend. Hence they must sink in despair if that favor is only attained by merit in themselves. Indeed, the doctrine of salvation by grace cannot be true if the election of sinners to that salvation is in consideration of anything in them deserving divine favor; for there is no grace in saving those who justly merit salvation. Such could not in fact be saved at all, since they would not be lost, and justice would shelter them. But since sin brought condemnation and death upon the fallen race of man, none of the children of Adam have been found free from that awful curse. So, when Jesus came into the world

it was not to keep any of them from being lost, but "to save that which was lost."—Matthew xviii. 11. This salvation is never revealed to any sinner until he is brought to know his lost state; and such are taught that it is entirely by grace they are saved, so that they have no room for boasting of merit in themselves.

In the effort to rob the saints of the strong assurance given them in the infinite grace of God, their enemy has perverted the meaning of the words which God has recorded for their comfort; so that when they read in the Scriptures such expressions as that under consideration, they are told that the choice of sinners to be saved was determined by the fact that God foresaw who would believe in the Lord Jesus, and therefore elected them to salvation. This is represented as the "election of grace." By this crafty device the sovereignty of God is utterly denied, and the will of the sinner is presented as the decisive power in his own case; thus ascribing absolute sovereignty to the will of man, while the will of God is held to be subject to the choice of the guilty sinner. So far is this from being "the election of grace," that there is neither grace nor the election of God in the case at all. It is a contradiction of terms to speak of conditional grace. With equal propriety might we speak of *cold heat* or *dark light*. Grace is unmerited favor. It is bestowed by the sovereign will of the Infinite Judge upon justly condemned sinners, without any claim upon his goodness and mercy. If on any ground they have deserved his clemency, then there is no grace at all in that favor which they receive as the just reward due to their merit. And if there was anything in the objects of the love of God by which they were better than others, then there was no election of God in their case, but they must ascribe their salvation to that superiority in themselves by which they merited divine approval. The just sentence of condemnation in the Scripture has "concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."—Gal. iii. 22. Therefore there was no good thing foreseen in those who were included in "the election of grace," as the cause of that choice. So Paul says we all "were by nature children of wrath, even as others."—Eph. ii. 3. The will of God is not dependent upon the events developed in time; but he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." He has revealed that will both positively and negatively. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John vi. 39. "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."—Matthew xviii. 14. Here is manifest the strong consolation for the chosen remnant, which is found in the infinite and immutable sovereignty of God in "the election of grace." It would

OBITUARY NOTICES.

take away all comfort and consolation from every conscious sinner if he could be convinced that "the election of grace" was based upon some good thing foreseen in the objects of that choice. Each of them must confess with Paul, "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do."—Romans vii. 18, 19.

If belief in the Lord Jesus were a condition to be fulfilled by the sinner as the cause of his being elected to salvation, then that belief is something good which marks him as better than those who do not believe. But Paul has forever refuted that false assumption.—See Romans iii. 9-18. They who are embraced in the election of God are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." None but those who were lost could have needed redemption; and even they could not have been redeemed unless their Redeemer had a rightful possession in them before they were involved in sin and death. If the Lord Jesus had bought a people to whom he had no previous title, that purchase could not be called a redemption. Instead of the subjects of salvation being elected because they would believe, it is because they were elected or chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world that they do believe, and are holy and without blame before him in love; and this is "According to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."—Eph. i. 4-6. If our acceptance were the result of our believing, or of anything meritorious on our part, it would not be to the praise of the glory of his grace, nor would it be "in the Beloved." It would then be in ourselves, and would not be of grace, since it would be only our just desert; and justice could not allow that we should be condemned while we merited acceptance. But this conditional system affords no comfort to the conscious sinner, since he feels that his condemnation is just, and all his righteousness is as filthy rags. His only hope is in "the election of grace." None ever rest in this hope until all other refuge has failed them; and this rest is always glorious to every one who is poor, needy, and destitute of other confidence. This is indeed "the glory of his grace." While the proud, self-reliant and boasting Pharisee, rich in his own righteousness, can find no rest in the sovereign grace of God who saves them that were lost, the poor know the joyful sound of salvation by grace, without merit on the part of those who are saved. To these the gospel is a feast of fat things.

"The pained, the sick, the dying, now
To ease and health restored,
With eager appetites partake
The bounties of the board."

In the text the election of grace is said to be "a remnant." This illustration is often used in the Scriptures

to designate the chosen people of God. Not only does this expression signify that the subjects of divine favor are a little flock, but the certainty of their preservation is implied. Peter says they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; and Paul records the assurance that all things are for their sakes, "that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."—2 Cor. iv. 15. To this remnant the sovereign election of grace is exceedingly important as the very foundation of their hope of everlasting life. If this could be destroyed, they have no comfort. But the text assures us that it is according to the election of grace that there is a remnant. It is not according to the willingness of sinners to believe the gospel, but alone "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."—Rom. ix. 11. In the wisdom of God the chosen people whom he designed or predestinated to salvation were not left to the uncertainty of their own carnal will to choose between eternal life and everlasting destruction. When as yet there was none of them, all the members of Christ were written in the book of God's eternal purpose. This is the election of grace. They were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. In accordance with this choice they were redeemed from condemnation by the death of their Savior, whose precious blood cleanses them from all sin. That salvation which is secured in Christ Jesus for them is the producing cause of their believing in him. Hence their election is of grace alone; and their obedience of faith in believing is the consequence and not the cause of their election.

The inconsistency of the doctrine of election because of the sinner's believing the gospel is manifest from the fact that believing is not dependent upon the will of man; it is the effect of evidence. Even in natural belief this is known to be true. Without evidence it is impossible to believe anything, and when the evidence is presented it necessarily produces belief, without reference to our will. Faith is the evidence which produces that belief which is peculiar to the subjects of the election of grace; and that faith is the gift of God and the fruit of the Spirit, as is plainly declared in the Scriptures. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—Heb. xi. 1. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."—Gal. v. 22, 23. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. Paul says, "All men have not faith."—2 Thess. iii. 2. Then it necessarily follows that such as have not this evidence cannot believe. This is the distinction established by inspiration. "He that believeth on the Son of

God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."—1 John v. 10. By this text the subjects of "the election of grace" are plainly separated from those who seek to be justified by their own works. Our Lord Jesus himself assigned this as the reason for the unbelief of those Jews who did not receive him, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you."—John x. 26.

While every one of this "remnant according to the election of grace" has the witness in himself, it is only in the light of the manifest presence of their Lord that they are able to see that evidence. Walking in darkness they are often tried by cruel doubts and fears, causing them to question the reality of their hope. Then their conscious unworthiness is presented as evidence against them, and they are ready to sink in despondency; but the ever-present Comforter delivers them out of their distress by showing their hope secured in the election of grace. Thus their confidence is revived, and they are saved by hope from falling into despair. These trials are appointed to the chosen remnant in their sojourn here on earth, and all who follow the Lord must endure them in the measure which he gives. In these afflictions they are partakers of the sufferings of their Redeemer. But there are seasons of darkness endured by the children of God when they have forsaken his law, which are visited upon them as chastening. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" in the visitation of his rod upon our transgressions; yet even this is more tolerable than the exemption from chastisement which marks those who are not recognized by our God as his children. Therefore, while the saints are admonished to despise not the chastening of the Lord, they are exhorted not to faint when they are rebuked of him. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 6. Under this severe experience the truth of our text affords consolation to the saints, and the inspired word directs them still, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." Thus the doctrine of divine sovereignty contained in the text under consideration is not a dry theological dogma; but while it embraces the foundation of the hope of every quickened sinner, it is also full of comfort and everlasting consolation to the afflicted and poor "remnant according to the election of grace" in all their seasons of sorrow while sojourning in this valley of Achor, (trouble,) which is given them for a door of hope. The power of God alone, which makes darkness light, can give the assurance of hope through this dark vale. Sustained by his sovereign grace, his chosen people can glory in tribulation, and sing praises in the night of deepest affliction.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Being on a visit to my daughter, Mrs. W. W. Duley, in this county, I am requested by her son, James M. Duley, to inform you of the death of his mother, our dearly beloved sister, **Elizabeth Duley**, who departed this life at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. John Wood, near Inka, Miss., on Friday, March 7, 1884. Our dearly beloved sister was the daughter of Deacon Wm. Wood, and Penniah his wife, of time honored memory among the Old School Baptists of the old Red River and original Little River Associations. She was born in Christian Co., Ky., Nov. 7, 1812, consequently she was in the 72d year of her age. She intermarried with Lloyd Duley Esq., of this county, in 1841, and was the mother of four children, all of whom survive her, though in a scattered state. Mr. Duley died of flux in 1861, leaving her a widow, which she remained during life. Our dear sister, after her marriage, joined the Presbyterians, her husband being of that order; but she was never satisfied while with them, believing strongly in the doctrine and principles as taught in the Bible and by all consistent Old Baptists; and she never became satisfied until she related her experience, and was baptized in the fellowship of the church. She lived in a country where none of these people lived, but the Lord stirred them up to a sense of their duty, and they sent to Muddy Fork Church for a counsel of brethren to form an arm of the church there, and to receive members. Being at that time pastor of Muddy Fork Church, they requested me to go with them, which I did, and received and baptized several. After this the church at Zion was constituted by Elder Fulkerson and myself, and we at their request ordained our dear brother, James B. Hardy, as their pastor. The church still exists, though they have lost several by death and removals. They are surrounded by many enemies; but if the Lord is on their side, what can harm them? I became acquainted with our dear sister forty years ago, while visiting at her father's, and found her sound in the faith, and all through her life she was a pattern of piety and good works, strictly in a gospel sense. She rejected the innovations of the modern means party, contending that she was saved, not by any means of men, nor of her own, but alone by the eternal love of God to a poor, helpless sinner. She was a kind and affectionate mother, and her children will sadly miss her, while the church at Zion feel that they have sustained a heavy loss; but we confidently believe that it is her eternal gain. Sister Duley died away from home. She had been in feeble health for some time, and thought that the climate of the south through the winter would restore her; but alas! it acted the reverse. She was taken violently with consumption of the bowels, and sank into the arms of that dear Savior whom she loved and adorned in her profession. Her son was sent for, but did not arrive until after her death; but before she departed, like Joseph, she gave commandment concerning her bones. She was brought home and laid beside her husband, until the trump of God and the voice of the Archangel shall call forth their sleeping bodies, when they shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body; and in the language of one of old, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." May the Lord in mercy look upon us in this dark and trying day, and may we be prepared to stand before him in that day when he shall make up his jewels, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in affliction,

JOHN H. GAMMON.

BIRDSVILLE, Livingston Co., Ky.

Jonathan W. Harvey departed this life on the 25th of March, 1884, aged 70 years, 11 months and 15 days. He was a consistent and highly esteemed brother, having been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church nearly forty years. His membership had been with the Indian Creek Church, Monroe Co., W. Va., for the last twenty-eight years. He was ever ready to give counsel when asked, and was quite as ready and willing to receive it. But God has seen fit in his divine will and purpose to take him from our midst, and we shall no more see brother Harvey's

silvery locks in our congregation in this world of sin and sorrow. But we fully believe that we will see him in God's glorious kingdom above, where sabbaths never end, and where congregations never break up. We can only say, The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. On the morning of brother Harvey's death he ate his breakfast as usual, walked about a quarter of a mile, to where his nephew lived, and very soon began to feel badly. He said, as he did not feel well, he would walk back home. His niece offered to go with him, but he said that if he died on the way it would all be right. He reached home with considerable fatigue. His bed was prepared for him, he pulled off his boots, lay down on the bed, and died instantly. Brother Harvey married Polly Keaton, daughter of Johnsen and Elizabeth Keaton, and lived in peace, both being members of the same faith and order. They shared each other's troubles and joys, and not a jar or hard word was known to arise between them. About two years and four months previous to brother Harvey's death, his dear wife was called from the shores of time to try the realities of the unknown world. She had been afflicted with a cancer on the face for many years, which destroyed one of her eyes, and finally destroyed both eyes. She was hardly ever known to complain or murmur until the time of her dissolution came. We were all watching with great anxiety around her dying couch, and I shall never forget brother Harvey's looks when she breathed her last breath. He turned to me and said, "Gone, gone." I could only bow my head in resignation. Sister Harvey never was the mother of any children. They were married in their youthful days. She died at the age of sixty-years, leaving four sisters and two brothers to mourn their loss.

Farewell, friends, yet not farewell;
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's time, a little space.
When ye come where I have stepp'd,
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know, by wise love taught,
Here is all, and there is naught.

JOHN MANN.

HUNTER'S SPRINGS, W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request it becomes my duty to send for publication a notice of the death of sister **Mary A. Jones**, who fell asleep in Jesus on the 17th inst., at five o'clock in the evening, at the residence of her son, in Henry Co., Ky. She went off quite suddenly, without a struggle or a groan. A few days before she left us, she sent for me, and told me she felt like she was not going to live long, and she wished me to preach at her funeral. I did so. She was born April 4, 1797, and if she had lived to see the fourth of next month she would have been eighty-seven years old. She joined the Old School Baptist Church at Sulphur Fork, in 1823, and lived a faithful member until her death. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS for many years. She has left one son and his wife, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren, the church at Sulphur Fork, and many friends, to mourn their loss; but they sorrow not as those that have no hope, for we believe that our loss is her gain forever. The text used on the occasion was Psalm cxviii. 15, 16. May the Lord bless the dear family she has left, and prepare them to meet her in a better world, if it is his will, for Jesus' sake.

ALSO,

PLEASE publish the death of brother **Thomas J. Randell**, who died at his residence in Henry Co., Ky., on the 7th day of December, 1883. He was born December 25, 1795. He was nearly 88 years old. He joined the church at Sulphur Fork in 1815, and remained there until his death, a faithful, upright member. Mark the upright man. The end of that man is peace. He served the church as deacon for many years. He leaves his dear companion, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, with the church at Sulphur Fork, and many friends, to mourn; yet we sorrow not as those that have no hope. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. May the Lord bless the dear relatives, and

sustain the dear companion (with whom our brother lived so long) by his grace, in her declining days. May her last days be her best days. I was called upon to preach upon the occasion, and did so; from Rev. xiv. 13, to a large and attentive congregation, after which the remains were interred, to await the moment when this mortal shall put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying, that death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours in hope,
N. A. HUMSTON.
TURNERS, Henry Co., Ky.

Mrs. Sallie Simpson died at her residence near Clarksville, Howard Co., Md., Dec. 17, 1883, in the 84th year of her age. There was no special disease, but just the wasting away and exhaustion of old age. Her maiden name was Green. She had never belonged to any church, but had been a Baptist in sentiment for many years. She was naturally of a timid, retiring disposition, and was not given to talking about herself a great deal. I have been there once or twice a year for twelve years past, and have always heard her express her satisfaction in the preaching of salvation by grace. Her views of herself were very humble and lowly, and her whole trust was in the power of her Savior, and in his atonement. The last time I saw her, a few months before she died, she said the Lord had given her great peace, and she was only waiting until the Lord should call her. She had said to her family all through the fall, that she would pass away before Christmas. She survived her husband ten years. She expressed no fear of death. On Friday before her death she bade all good-by that were present, and said, "Good-by for the absent also." She then said, "Heaven is near at hand." She seemed conscious until near the last, and then fell asleep. I was called to attend the funeral on the 19th, and tried to comfort the living from the words in 1 Cor. xv. 55-57. She has left three sons and one daughter, with many friends; but they sorrow as those who have hope. Peacefully she lived and peacefully died. May our life and death be the same, if it be God's will. As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., April 4, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It becomes my painful duty to send you the obituary of my wife, **Mary Durland**, who died at her sister's, in Warren Co., Ill., our home being in Mahaska Co., Iowa. We were called to visit her sister, who was low with heart disease. Two days after our arrival my wife was taken violently sick, and in three days died with inflammation of the stomach. She died on the 19th of February, 1884. Her sister died twenty-two days after. My wife had her right mind, and was reconciled. I brought her remains back to Iowa, and she was buried by the side of four children and her father and step-mother. She was the daughter of Abner Charles. She was born in Ohio, and married in Indiana, in 1842, moved to Illinois in 1843, where we both joined what is known as the Campbellite Church. I soon became dissatisfied with my home, and went and offered myself to the Old Baptists, near Greenbush, Illinois, and was received. Brother Charles Vanderver was pastor. In 1855 we moved to Iowa. I now have a standing with the Baptists in Pleasant Grove Church, Iowa. My wife did not go with me to the Old Baptists, but she was a kind, lovely wife and christian, and let her light shine. She leaves one sister, two brothers, eight married children, thirty-two grandchildren, and a poor, frail, disconsolate husband, to mourn, but not as those that have no hope. Her age was 60 years and 4 days. I will be sixty-four the 12th of next August. I think the time of my departure is close at hand. Dear brethren and sisters, pray for me, a poor sinner, believing Jesus died for such.

B. DURLAND.

DIED—April 6, 1884, sister **Elizabeth Oliver**, wife of Deacon M. D. Oliver, aged about 64 years. She joined the Baptist Church about

forty years ago, since which time she has been a devoted member, and a lover of the doctrine of salvation by grace. It can be truly said that she died in the full triumphs of faith, of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. In her death the church lost a loving sister, our brother lost a beloved companion, and his children a loving mother. She was beloved by all who knew her. Her disease was dropsy, from which she suffered as no tongue can describe; but she bore it with christian fortitude, desiring to be absent from the flesh and present with the Lord, which is far better. The writer of this notice tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing family and friends, from the words, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die," &c., after which she was interred in the cemetery, there to rest from toil and pain.

"Dearest sister, thou hast left us,
Here our loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God who hath bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal."

I pray God to bless and sanctify this deep affliction to the good of the sorrowing family and friends, and prepare us all to pass the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil.

WM. MORPHEW.

WOODBURN, Clarke Co., Iowa.

DIED—At the residence of Mr. Harry Clay, in the city of Lexington, Ky., March 1, 1884, after a brief illness of pneumonia, **Mrs. Tebitha Scott**, relict of Benjamin Scott. Sister Scott was a widow about thirty years, left in charge of youthful children. She battled nobly with life's uneven way, unswerving in the right, to raise, educate and set them out in the world, of whom there remains but two, a son and daughter. Strong in her religious convictions, punctual in her attendance on worship and religious duty, she died as she lived, a consistent and faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, of Particular Baptists, at Bryan's Station, in her 78th year.

ALSO,

DIED—September 15, 1883, in Lexington, Ky., sister **Pamela Bowman**, aged about 70 years. She was a widow, without children, a good and faithful member of the church at Bryan's, and in her love for the cause of Christ she willed the church at Bryan's one hundred dollars.

ALSO,

DIED—March 9, 1884, **Miss Margaret Tankersley**, in her 96th year. She was one of the oldest members of Bryan's Station Church. Thus have passed away four of our female members since the association in September, 1883.

J. W. ROYSTER.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please publish the death of my dearly beloved husband, **David Rigg**, who departed this life December 31, 1883, in the 36th year of his age. He never united with any church, but he was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was a dear lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. His sufferings were very great, but he was never heard to murmur. His health was very bad for two years before he died. A while before he died he said that unless he got better very soon he could not be with me very long. I told him I was in hope that he would get better and live with me and the little baby a long time. "Yes, Lila," he said, "if it is the Lord's will. I want to get well, but our Savior suffered and died on the cross, and I ought not to murmur." He said there was one time in his life that he felt like he would join the church, "but," said he, "I did not then, and I never have felt worthy since." He said he never had received such a bright hope, nor saw things like some could tell, but said, "I feel like I love all of God's people, and I love everybody that talks like they have the Spirit of God." I feel that he is with his dear Savior now, for as he fell asleep in Jesus, O what a heavenly smile was on his face! And while I am left to mourn my loss, I feel that he has gone where there is no pain nor sorrow.

MARY D. RIGG.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS:—I send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of my father, **Joseph Hughes**,

who departed this life March 30, 1884, in the 82d year of his age. He was born in the city of Londonderry, Ireland, Oct. 18, 1802, emigrated to the city of Fredrickton, British America, in 1821, was married to Ann Linn (who was also born in Ireland) in 1825. He resided with his family in British America until the year 1831, when he came with his family to the United States.

MARTHA L. NOBLE.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Tuscarora Church, Juniata Co., Pa., to convene on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May (14th), 1884, and continue three days.

The brethren and friends wishing to attend this association will take tickets for Mifflin Station, Juniata Co., Pa., where they will be met on Tuesday at all trains stopping there, and also on Wednesday morning. Those coming from the south will take the Baltimore R. R. to Harrisburg, and from thence the Pennsylvania Central R. R. to Mifflin, Juniata Co., Pa. A cordial invitation is given to all desiring to attend, and especially brethren in the ministry. The association will be held one and a half miles from the depot.

ARNOLD VARNS, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (21st), 1884, and continue in session three days.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 28th), and continue until Friday evening following.

G. M. FETTER, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Middletown & Walkkill Church, in the village of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (4th), 1884, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association will be held, providence permitting, with the church at Riker's Hollow, Steuben Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (11th), 1884, and continue in session three days.

J. C. BEARD JR., Clerk.

THE Turkey River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will be held at the house of Paul Sohner, five miles north-east of Waterloo, Blackhawk Co., Iowa, beginning on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1884, and continue three days, (being May 31st, June 1st and 2d), to which we cordially invite our brethren, especially our ministering brethren.

Those coming from the east and southeast will be met about noon; those from the west at 5:00 p. m., all on May 30, at Waterloo.

PAUL SOHNER, Clerk.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with Eagle Creek Church, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 6, 1884.

Those coming on the cars will be met at Findlay, Ohio, on Thursday, June 5, at the Lake Erie & Western R. R., also at the branch of the I. B. & W. R. R. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

THREE DAYS MEETINGS.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS:—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish in the SIGNS that a three days meeting will be held, providence permitting, with the Frying Pan Church, beginning on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1884. The meeting will close on Monday, in time to take the afternoon train to Washington, so that time will be ample to get to the Baltimore Association. A general

invitation is extended to our ministering and other brethren.

Those coming to the meeting will take the train leaving both Washington City and Alexandria at 7:20 a. m., Saturday, May 10.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., March 31, 1884.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Sylvester Hassell 6, J M Ossmon 2, Joseph H Stone 2, A J Russell 2, Henry Cameron 2, J L Hughes 6, Wiley Mayes 2, H B Howard 4, Mary Marsh 2, C W Kemper 2, W H Darland 2, Henry Moore 2.—Total \$34 00.

CHURCH HISTORY NOTICE.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—From the liberal manner in which the subscribers have responded to my request, I am glad to be able to inform the brethren that, with the permission of providence, the publication of the Church History at no very distant date is now assured. Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, our oldest publishing house in the United States, have the contract to publish the book. I hope that all the remaining subscribers, who have not yet remitted the amount of the subscription (two dollars per copy), will at an early day send on the proper amount, in postal order or registered letter to the brethren Beebe, so that the latter may issue the whole edition of three thousand copies at one time.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., Feb. 7, 1882.

"DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES."

PART I.

Truth versus Error.

PART II.

A controversy between the Rev. W. H. H. Hays, who is a modern disciple of Andrew Fuller, of Missionary Baptist notoriety, and the author, upon the fundamental doctrine of the Bible and church identity.

PART III.

A "Diagram of the Churches," illustrated by a supposed interview between the Arminians' all-wise and omnipotent God of the universe, and his Arminian ministers.

PART IV.

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We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size of the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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We do not mail a receipt to a person sending us a remittance for several subscriptions, his own being among them, for when his credit is given he can know that his money was received.

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Our subscribers will confer a favor on us, and enable us to keep their accounts with more accuracy, by observing the following instructions:

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LOOK TO YOUR DATES.

Opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper will be observed a date, this date denotes the time at which such subscription expires, and when a remittance is made to renew the subscription the date should be watched to see that it is forwarded to such time as the remittance pays to, and if neglected, by informing us, it will be corrected. By this method each subscriber has his own account, and can see that the proper credits are given for his remittances.

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AGENTS

FOR THE

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

ALABAMA—G W Norris, T J Norris, Wm E Freeman, H J Redd, J R S Bullard

ARKANSAS—A W Bacchus, G M Hartfield, A Tomlin, S P Burrell, J H Freeman, J P Haley, H G Thweatt

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1884.

NO. 10.

POETRY.

THE EVERLASTING MEMORIAL.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I will offer for your columns a piece of selected poetry, that I judge is suitable for your poet's corner. While I adopt and endorse it in the main, I have chosen to select, because I could not produce anything as good.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

SRATE ROAD, Del., April 7, 1884.

Up and away, like the dew of the morning,
That soars from the earth to its home in the sun;

So let me steal away, gently and lovingly,
Only remembered by what I have done.

My name, and my place, and my tomb, all forgotten;

The brief space of time well and patiently run;

So let me pass away, peacefully, silently,
Only remembered by what I have done.

Gladly away from this toil would I hasten,
Up to the crown that for me has been won;
Unthought of by man, in rewards or in praises,

Only remembered by what I have done.

Up and away, like the odors of sunset,
That sweeten the twilight as darkness comes on;

So be my life, a thing felt, but not noticed,
And I but remembered by what I have done.

Yes, like the fragrance that wanders, in freshness,

When the flowers that it came from are closed up and gone;

So would I be, to this world's weary dwellers,

Only remembered by what I have done.

Needs there the praise of love-written records,

The name and the epitaph graven on the stone?

The things we have lived for, let them be our story,

We ourselves but remembered by what we have done.

I need not be missed, if my life has been bearing

(As its summer and autumn moved silently on)

The bloom, and the fruit, and the seed of its season;

I shall still be remembered by what I have done.

I need not be missed, if another succeeds me,
To reap down those fields which in spring I have sown;

He who plowed and who sowed it is not missed by the reaper;

He is only remembered by what he has done.

Not myself, but the truth that in life I have spoken;

Not myself, but the seed that in life I have sown;

Shall pass on to ages, all about me forgotten,
Save the truth I have spoken, the things I have done.

So let my living be, so be my dying,
So let my name be, unblazoned, unknown;

Unpraised and unmissed, I shall still be remembered;

Yes, but remembered by what I have done.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HERRICK, Bradford Co., Pa., April 3, 1884.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—Your letter was a comfort to me, although it was written in sorrow and loneliness of soul and anxiety of mind, for the nature of your sorrow and the direction of your anxious thoughts are sure indications of divine life within. None have such feelings of unworthiness as you express, such longings after holiness and the favor of God, but those who have that life which is the light of men.—John i. 4. "All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."—Eph. v. 13.

You ask me to give my views on Acts xiii. 38, 39, 46, and are willing I should give them through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, only withholding your name. This portion of Scripture, you say, "seems to charge the guilt of not receiving everlasting life, or believing, home upon the rejecters, as if they had power to accept, and in consequence, 'Lo, we turn to the Gentiles.'" You repeat such expressions as, "If ye believe not, ye shall die in your sins;" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved;" and then you ask, "Is there anything I can do towards effecting my soul's salvation, which I am unwilling to perform, and be lost in consequence? My desires are likely of a selfish character, and my attachment to the Old Baptists of a transitory, natural affection to the cause, and dear friends with whom I was raised. Unless the word of God come with power, 'and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance,' all externals are mere shadows, which will vanish in the trying hour." These expressions of yours strongly remind me of my own state of mind for some time before I received assurance of a hope in the Lord, and I feel inclined to write a little concerning my thoughts and experience on this subject of belief; and through what I may be enabled to express of my own feelings, the Lord may be pleased to give you understanding of the Scripture which is the subject of your inquiry. I have but little time for writing; and when I do find myself at leisure my mind is often in a cold or distressed state, in which condition I do not often venture to do more than perhaps express my on present feelings. When I have both opportunity and liberty of soul to write, I desire to write upon such subjects and portions of Scripture as are at the time impressed upon my mind, which generally are such as have

been applied to me with power. Within the range of my own experience I feel a degree of safety and comfort; outside of that I do not feel either.

Like you, I was questioning for a long time whether there was not something for me to do in order to secure the love and favor of God. I had come to feel that I had no power to do anything meritorious in his sight; but often the question with me was whether my inability did not arise from unwillingness, and from an opposition to holy things that I ought to and might overcome. I somehow hoped that grace might be given me to overcome all that inability, and enable me to perform what was necessary to be done in order to be saved. That was my idea of salvation by grace. To the very last I thought that if I was ever saved it must be by something that the Lord should enable me to do. I had, it seems, almost or quite given up all such hope, when the hope of salvation came to me in the Lord's way; not as having made myself righteous, and so worthy of it, but as a poor sinner, still as undeserving as ever. One morning, while meditating upon my sad condition, the words came with power into my mind, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," and at once my soul felt the holy assurance that Jesus died for me. It was as unexpected as when the lame man at the pool of Bethesda heard the words of Jesus, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." I believed in Jesus Christ as my Savior, a thing I could no more have done before that power was given than I could have commanded the light to shine out of darkness. It was as though the sun had arisen upon me at midnight, and I can never express how sweet and restful and healing to my poor soul were his gracious beams. He was soon hidden from my sight by heavy clouds, and I remained so long in darkness that I ceased to believe that the Sun of righteousness had ever arisen upon me, until he appeared again as unexpectedly as at the first, as the Prince of Peace, filling my soul with that "peace of God that passeth all understanding." But to-day, notwithstanding all the darkness and bitterness of soul that I have felt, the sins and vileness that have oppressed me, I have to say with thankfulness and praise, my Sun has never yet gone down.—Isaiah lx. 20.

Your question has recalled to me my thoughts and feelings of the old time: "Is there anything I can do

towards effecting my soul's salvation?" It is the question of the jailer in another form, and of all poor sinners who feel their condemnation: "What shall I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," was then and is yet the answer. And what is it to believe? Is it a work to be accomplished by the creature? If so, how can I do it? When I lie weak and full of pain upon my bed, how can I believe that I am well and strong? When clouds and darkness cover my sky, how can I believe that the Sun of righteousness is shining upon me? I find that belief is not a voluntary act of the mind, but a state or condition produced by evidence. Faith is the only "evidence of things not seen" upon which true belief in regard to them can be founded. The jailer saw himself a sinner justly condemned. The wrath of God was upon him. He was lost. His sins were not only feared and hated as the cause of that wrath of God, but they were inexpressibly obnoxious to him in themselves. He loathed them. He loathed and abhorred himself. We know this because such is the effect of the fear of God which he puts in the heart of his people.—Jer. xxxii. 40. This fear is the beginning of wisdom.—Psalm cxl. 10. Without this fear none can hate sin or feel himself lost, for "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."—Prov. viii. 13. Until the Lord has begun the good work of grace in the heart by planting this fear there, none can depart from evil, nor even desire to do so; for "By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil," and "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."—Prov. xvi. 6; xiv. 27. Where this fear does not dwell there can be nothing that will please the Lord, nor even a desire for his favor, for "The fear of the Lord is his treasure."—Isaiah xxxiii. 6. We know therefore what it was that caused the jailer to cry out, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And we know also what it was from which he desired to be saved, because Jesus came to save his people from their sins, (Matt. i. 21,) and that which he has done for them and has in store for them they shall hunger after and earnestly inquire for.—Ezek. xxxvi. 37. Now the awakened sinner must struggle for salvation, as a drowning man must struggle for life, even though he see no prospect of being saved. If he knew what to do he would at once do it; but he does not know. At this time of his extremity he sees Paul and Silas, the prisoners under

his care, to be servants of God, and to them he appeals. But what an answer is given, "Believe!" Can belief change facts and circumstances? Can belief cause salvation? No, belief has no such power. It is not a cause but an effect of salvation. "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." What new and wonderful and glorious preaching was this to the poor jailer and his household. We may well think that they forgot themselves and their distressed and lost condition as that blessed name of Jesus, in which alone is salvation, was proclaimed, and the clear and glorious doctrine of God preached, and his eternal purpose unfolded, and the grace which was given in Jesus Christ to all the chosen people of God before the world began declared. And as the apostle spoke of his cruel death which he suffered because of our sins and transgressions, and of his glorious resurrection for our justification, and of his exaltation with the right hand of God to give repentance unto Israel with the forgiveness of sins, and of his sweet mercy which is freely given to the humble and contrite souls, how the hearts of the penitent jailer and his household warmed with love and swelled with holy gratitude and praise. He "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." This was no work of his, no duty performed to save himself from hell. Far from it. The light had come, and he had eyes to see it. The Sun of righteousness had arisen upon him, and his poor, sin-sick soul rejoiced in the healing power of his wings. He felt no opposition arising in his heart against the precious, God-honoring doctrine of election, predestination and salvation by grace, which Paul so loved to preach, but a sweet assurance of its truth, and a holy love for all that pertained to the blessed name of Jesus. It was the work of God.

Yes, indeed, I do believe the doctrine you preach, and rejoice in it, whatever may become of me. I do believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is a joy to my soul thus to believe; but what shall I do to be saved? This is all. This is itself salvation. Faith has come to you, that faith which is the work of God, "the fruit of the Spirit" within you, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The man who has the evidence is a believer. As soon as the subjects embraced in that evidence are presented and explained, he is a conscious or manifested believer. Thus the blind man, whose eyes Jesus had opened, was a believer when he experienced the power that gave him sight. Afterward Jesus said to him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" He said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe?" "And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." Then he was a conscious believer. In this sense Paul and Apollos are "ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man."—1 Cor. iii. 5. God has given to our faith the

revelation of divine things in our experience; and then when the minister of the gospel presents the same things out of the Scriptures we believe them at once, because we have the evidence or witness in ourselves, and had already felt their power before we thus heard of them. Thus we are constantly hearing new things by the ministry of the word, which we at once believe because we are believers.

One meets a man as he journeys, and hears him speak, and notices his peculiarly attractive countenance, and sees him exhibit great strength and wisdom, and receives help from him when all other help had failed, but does not know his name. Afterward he hears one speaking of a certain celebrated man by name, and describing his appearance, his acts and his wisdom, and at once he recognizes the description as that of the man whom he saw; and he rejoices in the knowledge that the great man is the friend he has already met, and he says, "I believe your testimony, for I have seen that man myself, and have witnessed the same things." So of Jesus. He reveals himself to the soul; and when after that we hear him preached, he is to us "the power of God and the wisdom of God," because we are believers. The Jews did not believe when he was preached to them, because they were not believers. They had not faith. They were a fleshly people whom the Lord chose, and to whom the law was given by the hand of Moses, that it might be openly and abundantly made manifest that "by the works of the law no flesh could be justified," "that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world brought in guilty before God," and that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."

These Jews esteemed themselves highly as the people of God, and regarded themselves as true worshipers, and as occupying a place of honor before him, while in truth they were enemies to him and his ways. Jesus came as the true Light, and he must first come unto his own according to the flesh, that they might be manifest as not of God by receiving him not.—John i. 11. When the apostles were sent forth to preach they were commanded to preach first to the Jews, that they might manifest their own condemnation by putting the word of God from them, and persecuting those sent unto them, thus giving judgment against themselves as unworthy of eternal life.—Acts xiii. 46; Matt. xxiii. 34, 35. They were not condemned for not believing, but their unbelief in and rejection of the gospel manifested their condemnation. The light does not cause objects to become black and vile, but manifests the character of such objects which the darkness had kept from view. The Lord had long ago declared that he would work a work in their days that they should in no wise believe though a man declare it unto them.—Isa. xxix. 14. Now the apostles must first preach the gospel unto them, and bring forth before them this prophecy, that it might be for a testimony against them that they were

the people referred to. Not one Jew believed *as a Jew*, that is, because of his fleshly relationship to Abraham. Then they turned to the Gentiles, "the ends of the earth," unto whom the prophetic declaration was that Jesus should be for salvation; and among them the apostles found a recognition of the light, and an evidence of belief, on the part of "as many as were ordained to eternal life."

My dear friend, I desire that you might know what a wonderful thing it is to be a believer, as the apostle desired for the brethren at Ephesus. To believe, about which many talk so lightly as a work that the creature can and must do, is nothing less than to experience the exceeding greatness of the power of God, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.—Ephesians i. 19. Your being raised among Old Baptists might cause you to be drawn toward many of that people naturally. Some are so drawn on account of natural ties and associations who give no evidence of divine life; though for the most part relatives and even children turn away in their feelings from Old Baptists, as such, when they fully see what the doctrine is which they believe, and how unpopular they are. But being brought up among true believers will never cause one to believe and love the truth, nor will it cause him to feel anxious about his state as a poor, lost sinner. There is a great difference between a natural belief in the letter of sound doctrine, and a true spiritual belief; and also between a natural affection for the people of God on account of relationship and association, and a love to them for the truth's and Jesus' sake. The one who believes with a natural belief, and who is drawn with a natural love to the Old Baptists, as you fear may be your case, is satisfied with himself and his condition and prospects for heaven. His belief causes no soul affliction, no trouble on account of the vileness of his heart and the sins of his life, no fear that he may be dealt with according to his sins, no sense of unworthiness to be in company with the least of the saints of God, no earnest seeking after God, no humble cries to him for mercy and salvation. Where these things are in the heart there is a true belief in God which is his workmanship; and when Jesus appears to our faith so that our belief embraces him as our righteousness and salvation, then we are filled with all joy and peace in believing, and abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.—Rom. xv. 13. These very anxieties of your soul, and your fear of deceiving the people of God, and your shrinking with a sense of unworthiness of their favor and society, all are but marks that strengthen my assurance that you are a subject of grace. The very feeling expressed in the words, "Marks of grace I cannot show," which is so often mine, is itself a mark of grace. But Jesus only can give that assurance to your poor, troubled soul and mine, and this he

does in his own good time and way; and when he does it our comforted and rejoicing souls arise to his most dear and blessed name in thanksgiving and praise.

How many times, as we journey on in our mortal pilgrimage, we receive again that sweet comfort from our dear Lord; and it is always new and as much needed as at the first. The more you become acquainted with the inner life of those you now know to be the Lord's manifested church and people, the more you will see the likeness between their daily experiences and your own. The other day, as I was reading some communication from one of the saints, all at once, through something that was said, the thought that Jesus was able to do exceeding abundantly above all that I could ask or think, able to forgive all my sins, able to overcome all my vileness, able to clothe such a sinful worm as I in righteousness and holiness before God, came into my mind with a power as new and wonderful as though I had never known it before. I cannot tell what comfort it gave me to think that he had "power on earth to forgive sins." The way it came into my mind, the knowledge of that power seemed a sufficient assurance to me. It would almost seem that, after all the wonderful manifestations of his power and sweet mercy in my behalf, I am still tempted to doubt that power upon every new view of my own depravity, tempted to question whether a holy and just God can be my Savior. But in his own time he shows me again that he "has power over all flesh," that he is "the power of God unto salvation," and then how my heart rejoices and rests in him. So from time to time the clear sunlight of his truth and love drops down with divine power among the shadows of doubt and fear, the struggling thoughts and dark perplexities that fill my mind, throwing a sweet radiance around in the darkness, and enabling me to say with the psalmist, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul."

Truly your friend,
SILAS H. DURAND.

OBLONG, Ill., Dec. 26, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I feel thankful this beautiful day that God is still mindful of me. Though weak and unworthy, yet through his providence I am numbered among the living. I have been much afflicted for a number of years, and have thought at different times that I must soon pass away; yet for some purpose I am spared, and for what, or why, I know not; for in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. If I am a saint, surely I am the least of all. Though many doubts and fears arise, and dark clouds hover over me, yet amid them all I feel that I have a hope which this world can neither give nor take away. I have had a desire for some years to tell of some of my travels and the dealings of the Lord with me.

I remember, when but a youth, of

being stricken down under conviction. It was the first time I ever tried to pray, except formal prayers, which I had heard some training their children to repeat. Formality can never change the heart, and such prayer has no more efficacy than the reading of a school-book. Prayer must come from the heart. This, I trust, I learned from experience. I was once quite an Arminian, for I thought I could get religion whenever I wanted it. I had a time set in the future when I thought I would get religion and be good, much better than some people that I knew, who made a profession. But O how weak and frail is nature! How mistaken I was! O what a heavy heart! What mountains of sin surrounded me, how dark and dreary everything appeared, and how much I desired to get by myself, in some lone and secret place, where none but God could see or hear, that I might pour out my heart in prayer to him. Oft did I seek the lonely grove and try to pray; but it seemed that my prayers were as chaff, and only came from the lips, not from the heart, and I was only getting worse and worse all the time. In this way I continued for months, seeking rest but finding none. Then there seemed a voice saying to me, "The prayer of the wicked availeth nothing." I thought this was Scripture, and tried to find it, but could not. Then I tried to quit praying. I thought it was all in vain for me to pray; yet my desire was that the Lord would have mercy on me. I continued in this way for a long time, and I knew not what to do. I tried, alas! but all in vain. My works were as filthy rags, and I thought it was useless for me to pray. I continued in this way for a time, thinking that I would try to be contented, but I could not. My mind would wander and rove, and my heart did ache, and I could not help it, and I knew not what to do. But I want to say, with a thankful heart, dear brethren and sisters, that I did believe there was a God who had all power in heaven and in earth, and that there was a Jesus, the Savior of sinners; but I could not believe that he was my Savior. Thus time passed on for some years. I was very much troubled at times, but could not get relief. In the year 1855, October fourth, I was called to witness a sad and memorable event, which is fresh in my mind to-day, and I feel will never be forgotten; that of the death of a dear brother, who passed away very suddenly. This sorrow, with my other trouble, appeared to be more than I could bear. When I was called to the bedside to take the last farewell look at that dear departing brother, I felt that my heart was almost broken, and the thought came to my mind, Shall we meet in a better world than this? I felt that I was unprepared, and that he was in the hands of a just God. I prayed fervently that the Lord would take him to himself, and that he would prepare me to meet him in the better land. He died on Sunday and was buried on Tuesday. We could not bury

sooner, on account of sickness, and my prayer was continually that the Lord would deliver me from the condition which I felt myself to be in by reason of sin. The next morning after my brother was buried I felt so changed, so light and free, to what I had before, it seemed that old things had passed away, and behold, all things had become new. The beautiful hymns that I had sang before as I would a play-song, now had great meaning and beauty in them; and the Testament, that I had taken to school and read as I would a spelling book, now seemed to present itself in a different way from what it ever had before, and my desires were very much changed. I wished to be in christian society, but I did not feel to rejoice as some do, nor even as I did afterward. I had a desire to belong to the church, but did not join the church for two or three years.

In the year 1857 I was married to my first husband, Mr. Jones, and moved to Cumberland County, Illinois. In 1859 we joined the Freewill or Separate Baptist Church, and were baptized; but I was soon dissatisfied. My mind became confused, and I got into trouble, and wanted them to exclude me; for I did not believe their doctrine, nor could I go with them in point of order. But I remained with them two or three years. In this time my mind became so dark and beclouded, and so much confused, that I concluded I had been deceived, and I was in great trouble and distress of mind. My sins like mountains round me rose, and everything I had ever done seemed to appear before me, to distress me more and more. I thought of the language of the woman at the well of Samaria, for it seemed to me that all things had been made known unto me whatsoever I did. O that dreary time I never shall forget. I tried to pray, but could not. I went to meeting, but still got no relief. I then sought the lonely grove, and prayed to God that if I had been deceived, he would undeceive me, and teach me to know him, whom to know is life eternal, and give me to feel and to realize that I was accepted of him. But my prayer was only as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. I felt miserable. I thought I had been deceived, and was without hope, and no friend on earth could comfort or cheer me on my dreary way. I felt that there was no mercy for such a rebel as I was. I felt horrible indeed. I thought my time on earth was soon to be closed, and that my doom was sealed. The Baptists were then having a protracted meeting. I had attended their meetings regularly from the time I had joined, unless providentially hindered, but this time I did not want to go; yet I did not want my husband to know it, for I had always been so ready to go that I feared he would think strange of me. He got ready, and I went, without saying anything about staying at home. They had a very warm meeting, but it did me no good. I was very anxious to get home, but when meeting was dismissed they per-

sueded us to go home with old sister Lemmon and stay until after night meeting. I dreaded for the night meeting to come on, for I began to think that my time was up. I slipped away from the company and went off in the woods to pray, or to try once more to pray. I cannot tell how I felt, for I was so miserable that I did not want to be in company. I thought if I was at home I could get out by myself and pray to the Lord, and he surely would relieve me. The time came for the meeting, and they had a very warm one, but there was no joy for me. I had given up all hope. When meeting was over I do not know just how I got to the wagon and got in. We started for home, and as soon as we got a little way my mother-in-law and some of the others began singing, "Jesus my all to heaven is gone." They also sang the chorus, "Prepare me for the judgment day." I never shall forget it, for the very breathing of my soul was that I might be prepared for that day; yet I could not see how or why I should ever be prepared. I can never express the horror of that gloomy night. I could not speak a word for a short time, and I verily thought my doom was sealed, and that I should never get home; that the adversary was right over my head, and would take me as I was and drag me to torment, there to dwell with devils forever. I had my babe in my arms, and I thought I must put my arms up and tip my chair back a little, and that was the last I knew for a short time. When I came to myself they had stopped the wagon and had quit singing, and I was standing up in the wagon, praising God at the top of my voice. I did not know where my babe was, nor what had taken place. My sister-in-law had my babe, but I do not know how she got it, for I never asked her anything about it. But there was one thing I did know, and that was that a change had taken place with me. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." But it was not long until I was again in doubt and fear; and I have ever since been wandering around in this wilderness of woe, trying to live as best I can.

In the year 1862 I got a letter of dismissal from the Freewill Baptists. I then lived out of any church for some time, as I did not feel worthy to belong to the church. I read the Bible, and the more I read the more I believed the Old Baptists were right. Soon after I got my letter from the church my husband went to the war and was killed, and I was left with my babe to do the best I could. I had no way to get to meeting, only as I could get a chance, and that was very seldom. When the meeting days at Grand Prairie would come, where my parents held their membership, my mind would be there, and I wanted to be there; but I seldom had the privilege. I often went to other meetings, but I could not

enjoy myself like I did among the Old Baptists. It was some twenty miles to the nearest church, so you see it was very inconvenient for me to attend. I must confess with shame that I became very negligent and cold, and did not watch over myself as I should have done, but was careless, and living in disobedience, doing many things that I ought not, and leaving undone many things that I should have done. But I was made to suffer for my disobedience; for you know that the promise to the disobedient is stripes and chastisements, while the obedient has the promise of being blessed. The Lord has said that he never will leave nor forsake his children, but I often wonder if I am one of that number.

"Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?
"If I pray, or hear, or read,
Sin is mixed with all I do;
You that love the Lord indeed,
Tell me, is it thus with you?"

But notwithstanding all my wanderings, I was at last made willing to go to the church called Grand Prairie, and there tell the brethren and sisters what great things the Lord had done for me. I told them that I was a curious creature, that I had two experiences, or had been deceived, which no doubt was the case; for I do not believe in falling from grace. I told them if there were any objections among them whatever to receiving me, to just cast me aside, and all would be right with me; for I did not feel worthy of a place among them, although I so dearly loved them, and had long desired to be one of their number. I had made my life miserable by living in disobedience. To my surprise I was received into their number, and baptized, and have been a member among them ever since. I have sometimes been on the mountain high, but often, very often, in the valley low. My dear brethren, when I consider what it takes to constitute a true christian, I feel unworthy of a name so great; for in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. When I would do good, evil is present with me. I am all weakness, and without God I am nothing. I have no confidence in the flesh, and I read in the Bible, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." We learn that there is no soundness in man; that he is full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores, from the head even to the feet. He cannot direct his steps, much less his thoughts. They are said to be evil, and that continually. We see that man is dead; but Jesus, who died upon the cross, can give life to the dead sinner. He can all our sorrows heal. He can make the wounded spirit whole. He can lead the blind in ways they have not known, and in paths they have not trodden. Then, dear ones, in view of all the weakness and depravity of man, and the great love wherewith God loved us, what manner of creatures ought we to be? Ought we not to love him supremely, and to praise him for his goodness,

and love one another with a pure heart fervently, and meet often and talk one with another, exhorting one another to love and good works? I have not anything good to say of myself, but let me exhort the dear ones who have a hope in Christ to take up their cross and follow him, through evil as well as good report, that they may enjoy the blessing that is for the faithful and obedient children of God. Do not live out of duty, and in disobedience, as I have done, for there is no enjoyment in this. I know my life thus far has been one of sorrow, affliction and care; but amid all the changing scenes of life I feel that God has ever been mindful of me, that his loving-kindness has been with me from the earliest dawn of my life even until now, and I know not how to be thankful enough for all that he has done for me. I am yet a poor sinner, and will continue so while in the flesh; but my greatest desire on earth is that I may live more humble, more obedient, and be more free from sin.

"This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not.
My grief a burden long has been,
Because I could not cease from sin."

But it will not be long until we will be released from this house of clay, when we will cease from sin, our toils and cares shall end, the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary shall be at rest.

MARY A. BIGGS.

CEDAR COUNTY, Iowa, March 26, 1884.

DEAR EDITORS:—The following letter was sent me, with permission to dispose of it as my judgment should dictate. It contains what I understand to be a christian's experience, which I think will interest the saints generally, especially those of the church of which she was a member. I therefore send it to you for publication, if you think best.

Yours truly,

M. COUNTS.

MT. STERLING, Ohio, March 1, 1884.

DEAR SISTER IN THE FLESH:—(and, I hope, in the Spirit) I take my pen to write of what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me. This I promised you long ago, but I have felt it such a task that I have put it off from time to time, hoping I might have more ability to write. But at present I feel my weakness to a great extent. I feel myself ignorant, and unworthy of this holy cause. You said you had lived a gay and thoughtless life. I was not so gay, but I must have been very thoughtless indeed, to live to be nearly forty years old before awakened to my sins. I never had any very serious impressions before this, but always thought we must be changed; and I remember having often expressed myself, that when my change came I might unite with some church. But how little did I know how that change was to come. You are aware that about the time mentioned above I became a subject of very poor health, often suffering severe spells of bodily pain. From some cause I was led to see my lost

and ruined condition, feeling my burden so heavy and my affliction so great that I feared death, thinking my doom was endless misery. After every severe attack I thought I would reform myself, as I thought to bring myself in favor with God. But I found I could do nothing. If I tried to offer up a petition, I could only say, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." I read my Bible, but all I read condemned me the more. Often I would lay my Bible down, thinking I would not read it again; but the words, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life," would bear on my mind, and soon I would be reading again. Often my mind was carried back to my youth, when you and I, dear sister, enjoyed ourselves among the Old Baptists. How endearing the name, when I think of our parents and grandparents, and so many kindred and friends, who were Baptists. Yes, dear sister, I looked upon them as I do the Baptists to-day, as the very best people living, and the only true church on earth. But being separated for a number of years from all who held to that faith and order, and traveling in the wilderness and shadow of death, I felt that I was a castaway, and would never have any more pleasure with those dear people. About this time I heard that there was to be an association held at Waterloo, Deer Creek Church, and I determined to go if my health permitted. As the Lord willed it, I was permitted to attend every day, and I shall never forget the introductory sermon, preached by Elder Sherwood. The first words pierced me to the heart, my eyes soon filled with tears, and I felt so condemned that (as I have done many times since) I had to hide my face to keep from being perceived. After this I had a stronger desire to attend the meetings there, but my inability was such that I did not attend very often. Sometimes I felt so condemned, I thought I would never go again. Thus I lived from months to years, for nearly ten years. After many sleepless nights, and bathing my pillow with tears, I felt to give up, and put my trust in the Lord, and wait his appointed time. In the spring and summer of 1878 I was confined to my room, and a portion of the time to my bed, with bodily afflictions. After a severe attack of bodily pain, I was sitting up in bed, being all alone, and feeling very lonely. I thought of the remark I often heard my mother make, "Go to the Bible," and again the words, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me," and "Ye will not come unto me." This caused me to turn to the Bible and go to reading. After reading several chapters, I thought, How differently this all looks! I have read all this, but I never saw it in this light before. After reading awhile, I found myself singing, "Amazing grace," &c. I thought, Why should I think of that old tune, which I have not thought of nor sung for years? Again it just suited me. O-how sweet the sound!

Had I not been lost? and can it be possible that I am found? Surely I was blind, but now I see. All that had been so dark was light before me now. I felt a happy change indeed. I was led to see my own depravity, and the grace, goodness and tender mercies of the Lord, and to say, "My Redeemer liveth, and by his amazing grace he saved a wretch like me." All was love, joy and happiness within, and I wanted

"To tell to poor sinners around,
What a dear Savior I had found."

Soon the thought came to my mind, I have kept this all secret so far, and I must not tell this. I may be deceived, it may all be a delusion, and may pass away, and I would only be laughed at. To my surprise my health was better from that time onward, and I desired to go to meeting, but was not able to go until the October meeting. It was then and there I first met and heard our pastor, Elder Cole, preach. It had been just one year since I had been there, and they had new ministers. O how I enjoyed that meeting! It was like meat and drink to a hungry and thirsty soul. I thought I would like to tell some one what a joy and comfort the preaching was to me. Again I thought, I have kept all else secret, and I must this. After that I went to meeting on every opportunity, anxious to hear the truth. It was the only place I could go to hear the gospel preached in its purity. I had no idea of becoming a member, but thought I would be satisfied to hear the gospel of God proclaimed as it is in Jesus. In August, 1880, the association was held with the Paint Creek Church. While there I thought I never would go to another association, although I enjoyed the preaching very much. But the members all seemed so good, and so much better than I was, that I felt too unworthy to be among them. Every acquaintance I made would say, "Where do you live, and what church do you belong to?" The thought occurred to me that none but members had any business there. Soon after the association, while thinking over all the past, I thought, Have I not a hope in Christ? Has not the Lord been gracious to me, in forgiving my sins? Surely I can claim him as my Savior, and why should I not be a member of his body? I thought then that I would try to have courage enough at the next meeting at Waterloo to tell the church of my hope, and of my desire to be among them; and if they rejected me, it would at least satisfy my mind. But I was not able to attend the next covenant meeting, and before the next meeting, which was in November, a beloved member of the church was called home to rest, one that I felt was my particular friend. This was a great loss to the church, which was reduced very low. I felt then that I had no desire to become a member, even if they would receive me as one. I would try to be satisfied with hearing the truth proclaimed. I felt that I could not stay away from their meetings. The fol-

lowing winter was very severe and cold, and there was no meeting all winter. It was during those lonesome, cold winter days that I was led to write a letter for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, little thinking of seeing it in print, although I thought I must write. Some called it an experience of grace, but I did not intend it as such. My desire was to tell the beloved editors how much I appreciated their paper, for I felt it was a great friend to me during those cold winter days. I had no other place to go to for comfort. I was much surprised when I saw it in the paper, and the words of the Savior came to my mind, that all that was hid shall be made manifest, and all that is kept secret shall come abroad. I thought, Now I have done it. But why should I be ashamed? Jesus says, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed." At the next meeting, which was in April, the Elder said to me, "I read a letter of yours in the SIGNS. It was pretty good. You had better write again." I thought he was rather making light of my writing, and I held to the resolution that I would be satisfied with hearing the gospel preached, until the June meeting. It was their communion season. Myself and two or three others remained while they were preparing the table for that purpose. I had a view of Jesus, while breaking the bread for his disciples, and I thought nothing could be more beautiful. I thought, If I am too unworthy to partake of the bread of life, why should this be revealed unto me? The Lord reveals himself to none but his subjects. I resolved again in my mind, that I would try to be bold enough at the next meeting to tell the church something of my exercises, greatly fearing I could not say anything to the purpose. Again I was disappointed. The church received word that the pastor was very sick and would not be there. It was their meeting to appoint messengers to the association, to be held with the Friendship Church, Franklin County. I would like to tell you some incidents that happened that day, and my thoughts concerning them, but it would take too much space. O what wretched feelings I had after that meeting! I thought I had put it off too long, and might never have another opportunity. We intended to go to the association, but I felt now that I did not care about going; but as we intended to visit at Columbus by the way, I said nothing against going. My mind was much troubled about baptism, as there was much said at the association on that subject. I desired to tell some one of my feelings, but I had not power to command my feelings, or talk on this glorious subject. But I was made to be still, and know that the Lord reigneth, as I had many times before, and have since. They were disappointed again of having any meeting at Waterloo all winter. But you know that our old uncle was with us that winter, and it passed away very pleasantly. His talk and explanation of the Scrip-

tures made me feel stronger in the faith and hope of God. I did not go to meeting again until April, and then I went with the same resolution that I had made in June before. When preaching was over, and the door was opened for the reception of members, I was as one dumb and nailed to the seat. I felt that I could not rise nor speak. As the meeting closed, I thought, What a fool I am! I have let this opportunity pass again. O! why is it thus with me? To will is always present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. Dear sister, this often made me fear, and doubt whether I was a child of God or not; for the Lord worketh in us both to will and do of his good pleasure. After meeting closed, I said to a sister that sat by me, "I am coming the next time;" but I was sorry a moment after, for I could not tell her one word of my hope or desire to be among them, or come to the church. Why did I not let it pass, and suffer the punishment? On our return home from meeting the next day, to my surprise I found that my husband was greatly troubled in mind concerning his salvation, and after two weeks he was troubled and burdened almost beyond endurance. He afterwards found peace with God, but thought it best not to say anything to the church until the June meeting, fearing he might be deceived, and desired that I should wait with him. This was beyond any expectation of mine; and remembering the exhortation of Paul, of the duty of wives, I submitted, wondering what the church would think of me. We went to the May meeting, and I expected to be silent as usual. But he could not keep silence. I felt then that I must follow him. But I said so little that I have thought if the church had all known me they would have rejected me. After the meeting the Elder said to me, "Your burden has left you now, in part, and the remainder will leave you in the water." I felt that it was so. On the next morning we were baptized by Elder Cole, at the same place that I had looked upon many times, and had hoped the day was not far distant when I might be buried with Christ beneath the waves. Dear sister, I felt that morning as if I could face a thousand. As I was led from the water, I thought, O how relieved I am! Now I have answered with a good conscience toward God. For some time after this I felt such a sweet peace of mind that I thought I never would see any more trouble; but since then gloom and darkness have made me often doubt and fear. I often wonder if a child of God can be led in so many forbidden paths as I have been. But I feel to thank and praise the Lord evermore, that it is all so, unworthy as I am. For in him and through him we live, and we can do nothing of ourselves. Christ is the only way, the truth and the life. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

"I go to prepare a place for you." "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." "I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." These, and many others, are precious promises to the child of God. Now I must close, yet I feel that I have not told you half; and as we are thousands of miles apart, we can hardly expect to see one another in this life; but let us look to our hope in Christ, which is eternal life, where parting is no more, and troubles have an end.

As ever, your sister affectionately,
E. LOHR.

GRAEFENBERG, Ky., Jan. 20, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the inclosed letter for publication, if you deem proper. It is from our muchesteemed brother, N. T. Watson. His words have been very consoling to me, and I thought that perhaps they might interest the many readers of our valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes regularly to us, richly laden with the true and precious gospel; also the many beautiful experiences, which are of so much comfort to the little ones. I have often wondered, after reading, and while deriving so much pleasure from a dear brother's or sister's experience, if what little I could write would interest or comfort any one, when the thought that their experiences are so much more beautiful than mine, would arise, and I would thrust the subject from me as much as I possibly could. But I have been thinking of Jesus' remarks, when many were casting of their abundance into the treasury, and the poor widow came and cast in her two mites, and I am at last constrained to cast in what I can, though it be but one mite. Yet I hope to have the guidance of the Most High, for without it all that I could write would be nothing more than vanity.

I was born in Anderson County, Kentucky, and am now aged seventeen years. I have loved the Old Baptists from my earliest recollection. I can remember how it used to please me (and it pleases me still) to have them visit us, so that I could hear them talk on spiritual things; for I then thought, and yet think, that what they said was truth. But perhaps the reason I believed, when I was a child, that they were right, was because my father believed so. I never thought that I was good, not even as much so as my associates; and I never thought that I could do anything to merit salvation; but never did I fully know that salvation was of grace until about a year ago. About that time I not only thought, but was made to feel that I was the chief of sinners. I was wretched indeed, for I thought that death and destruction were right before me. The first thing I did was to flee to the law for deliverance; but alas!

nothing did I find but condemnation. At night I would set resolves for the day: I would say, "I will be better to-morrow." To-morrow would come, and I would find myself the same polluted girl. At night I would set other resolves, and so continued for some time. I found that I had broken every resolve, from first to last, and could do nothing but sin. I could not find any comfort for some time, yet I was constantly uttering the publican's prayer, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." But one night, while alone, I was thinking how sinful I was, when I said, "Do you love the Lord?" and something seemed to say, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." What was I to do? I had found that I could not cease from sin; for when I would do good, evil was present with me. I was in anguish of soul, when the passage of Scripture, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God," appeared to me as I had never seen it before. Tongue cannot express the joy I experienced at this time. I could now realize the song,

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me."

All my trouble was gone, and it seemed that I could see Jesus bearing my sins upon the cross, and I felt like praising him for his abundant mercy to me, a sinner. I soon began to desire

"To tell the sinners round
What a dear Savior I had found."

Before this, I had never thought of being baptized, but now baptism became my daily thought and nightly dreams, one of which I shall relate. It seemed that Elder S. Hawkins was here, and I had been telling him my exercises of mind; after which I was alone, and a voice said to me, "Arise, and be baptized." I thought I ran and told brother Hawkins what I had heard, and he at once was to baptize me. O how unutterably happy I was, and how angelic brother Hawkins appeared! When I awoke, how I did wish it had been a reality, and how I wished to talk to brother Hawkins. This was in the latter part of April last, and I thought if I ever had an opportunity I would offer myself to the church. On the fourth Saturday in June I had the privilege of attending the Little Flock Church; but when the door was opened for the reception of members, my unworthiness rushed before me, and it seemed that I was too unworthy to be with such a dear people; so I had to return home heavy laden. Yet I thought that I should wait patiently the Lord's time. On the fourth Saturday of the next month I attended the same church again, and with my mother and sister went forward, and on the following day we were baptized by our dear pastor, J. E. Newkirk. O what a happy day that was to me! I had found a sweet, sweet home! But since then I have been way down in the valley of sin and sorrow, and often fear I have deceived the dear brethren and sisters. Yes, the thick cloud of sin often obscures from our view the glorious

Sun of Righteousness, and we feel dreary and desolate; but when the clouds pass away, he bursts forth in all his refulgent glory, and then we can sing,

"His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music his voice;
His presence disperses my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice."

I shall now close this lengthy letter. May you long be spared to us, brethren Beebe, and may the Lord bless and sustain you while here, and when the end of your appointed pilgrimage shall come, and he calls you to lay your armour by, may you pass peacefully over the river of death, into his bright and beautiful home, is the prayer of an unworthy little girl.

BETTIE VAWTER.

RIPYVILLE, Ky., Nov. 20, 1883.

MISS BETTIE VAWTER—DEAR AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED SISTER IN THE KINGDOM OF OUR GOD:—It is with pleasure that I seat myself at this time to acknowledge the receipt of your sweet letter, and how it made my poor heart swell with love, that I, a poor, weak mortal, should be remembered by any of the dear children of our blessed Lord. And I wish to say, how cheering were the words to me when I read that sweet epistle of love; and I am made to rejoice when I know that none can speak thus but those that have been taught of the Lord; for the preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord. O what a sweet thought, that by a word directed by the giver of all good, we are enabled to comfort one another while traveling through this world. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it. And a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Should it not be a sweet solace to the dear saint of God to be assured that none are forgotten, that the poor child, though feeling so little in itself, can think upon his name? Dear child of our God, though you may feel so unworthy in yourself, and so poor, yet rejoice, for hath God not chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom? Yes, let us remember that the dear Lamb of God, who was rich, for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Born of God, and made heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. Should it not inspire our hearts to praise him for what he has done? He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Yes, he came to redeem his bride, and he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and has made us kings and priests unto God, and heirs to that glorious inheritance which shall not fade away, but is reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God, ready to be revealed in the last time. Dear one, should we not rejoice when we contemplate this glorious kingdom which

was set up by the great Master Builder? He said, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." No, indeed; nothing shall destroy it, for underneath are the everlasting arms. "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." It shall not be left to other people. It shall break in pieces all other kingdoms, and shall stand forever. Yes, dear one, this is the kingdom of our God, which he has redeemed by his own blood; and he will bring them out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue, and place them in his glorious kingdom, which is the purchase of the blood of the dear Redeemer. And now, in view of this precious truth, should not his saints rejoice that Jesus has redeemed his people which he foreknew? "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. And whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." And they are called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. And they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. O glorious thought! We are enabled to view this kingdom as complete, that the blessed Savior has borne their sins in his own body, and has put them away by the sacrifice of himself. He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. And now the saints are called upon to walk about Zion, tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks and consider her palaces, that they may tell it to the generation following. O how secure is this Zion of our God! "Salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks." In view of all this sure defense, what need have we to fear? For if God be for us, who can be against us? What shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? His is an everlasting love. "I am God, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Then let us praise him who has done so much for us, and has brought us to his banqueting house, and his banner over us is love. Then, in the language of the psalmist, may we say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." "The Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." For the comfort of his saints he has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "Thou art mine." "I have called thee by my name." "Because I live, ye shall live also." Then, dear children, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Hope thou in God, for we

shall yet praise him. But as long as we are in the flesh, we may expect to have many trials; but the blessed Lord says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." For in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore. And though you may be often cast down by reason of the sin that remains in your flesh, yet he that is in you is greater than he that is in the world. And now, in view of these things, what manner of persons ought we to be? May we love one another with a pure heart fervently, and so fulfill the law of God. I have tried to pencil a few thoughts, though they are scattering, and seem to be so much like myself that I fear they will not be of interest to you; but I trust they have been written with a desire to glorify our God, and for the good of his children. I must confess that I am a poor sinner, and if saved, it will be through the grace and mercy of the dear Redeemer. To him be all the glory, for he has done all things well. And now may the good Lord be with you all, to comfort and sustain you while traveling here below. For want of space I will close. I will commend you to him who is able to save to the uttermost. I will be glad to hear from you all. I remain yours to serve in the kingdom of our God. Farewell.

N. T. WATSON.

DEAR BRETHERN:—Will you publish this letter from our afflicted sister, Mary Parker? I am sure all would be glad to hear from her again. On account of her long affliction she has not been able to have the SIGNS until recently.

KATE SWARTOUT.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, April 21, 1884.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER IN THE BLESSED SAVIOR:—Very pleasant to me was the coming of your last dear letter. My sick chamber is seldom clear of callers during the day. I appreciate the kindness of my neighbors in coming with words of sympathy and condolence, often cheering me with a rare flower or some delicacy to please my capricious, fastidious appetite. It helps to relieve the monotony, and causes the hours to drag less wearily along. But very different is the visit or message from one of Zion's "afflicted poor." To the first, one can only converse upon mere worldly things, and all the rich "jewels" of the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ must be hidden from their sight. They are well pleased and satisfied with the gaudy jewels of self-righteousness. The rare pearl of great price, the precious diamond, which is alone a fit setting for the great crown, the royal diadem, would be nothing worth to them. But when in the company of God's peculiar people, the afflicted poor, we can bring out the rich jewels of his grace. We may cast the lovely pearls at their feet, and they will pick them up carefully, and gladden the hearts of each other while gazing at their beauties, and con-

versing upon the grandeur and wonderful perfections of the King of holiness. My beloved father was preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ before I was born. My dear mother was also a firm Old School Baptist. From the earliest of my recollections our dear home was a rendezvous for this peculiar and poor people. I loved them early, and I often questioned myself, if I had to sit down by the river of Babylon, if I would love them just the same, and could my heart be tuned to sing the Lord's song in a strange land. I had hoped never to have my love thus tested; but I am now truly a stranger in a strange land, and the waters of Babylon roar and toss their stagnant waters upon its banks near by. Very hard do I find it now to sing the Lord's song in this dry and parched land. But has my love abated or grown less strong for the peculiar and afflicted poor people whom the Lord said he had chosen? O no. In the north or south, the east or west, under the flag of our own loved country or beneath foreign skies, wherever there is a poor trembling lamb, whose righteousness is as filthy rags, and who calleth upon the name of the Lord, to them my heart goes out with a warmth of love which, though felt, cannot be described. Since sickness and distance have debarred and isolated me from this dear people, I have had much time and matter for reflection upon who or what people are the true people of God. All the while the conviction grows stronger that the Old School Baptists are that peculiar people, the chosen generation of God. They are the people who bear the striking likeness to those who said unto the Lord, "When saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee?" While the self-righteous, worldly religionists are plainly pointed out by those arrogant persons who insolently said unto the Lord, "When saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee not?" How like the self-denying, self-despising Baptist is the first; while the last sounds greatly like the self-sufficient, pharisaical, popular religionist of this world. That God's people are called by himself "a peculiar people," is another strong proof that the Baptists are the true people, for that they differ from others is beyond question. Why, if a sound minister were to enter a pulpit in this village and preach the truth as it is in Jesus, if he were to describe the feelings of a child of God who had just been awakened to the sense of his lost and ruined condition before the just and holy One, if he exalted God and abased the poor, puny arm of flesh, the people would look upon him with contempt. Such preaching would be considered unfit for intelligent and refined people to listen to. But if there should be in the congregation one of the afflicted poor, who is walking in darkness and hath no light, would not the preaching of this "peculiar" preacher be food for his poor soul? The word of God teaches us that the followers of Christ should in lowliness of mind esteem others better than themselves; and the Bap-

tists are the only people who can see beauty in others and none in themselves. Again, they are told to keep themselves unspotted from the world; and where can one find a religious body who do not have their festivals, their mite societies, and many worldly amusements, except the Old School Baptists? I think you understand me. I do not mean by what I write that none are God's dear children save those who are connected with the Baptist Church, for his people are among every nation, kindred and tongue; but if my convictions are not erroneous, the Baptist Church is the one spoken of as having "one Lord, one faith, one baptism;" and those of the Lord's children who are connected with those who worship other gods, or who have "lords many," are in Babylon. It is long years since I heard a sermon preached by one of this peculiar people to the afflicted poor. It is seldom I have the privilege of conversing with this dear people, for we must not cast the precious pearls before swine. How then, my dear sister, am I to learn in this great high school, or how is mine to be the tongue of the learned? In your first letter you ask why I do not write to the editors of the SIGNS. How can a poor, ignorant, unlearned child come before the wise and learned scholars of the great kingdom of Christ? O! I tremble at the thought. Much as I love the SIGNS, dear as its contributors are to me, and feeling my poor heart go out in a great warmth of love to each trembling, precious child to whom the reading of the SIGNS is food to their hungry souls, yet what am I, that I should come before them exposing my ignorance, and it may be darkening the minds of those dear ones by uttering words without knowledge. How blessed you are, my sister, that your circumstances and affliction do not deprive you entirely of meeting with the saints, and being taught what are the unsearchable riches of Christ by faithful watchmen, whose beautiful feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel, and who bring good tidings of great joy to the afflicted and poor people of Christ's great kingdom. Ah, my sister, you know not how disconsolate one feels who with bowed head finds herself placed along the shores of Babylon; nor how difficult it is to raise one faint strain of the Lord's song, the song of redeeming love, while in this strange land. Very different is the roar of the turbulent waters of Babylon from the low, sweet murmurings of the water of life. But amid all my conflicting circumstances one thing comforts me, and comes like the soft whisperings wafted from the sinless shore. It is the thought that I love the people of God, and that wherever they are, they are dear to me. Serving as a strength to the sweet thought are the words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Surely if we love the brethren, even those whose faces we have never seen, we first loved Jesus, the glorious Leader and Head; and loving him, we shall

one day see him as he is, and know and be like him. Comforting, soul-cheering thought!

The knowledge I have of your affliction, causes you to be inexpressibly dear to me. O, my sister, mine is indeed a sore affliction. It causes strong men to shed tears; and even medical men say they are appalled at so much suffering. Yet I am strengthened upon my bed of languishing, and the Lord makes all my bed in my sickness. I cannot stand on my feet, neither have I lain down for four years. I sit on the edge of a low couch, with my feet in a tub of cold water or on a low ottoman, day and night. At times I can knit lace, hose, embroider, and do plain sewing; but there are times when severe chills attack me, followed by high fever, delirium, extreme stupor, and the limbs swell until the flesh bursts. The water is so hot that it blisters the skin, just like a burn from boiling water. When this hot water oozes out on the raw surface, the pain is indescribable. Nothing but cold bandages gives me any relief. I fear it would tax your delicate nerves too severely were I to attempt a further description of what I suffer; but thanks be unto the Lord, he gives me patience and a calm resignation to his holy will. What a wreck does continuous sickness make of one's life. How it has broken into atoms the "golden bowl" which contained all my earthly dreams, my human hopes and aspirations, leaving but the ashes of life, like a heap of ruins, alone for my earthly thoughts to dwell upon. It is well for us that the future in this life is hidden from view, that we know not what the morrow will bring to us. Truly can I say, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;" for very different is my barren, afflicted life from what my youthful fancy pictured it. I cannot see now why God ordered it so; but I dare not question his right to deal with me after the counsel of his own will. I would quickly crush and put from me any murmuring thought against one so holy, infinitely good and wise. If we are so unspeakably blessed as to reach that mystic golden shore, upon the borders of whose ever green banks no trouble or sorrow shall come, then perhaps we shall indeed have beauty for ashes, and shall find rest and peace all the more sweet because of our suffering here. After the storm shall come sweet calm; after the clouds and tempests and darkest night, there shall be sunshine and everlasting light.

Do you know anything about sister Hughes, of Cleveland, who wrote that she was threatened with poor health? She is often in my thoughts, and I do hope, if her health has not been restored, that she may be blessed with the patience she so much craved. O that the Lord may remember Zion's afflicted poor everywhere, and comfort and carry the little ones in the bosom of his love. You will be glad to hear that brother Cole called on me day before yesterday for a few minutes. He is well, and truly a

faithful servant of the Lord. Pray for me, dear sister; and may the blessed Lord be with you, comfort and strengthen you, both in the inner and outer man, is truly my prayer.

MARY PARKER.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., April 14, 1834.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—For many years I have had a desire to bear some humble testimony with the brethren through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which we esteem very highly for the truth's sake, and which has been very comforting to us, expressing our sentiments, that is, the doctrine and experience of all the dear brethren and sisters who have so ably and comfortingly written, for the building up of God's dear children, who have been born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. For it is these only that can know Christ, whom to know is life eternal. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the glory of God. And it is light that maketh manifest, and gives us to see our lost and undone condition, of which I now wish to say something.

I was born in Shelby County, Ky., November 26, 1810. My parents were Primitive Baptists, and taught their children to be moral and upright, but never tried to teach them religion. I grew up with the feeling that if I was good, God would love me, and I would be saved; but if I was disobedient and bad, God would hate me. I lived in this way until I was in my twelfth year. My uncle, Samuel Vancleave, was a Baptist preacher, and while sitting under his preaching my eyes were opened, and for the first time in my life I fully realized that I was a lost and undone sinner. I was working in the field the day after I got this view of what a miserable sinner I was, and I really did not know what was the matter with me. I could not refrain from weeping, though I tried to hide it from my father, who was working with me. The constant breathing of my soul was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner." My mind was exercised in this way for some time. There were several young persons in the neighborhood who had professed a hope in Christ, and were baptized. I would look at them and wish that I was as good as they were; but I could not see how God could be just and have mercy on one so vile as I felt myself to be. After remaining in this condition for some time, my mind became more easy, but never could I feel that all was well with me. In the year 1824 my father sold his farm and came to Indiana, and entered land for himself and children. His desire was to get a home for them all, which he did. We remained in Kentucky until March, 1825, when we started for our new home. We were twenty-one days on the road, with two teams. The high waters and bad roads made it very slow traveling. It was a terrible trip for us, during which time I had many reflections on my lost and terrible con-

dition, but hoped that I would feel better when we reached our new home. But alas! when we landed we found Indians in camp a short distance from where we settled. We went into an open camp, covered with bark, until we could build a cabin. There were but few white people here then. I suppose there were ten Indians to one white man, though they were friendly, and soon left the country. The emigration of the whites was very great, and the country was settled very fast; but truly it was a wilderness country. There were no schools nor meetings nearer than Crawfordsville, where there was a small Primitive Baptist Church, called Sugar Creek. In the year 1826 we received a letter from one of my cousins who lived in Kentucky, saying that he had received a hope in Christ, and was to be baptized the next Sunday. Instantly I thought of my miserable condition, being without hope and without God in the world, and here in the wilderness. Before my father was through reading the letter, I left the house to hide my grief. And from that evening on, for a good many months, I was a poor, mourning soul. I sought the lonesome woods, and would try to implore God for mercy; yet I felt that it would be just in him to cut me off from among the living. I had a full view of the just and holy God, and of my entire dependence upon him for life and salvation. There was a small church constituted about the year 1827, near where my father settled, which was called Union Church. My parents were in the constitution of this church. Elder John Lee was the pastor of the little church, and on his way he would stop at my father's and have meeting. At one of those meetings, while he was talking of the love and goodness of God to poor, lost sinners, all at once my trouble was gone, and I felt so happy that I could not help crying and praising God for his goodness and pardoning love to such a poor, unworthy creature as I felt myself to be. I then felt that my trouble was all gone, and that I should always be happy, and felt that I wanted to tell what a dear Savior I had found. The dear pastor, Elder Lee, advised me to go to the church, and I thought then that I would; but a few days after I trusted that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins, doubts came upon me, and I feared that it was all a delusion. I would find myself searching for my burden, thinking that if I had it back, and it would leave me again, I would know better whether I was deceived. From that time till the present moment, though it has been many years, I have had doubts and fears to pass through almost daily; yet I can say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1828, I went to meeting, not expecting to join the church; but after a discourse was preached by Elder Lee, and the door of the church was opened to receive members, a Mrs. Glen and myself went forward, and were received, and baptized the next morning, that

being the communion time. It was with much difficulty that I could partake of the bread and wine, feeling too unworthy to partake with the dear brethren and sisters, viewing them so much better than myself. I remained a member of Union Church until the year 1831, when I was married to Miss Nancy Nickelson, and we settled near Crawfordsville. I got a letter from Union Church, and joined the Sugar Creek Church, at Crawfordsville, and have remained in this church until the present time. In the year 1836 my mind became burdened on the subject of preaching, so that I could not rest day nor night. Often when out in the woods by myself I would be talking of the goodness of God to poor sinners. My mind was exercised on the Scriptures almost constantly, and when our preachers were preaching I would feel that I must speak and tell of the unsearchable riches of Christ. About this time the church was travailing, and many were added to the church. They would often hold prayer meeting, and I would be called on to take a part with them, which I did, and I would feel relieved in my mind for a short time. At one of our prayer meetings, after I had given out a hymn, and it was sung, I felt very light and happy; and after speaking in prayer and saying a few words, all at once darkness shut me in, so that I could not utter another word. I felt that God had forsaken and rebuked me for my presumption, and I felt that I would never try to speak in public again. The next week was a dark and dreary time to me. The next Saturday and Sunday was our regular meeting time, and as I was the house-keeper I told my wife that I would go and open and fix the house, but would not stay for meeting, as I felt too unworthy to be with those good brethren and sisters. While I was sweeping, I looked at the stand, and felt that I was too vile to go into that sacred place to sweep it. But quick as thought these words came to me, "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Then my burden and trouble was all gone, and I could rejoice in my blessed Savior. Not long after this, Elder R. M. Newport had an appointment to preach near this place, and my wife and I went to the meeting; but he did not come, and the brethren called on me to speak to them. I refused, saying there were older brethren present; but they continued their request. We sung a hymn and I spoke in prayer. Near the close of my prayer the following words came to my mind, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" As I arose my tongue was loosed and my mouth was filled, to speak of the blessed child Jesus. While speaking, I feared nothing; for my mind was caught away to heavenly and divine things; but after sitting down I felt that I had ruined myself, and was very much cast down. The brethren encouraged me, saying that they were comforted. This was the beginning of my preach-

ing. A short time after this, the church took up my case and liberated me to speak in the bounds of this church, so I went on, trying to speak. Sometimes I would be carried away from earth and earthly things, and at other times would be left in darkness, and would feel that I never would attempt to speak again. In the year 1850, on the 30th day of November, I was ordained to the full work of the ministry, by a presbytery consisting of brethren Aaron Harlan, James Edwards, John Brady, Johnathan Vancleave and Jessie J. Goblen. For a good many years I traveled a great deal in the bounds of our association and its correspondence. I have had the pastoral care of several churches, and my labors have seemed to be blessed. I have baptized a great many of the dear ones that have joined the churches that I attended. I am now in my seventy-fourth year, and cannot remain here long. My desire has ever been to live in peace with all men, and especially with the household of faith. I feel that I can say with the apostle, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth." I know that I have as great a desire for the prosperity and welfare of Zion as I ever have had.

Your brother in the bonds of the gospel,

M. M. VANCLEAVE.

ELDER LEE HANCKS—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Will you please give your views on the following: Is the preacher an ordained instrument in the hands of God in quickening sinners? Yours affectionately,

S. L. A.

REPLY.

As our dear sister has requested my views upon the above, I will offer such feeble views as I may have presented to me. "Is the preacher an ordained instrument in the hands of God in quickening sinners?" I answer emphatically, No. The word "instrument" means a tool or machine; and I have not found on record that God has ever been dependent on means or instrumentalities to accomplish any of his purposes. The very idea of God using a tool or machine to do any of his works, signifies at once that he is too weak and his arm too short to accomplish his purposes, consequently he will have to call upon poor, puny man to help to accomplish his designs. Elder Gold truthfully said on one occasion, "Why does a man use tools to work with, such as the axe, and many others? It is because he cannot accomplish his works without them. If a man could speak to a tree and cause it to fall, would he take an axe to cut it down? Of course not." Again, if you could speak to your wheat, and it would fall, would you take a cradle and go there and labor hard to cut your wheat, when you could have spoken and caused it to have obeyed? By no means. The reason why man uses instruments is because he cannot accomplish his purposes without them. He cannot cut the tree without an axe, nor can he save his wheat without machinery.

Hence you see that man needs means to aid him. But not so with God, for "he speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast." I heard a preacher say that the church of God was compared to a building, and God to the workman, and the preachers to instruments. He said a workman could not build his house without instruments, such as the saw, hammer, plane, and others; neither could God build his church without preachers. He said that God used the preachers as instruments in hewing off the humps and bumps, and for preparing the sinner for the church. You never saw a workman go to a house and take a log out, and use that as an instrument in cutting down trees and hewing them down to the right size for the building. But the instruments do not belong to nor have any connection with the building whatever. So, if the preacher is an instrument in quickening sinners, he has no connection with the building; consequently he will be left out; for after the building is completed, after the Lord has brought the last heir of promise in, through aid of the preacher, he will gather them up, as a workman gathers his tools, and cast them into his tool-box. The tools are always left out. So it will be with the preachers, if they are instruments. But if what our friend has said be true, that God cannot build his church without preachers, I think they ought to preach more than they do, for they just preach on Saturday and Sunday; consequently the building will stand still five days every week; for God can only work as the preacher works, according to this theory. If his god is so weak that he cannot work without instruments, he certainly ought to help him, take pity on him, preach a good deal, and save all the sinners he can, for it will take his god a long time to complete his building, if his god is that weak; and if he does not help his god, the devil might take some of his children from him, and take them to an endless perdition, if our friend will not take pity on his god and help him. He should take pity on poor sinners, who are dying and going to hell daily. I would like for our friends, who hold to such means, to tell what part they perform in the salvation of sinners. Our Arminian friends claim that the Lord sanctified the seed which the sower sowed, to the preparing of the soil. But notice carefully, the seed that fell by the wayside did not prepare the ground; the seed did not dig out the thorns nor soften the rocky places. Sowing seed does not prepare the land; but the seed that fell in the good ground, which had been prepared, sprang up, and brought forth fruit. Hence you see that the ground must first be prepared, before the seed will do any good. Some say that sometimes the Lord will take one of a family, in order to get others to repent; but I do not believe that God is so unjust as to kill an innocent child as an instrument, or for what its wicked father has done. But I am going to try to

show that our salvation is not based upon such a flimsy foundation; nor is it partly of the preacher and partly of God. "You hath he [God] quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."—John v. 21. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh [preacher] profiteth nothing."—John vi. 63. You see the preacher is not used as an instrument here in quickening sinners. But some say, "There has never been a Gentile brought in, only through the instrumentality of preaching." I do not see where the Gentile church at Ephesus was brought in by any preacher whatever. We might mention a number of instances in which God displayed his mighty power in gently leading his people, but we have not time nor space to enlarge very much upon this sublime subject. But I will give a few more quotations, and let that suffice. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."—Psalm cxxvii. 1. Where is any instrumentality here? There is none. The building and keeping is all of God, for God has not delegated that right to any man or set of men. Again, he says, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He says he "gathered them out of the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. They wandered in a wilderness, in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."—Psalm cvii. 3-7. The above clearly teaches that the gathering and leading is all of God, and not of the preachers. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Hence you see the drawing and raising up is of the Lord, and not of the preacher. Some will say, If the preacher is not an instrument, what is the use of preaching? Isaiah answers that by saying, "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called, Trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."—Isa. lxi. 1-3. The above does not teach that the preacher is an instrument to give life, but that he is to

preach to the living, and comfort them; to comfort Jerusalem, feed the sheep, (not make them), prophesy to the dry bones, which are the whole house of Israel, dead to their enjoyments. "Show my people [not dead sinners] their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." And in doing this, you will save yourself, and them that hear thee. It is the christian that hears, and not dead sinners. The preaching of the gospel is beneficial and saving to the believer; for Paul says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to every one that believeth." Not to save unbelievers. In every instance that is spoken of in the Bible, where the children of God were comforted by preaching, they were prepared to hear preaching, and the preacher was prepared to preach to them. In the case of Cornelius, while the Lord was preparing him, he was also preparing Peter to preach for Cornelius. So it was in the case of Lydia, Paul and Ananias, and Philip and the eunuch. So, if the Lord impresses it upon his servant's mind to go and preach, he will open some poor sinner's heart to hear him.

Now, dear sister, I have written this just as the thoughts have been presented to me. I am almost ashamed of it, as it is so disconnected; but I hope there may be some feeble thoughts in this which God has ordained to the comfort of his people. May the Lord fully establish his people in the doctrine, and enable them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Yours in tribulation,

LEE HANCKS.

NORCROSS, Ga., April 12, 1884.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I have had some very comfortable meditations upon a text in the first chapter of Ephesians, which reads, "That ye may know what is the hope of his calling." The hope of the saints is that the Lord will suffer no harm to befall them in this life, nor suffer any trials to assail them, except such as shall be for their good and his glory; give them the comfort of his rod and staff in the hour of death; bring them up from the dust of the grave in his own good time, in the likeness of their Elder Brother and blessed Lord. Now, the salvation which we enjoy is of such a blessed and precious nature as to supply to us complete freedom from anxious care as to the future, so that we can say, "I will both lay me down and sleep in peace, for thou alone causest me to dwell in safety." So that if our time be long or brief in this life, it is not important to us, since it is to be according to the will and good pleasure of our heavenly Father. I think that some persons who, to human judgment, seem, as the apostle says, "destitute, tormented, afflicted," are, in consequence of the inner light which they have in their dwellings, the happiest individuals that live upon this rolling sphere. Of these the world is not worthy. To these pertain the things that accompany

salvation, namely, faith, hope and love. By faith they walk through deserts dark as night. Their good hope through grace may trials well endure. And by love to God and to all the saints they fulfill the law. Who shall lay anything to their charge? If I know anything about the effect of faith, it makes this life seem very short; and it is only by faith that we have any proper idea of eternal things, upon which, by the favor of the Lord, we are permitted to look. Their love is indicated by David's remark with regard to his fallen friend, whose heart had been knit to his in former years.

I sometimes think my love is growing cold, and that my hope of salvation is not so bright as once it was. I think at times of the wondrous grace of God in bringing salvation to any of the fallen race of Adam; and more than all, that he should bring one so vile as myself to hope in his mercy. How is it that one who has for a helmet the hope of salvation, can be so careless, so full of evil thoughts and evil deeds, and so little inclined to love, praise and pray, and give thanks to the Giver of so matchless a blessing? In view of so great a favor let us say, "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." Even in my lowest estate I continue to hope and believe that his mercy, of which he has given me a taste, will endure forever. But it is a constant and growing wonder that I have ever received any mercy at all. But I believe I know that the cause or causes of salvation cannot be reasoned out, and we can only feel glad and thankful upon the declared word of the Lord, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Like the prophet Daniel, I bless the God of heaven for a hope of salvation, while I abhor myself for my coldness, and for my sinful, hateful, unholy disposition. While I own with shame my wanderings and cold-heartedness, I find comfort in the saying of our common Lord, who was pleased to declare that he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto eternal life. If it were not for some such things, I do not know what else could keep me from despair. The Lord is good, a stronghold in time of trouble. It is plain how God is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. May the spirit of grace and supplication rest upon us, and the divine controlling hand keep us from evil, guide us by his counsel, and afterward receive us to glory.

H.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

IF not asking too much, I would like to see your views in the SIGNS on the parable of the ten virgins, and the views of brother Wm. J. Purington in the same on Matthew xix. 28. By complying with the above request you will greatly oblige a reader and lover of our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

ED. WILLIAMS.

JEFFERSON, Ala., Feb. 29, 1884.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

THE PLANTING OF THE LORD.

"THUS saith the Lord God: I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken and have done it."—Ezekiel xvii. 22-24.

In compliance with the request of sister C. L. French, of Otego, N. Y., we submit the following remarks in connection with this inspired declaration of the purpose of God. As this prophecy is included in that which Ezekiel was commanded to speak to the house of Israel, it is important to remember the condition of that typical nation when the word of the Lord was sent unto them by this prophet; and in tracing the shadow the substance will be delineated just so far as the Comforter shall show us therein the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit (or essential truth) of prophecy.—Rev. xix. 10.

The name of this prophet is appropriate to the circumstances surrounding him and the people to whom he was sent. He was among the captive Israelites by the river of Chebar, weak and helpless, in the power of that strong enemy who had taken them from the land of their nativity which the Lord had given to them for a perpetual home. No wonder they were disconsolate, and felt keenly the bitter irony of their oppressors in requiring of them mirth, and saying to them, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." From their dejected and exiled hearts no emotions of joy could stimulate them to sing at all, much less to pour forth the glad anthems which cheered them in their prosperity. Oppressed and afflicted by their enemies, how could they sing or exhibit mirth? It did not then appear that the Lord was their strong Deliverer. They could only weep at the remembrance of Zion, while they hanged their harps upon the willows in the midst of the land of bondage. This prophet was one of those helpless captives when the word of the Lord came expressly to him. Then appeared the significance of his name *Ezekiel*, that is, *Whom God will strengthen*. Whatever may have been his standing and strength as a priest in his native land, all that was now taken away. He was "among the captives by the river of Chebar." But the heavens were opened, and he saw visions of God. "The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel," "and the hand of the Lord was there upon him." It was not merely a message sent abroad with the design

that somebody would receive it. No other of all the captives there could speak that word, and none of the learned Chaldeans could hear it, for it came expressly to Ezekiel. In the first chapter of this prophecy is a sublime account of the vision in which this word came to him; and repeatedly throughout the book he describes in other words, illustrated by other figures, the revelations given him, but every one, he declares, was the same vision which he saw there among the captives by the river of Chebar. This strikingly agrees with the experience of all the saints even now, for the oldest of them have to confess that in all their later experience they have seen only what was revealed in their first view of the glory of the Lord. So, when Jonah had been delivered and brought up from the bottom of the mountains, he could only testify to what every child of grace has learned, "Salvation is of the Lord." Well did the old apostle say, therefore, to these little children, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."—1 John ii. 20, 27.

In the chapter of which our text is the last paragraph, by a riddle of two great eagles, both unclean birds, the Lord denounces the effort of these captive Jews to obtain deliverance by the aid of Pharaoh and Egypt from their Assyrian oppressors. Judah is represented as the cedar of Lebanon, whose highest branch, the royal family, was carried away by the king of Babylon, and in exile became a spreading vine of low stature, bending her roots toward Egypt, from whence the Jews sought deliverance; but the Lord declares that this hope shall fail them, and their king shall die in that foreign land, and all his fugitives shall fall by the sword. Then follows the declaration of the word of the Lord in our text, in which that deliverance is promised which God had appointed for them at the end of the seventy years of captivity. In their final release and restoration to their own land they could claim no art nor agency. It was brought to pass by the overruling providence of God in a way which finite wisdom could never have devised. In this was fulfilled literally the declaration of the text, that the Lord God would also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and set it. This was accomplished in the restoration of the Jews after the Babylonish captivity, when that empire was given to Cyrus, who authorized the rebuilding of Jerusalem. In that wonderful exhibition of divine wisdom by which the history of the overthrow of the mighty power of Babylon was written in prophecy before its actual development, the absolute sovereignty of God is displayed; but this prophecy does not end with this temporal revolution.

From the top of the young twigs of this branch the Lord God will crop a tender one. This is the Root and Offspring of David, who evidently sprang out of Judah; he is the Plant of Renown which the Lord raised up for his people.—Ezekiel xxxiv. 29. "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant."—Isaiah liii. 2. In his relation to his body, the church, he is the Vine, of which his members are the branches. This Plant is set by the Lord in the mountain of the height of Israel, which is established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.—See Micah iv. 1; Isa. ii. 2. The planting of the Lord is not in vain. The great eagle in the riddle set the branch which he had taken in a city of merchants, and planted the seed of the land in a fruitful field by great waters. Yet it became only a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and whose roots were under him; and even this low vine bent her roots toward another great eagle. This is explained as representing the appeal of the Jewish captives to Egypt for deliverance from their Assyrian bondage. The Lord says this shall not prosper. But the planting of the Lord in the mountain of the height of Israel "shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar." In prophetic language cedar, as a generic name signifying evergreen trees, is used to represent joyful praise and prosperity. So this is "the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord."—Psalm cii. 16-18. The manifestation of the praise of the Lord in this glorious work is not dependent upon the will or works of man. It is the Lord God who plants this tender twig, taken by his own sovereign election from the top of the young twigs of this high cedar. By this metaphor it is declared that the Lord will take from the seed of David the tender Babe of Bethlehem, and will set him in the mountain of the height of Israel, that is, the justice and judgment which are the habitation of his throne. This is the exalted height of Israel to which no other being was ever able to attain; here the mountain of the house of the Lord is established in the top of the mountains, and the hand (or power) of the Lord God alone is competent to plant this tender twig in this lofty position. Nor does he leave it to perish from exposure to the bitter blasts of winter. He declares that it "shall be a goodly cedar." This word cannot fail. Reason would say that this tender twig could not grow under such adverse surroundings. Since the branch which had been planted in a fruitful field (verse 5) did not prosper, it was not likely that a tender twig could grow in such an unfruitful soil as this high mountain. But the truth of

God was pledged that it should grow; therefore it must be so, and the glory of the Lord is manifested in its prosperity. In this type the establishment of the gospel church is vividly described. As a very tender twig the Lord Jesus is revealed in the humble form of a servant under the law. No royal pomp or power of earth protects or attends the helpless child, against whom the kings of the earth set themselves; yet he is not destroyed. All the wrath of man only declares the praise of God in fulfilling the Scriptures concerning him. Still the glory of his power appears in the steady accomplishment of his work, until he fulfills all that is written of him, and blots out in his own blood all the demands of divine justice against his body. Then, rising victorious over death and hell, he brings forth boughs and bears fruit, in the establishment of his church in the liberty of the gospel, free from condemnation, and dead to the law by the body of Christ. Every holy principle implanted within his members by the Spirit of God may be represented as one of the boughs brought forth by our Lord, and all obedience to his commandments is fruit borne to the praise of the glory of his grace in each individual saint. In the whole church, which is his body, these boughs are the doctrine and ordinances which he has enjoined. There is no need of gathering the bitter and deadly fruits of Sinai with which to adorn this gospel tree. The living fruit which is borne by its own vitality is all that displays the glory of our God. It is rebellion against our Lord when one whom he has redeemed from under the law goes back to that law for justification. The life of Christ is manifest in his members only when they bear fruit by virtue of that life which is of him alone.

"And all the trees of the field shall know." The field here presented is in contrast with the wilderness of the world. In this field there is no growth of natural forest included. All the trees referred to are those which the Lord has planted. Evidently the expression is figurative, and must be taken in connection with the figure under consideration. The blessing of the Lord rests upon this field, causing it to produce trees of righteousness, while thorns and thistles are brought forth by all the ground which still is under the curse passed upon it for the sake of the sinner Adam. The trees of the field which shall know that the Lord has done this wonderful work, represent the people who know the joyful sound, who are taught of the Lord. The comprehensive expression used is to be understood as of the same import with "all the ends of the earth," and other similar phrases, the limitation in the text being marked by the bounds of the field. No trees outside of the field are so favored as to know the work of the Lord here foretold. Hence the psalmist says, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." They are not blessed for knowing; but in the fact that they do know, the blessing consists. This

blessed people includes every one of "the trees of the field" spoken of in the text. The field is not confined to the natural children of Israel, as were all the provisions of the legal dispensation; it includes all that are afar off, among the Gentiles, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 39. These trees shall know that the Lord has done all the wonderful work of salvation, and that he has displayed the exceeding riches of his grace in the deliverance of his people from their sins, while no demand of strict justice has been sacrificed. This mystery is known only to those who are taught of the Lord. He alone can teach it; and as they are made to know the truth, they are all competent witnesses to testify to the glorious work of the Lord. This they could not do if they had only learned of men the fact that salvation is of the Lord. They might tell the doctrine which had been told to them, but that would not be witnessing its truth. Only by personal experience of the work of the Lord can any one know that he has done it. All the trees of the field shall know this, so that they shall not have to learn it of others.

The trees of the field are a figurative representation of the same people with "all fowl of every wing" in the text. In the gospel dispensation Gentiles of every nation shall dwell at home in the shadow of the branches of this goodly cedar, which the Lord has planted. The insurmountable wall which had separated between them and the Jews as the peculiarly favored people of God, is now broken down, so that there is no difference. "In his name shall the Gentiles trust." In bringing down the high tree and drying up the green tree of the favored nation of Israel, the Lord displayed his own omnipotent sovereignty and absolute justice; and in exalting the low tree and making the dry tree to flourish, the same holy perfection appears in giving light to the Gentiles, who had been aliens from the covenants of promise, which were given exclusively to Israel. Not only had the Jews despised these Gentiles as unworthy of their regard, but they had felt themselves as without hope and without God in the world. These are therefore appropriately designated as the dry tree. The amazing grace of God is gloriously revealed in making this "dry tree to flourish." No longer is the favor of God restricted within the narrow limits of national Israel. In this "great day of the Lord," "God is no respecter of persons; but IN EVERY NATION he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—Acts x. 35. Under this goodly cedar, (the gospel dispensation,) and "in the shadow of the branches thereof," (the principles of grace therein revealed,) shall the dry tree of Gentile hopelessness be made to flourish; and they whom our God shall call shall praise his salvation, even to the ends of the earth. They have no room for glorying in their own strength or merit, for he always shows them their utter destitution

before he reveals to them his riches of grace. Then the fact of their own low and dry condition presents in more manifest clearness the amazing mercy of the Lord in doing such great things for them, whereof they are glad. In this manner God works in them to show forth the praises of his name.

The closing expression of the text repeats emphatically that it is the Lord who has spoken this declaration of his purpose, and he has done the work according to his will. This affords strong consolation to the dry trees, who feel themselves incapable of producing any good fruit. They have no hope in themselves; but this precious word not only gives assurance of the purpose of grace concerning them, but announces the work completed by the power of the Lord who has spoken it. Then nothing is left dependent upon the will or works of the poor and needy sinner. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8-10.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ANY one knowing the whereabouts or present post-office address of the following named persons, will confer a favor by sending the same to this office:

John Mason, formerly of West Troy, N. Y.

J. J. Page, formerly of Sedalia, Kentucky.

J. W. Richards, formerly of Meriden, Mississippi.

Mary A. Welch, formerly of Illinois, Illinois.

DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES.

TO ALL LOVERS OF TRUTH:—The brethren Beebe have fixed the price of our book at \$1.50, to prevent the author from being involved in a debt in the publication of the first thousand copies. See card on last page of SIGNS. We extend our heartfelt thanks to brethren and friends who have tendered us with compliments of their high appreciation of our work.

Yours in hope,

S. M. CARLTON.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

We have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

We still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars, see advertisement on last page.

MARRIAGES.

APRIL 3, 1884, by Elder A. B. Francis, Mr. Wm. H. Patterson, of Delaware Co., Pa., and Miss Irene Baldwin, daughter of Hon. Thos. L. J. Baldwin, of New Castle Co., Del.

In Anderson County, Kentucky, April 29, 1884, by Elder P. G. Lester, Mr. Willie S. Farmer and Miss Ada B. Lillard.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ENTERED into rest March 23, 1884, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. N. S. Jones, Mrs. Catharine Stoner Ingals, widow of the late Wm. S. Ingals, aged 90 years, 8 months and 7 days. She was born in the village of Newtown, Tioga Co., N. Y., now the city of Elmira, where she grew to womanhood, married November 22, 1812, and remained there until 1816, when with her husband and two children she removed to Wells, Bradford Co., Pa., where she spent the rest of her life, her husband dying February 14, 1868. She spent the last twelve years with her daughter, who by kindly attentions ever tried to cheer her in the loneliness of her widowhood, and under the weight of advancing years. The subject of this memoir was blessed with a vigor of mind and body far exceeding that of most people of her age. For years previous to October, 1879, she was never confined to her bed a week at a time by sickness. Since then she has been a sufferer most of the time, but maintained a marvelous mental poise until a few days before her death, when her brain became clouded, and rallied only at distant intervals, until the golden cord was loosed. More than sixty years ago she experienced the religion of our Lord and Savior, and united with the church of her choice, the Old School Baptist, of which she remained a life-long member, although distance and the contingencies of age made it impossible for her to attend the meetings of late. She united with the church of Columbia & Wells, at or about the same time with the late Elder Joseph Beaman, after whose death she with the remaining member of that church united with the church of Canton & Columbia. Often when she thought herself alone her lips would be seen to move in prayer. As the days went by she longed to go, often saying on retiring, "May be the Lord will take me to-night." Notwithstanding her pain, her cheerful disposition would break forth, and none who watched over her will forget the sunshine of her smile, nor the gratitude that shone in her countenance for each offered kindness. Of the ten children born to her, five lie in the church-yard and five remain, three in the west and two in the village of Mosierville, where she spent the last years of her life. The funeral services were held at the Union meeting house in this place, March 26, Elder S. H. Durand, at her request, preaching, her grandsons acting as bearers. Text, Rev. xiv. 13; Scripture read, Psalm xc.

Thus we have laid her to sleep among the nestling hills, and feel that all is well; for, in the words of a friend, she had come a long journey, and desired rest. Dear mother, farewell!

ONE WHO LOVED HER.

WELLS, Bradford Co., Pa., April 8, 1884.

DIED—In New York City, October 10, 1883, Lawrence Van Wart, aged 86 years, 7 months and 10 days. He was an old and dearly beloved member of the Ebenezer Church, becoming identified with it in May, 1858, when the Mt. Zion and Ebenezer Churches were united. He was a deacon in the Mt. Zion Church at the time of the consolidation referred to, and was continued in that office by the Ebenezer Church until the day of his death. He was a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ, a fond lover of the truth, and an earnest and bold contender for the faith once delivered to the saints. His warm love for the church and people of God endeared him to all the members of the household of faith whose privilege it was to know him. His loss is keenly felt by the church in New York, who miss his presence in their gatherings, and his words of counsel and admonition. We do not mourn, however, as those who have no hope; for we derive sweet comfort from the thought that our dear brother sleeps.

in Jesus, awaiting the dawning of that glorious day when he shall awake in the likeness of his Savior. As near as we can learn, he was baptized in 1827, by Elder Perkins. The funeral took place at his late residence in this city, and was largely attended. Elder Wm. L. Beebe spoke, basing his remarks on Psalm xxxvii. 37.

At a regular church meeting, the Old School Baptist Church in New York City, called Ebenezer, passed the following resolutions as a memorial of Deacon Lawrence Van Wart, who departed this life on the 10th day of October, 1883:

WHEREAS, It has pleased almighty God, our heavenly Father, to remove from our midst by death our dearly beloved brother DEACON LAWRENCE VAN WART; therefore,

Resolved, That while we deeply feel and mourn the loss of one whose love for the truth and people of God, and whose consistent walk and heavenly conversation had endeared him to all who knew him, we desire to bow in humble submission to the will of him who doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

Resolved, That we sorrow not, even as others who have no hope, knowing that our dear brother, forever freed from the cares, trials and sorrows of this pilgrimage life, now sweetly sleeps in Jesus, awaiting the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior, Jesus Christ, when he and all the sleeping saints shall awake in his likeness, and, together with the saints who are living, be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

Resolved, That these resolutions be embodied in the minutes, as a memorial of our brother, Lawrence Van Wart, and a copy of the same be sent the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

GEORGE B. HOOTON, Mod.

R. M. STRONG, Clerk.

It is in deep sorrow that I endeavor to write for publication the death of our little girl, **Martha E. Lowe**, youngest daughter of Silas J. and Sallie E. Lowe. Her disease was measles, which settled in her lungs, and in the short space of two weeks and four days, her spirit took its flight. She was 9 years, 5 months and 18 days old, was a very interesting child, always ready and willing for anything that had to be done. Thus it pleased the Lord to lay his hand heavily on us, in removing her, leaving an aching void that the world can never heal. She was done with the world as soon as she was taken sick, as it appeared that nothing drew her attention. She called all around her, a week before the last, and bade us good-by. She told me not to grieve for her, that she was going home. I told her that I wanted her to get well, for she was my dear little girl. She replied, "O mamma, you don't know how I suffer!" I knew her sufferings were beyond description, although she bore them with all the fortitude that could possibly be. She wanted to die, and longed for the time to come. The night before she died she said she could not live. When she was dying she reached out her little hands and took hold of mine and shook them, and looked at us and smiled. I asked her if she saw something pretty. She nodded her head that she did, and was gone. It appears to me at times to be more than this poor, feeble frame and mind can bear. Everything appears to be lonesome and gloomy. But we should be still, for we know that the Lord is merciful, and he will do all his pleasure. We read that we should not set our affections on things of this world, but on things above. She was only loaned to us for a little while. The first thing I think of in the morning, and the last at night, is my dear little Martha. I have had some very precious things come to my mind since she has been gone, words as though spoken to me. On waking one morning my first thought was my child, when suddenly the words came to me, "Be ye reconciled to God." The first words that came to my mind when she was gone were, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Brother George Jenkins read

the fourteenth chapter of John, made a very comforting prayer, and sung the hymn, "O land of rest," &c.

Your sister in tribulation, if one at all.

SALLIE LOWE.

ROCK SPRINGS, Md., April 16, 1884.

BRETHREN:—In compliance with the request of the afflicted family, I now forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of **Mrs. Martha A. Golden**, of Lawrence, N. J., who departed this life April 13, 1884, aged 70 years, 6 months and 13 days, relict of the late Jacob Golden. The subject of this notice, though not a visible member of the organized church, had been a lover of the gospel truth for many years, and attended the meetings of the Old School Baptists at Hopewell and other places whenever she could, and clearly evinced her attachment to the truth of our God. Her death was caused by an internal, cancerous tumor, and at times her suffering was excruciating, but not a murmuring word came from her, which clearly showed that she was sustained by superhuman power. The writer of this notice visited her on Thursday, before her death the following Sunday; and although she was much emaciated and very weak physically, her mind was clear and in lively exercise, and she stated to me that her "salvation was all of grace, and that creature merit had nothing to do with it." In answer to the question, "Mrs. Golden, are you afraid to die?" the ready answer was, "No!" and she stated also that, "My hope is in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ." The relatives stated that her end was calm and peaceful, showing clearly to all present that

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

She has left a number of children, as well as a large circle of other relatives and friends, to mourn the loss of such an amiable woman; but feel that for her to die was gain, for the Scripture says the "day of death" is better "than the day of one's birth." Her funeral was numerously attended the 16th inst., and the Scripture was used as a text upon the occasion, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPWELL, N. J., April 17, 1884.

FELL asleep in Christ, in Topsham, Me., Jan. 19, 1884, sister **Henrietta Wilson**, wife of brother A. L. Wilson, aged 77 years. Sister Wilson professed faith in Christ more than fifty years ago. It can be truly said of her that she adorned the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. As a wife she was faithful and loving, as a neighbor, kind and obliging, as a sister in the kingdom of Christ she manifested in her daily life so much love, patience, meekness and humility that she was dearly beloved and highly respected by all who knew her. Her sufferings were great at times for more than three years before she passed away, yet she, in all her sickness and pain, did not murmur or complain. Sometimes when enduring the keenest agony, she would say, with a heavenly smile, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, O Lord." She leaves many relatives and friends, besides the church of God, to mourn their loss. But most of all do I pity the loneliness of brother Wilson, the bereaved companion, in the loss of one who has been so much comfort and support to him in all his sorrows for so many years. Let us remember that the grace of God that bringeth salvation is sufficient for all of his people in all of their afflictions.

H. CAMPBELL.

BRUNSWICK, Maine.

DIED—In Drew Co., Ark., March 18, 1884, our highly esteemed friend, **Samuel M. Morris**, after a short but painful illness of four days, of pneumonia, aged about 52 years. He was the oldest son of Benj. E. Morris, our

once brother, who died in November, 1882, near Pine Bluff, Ark., whose death was soon after published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The subject of this notice had not attached himself to the visible church, though we who have been long acquainted with his godly walk and conversation are well satisfied that he had several years ago been made to hear the voice of the Son of God, and live. He never married, but left a brother, several sisters, and many other relatives and friends to mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope. Though he felt unworthy to enjoy the sweet privileges of the church on earth, yet we feel assured that his loving Lord does recognize him as worthy in the righteousness of the Beloved, to enjoy the eternal felicity of the church triumphant. May the Lord sanctify the bereavement to the good of the bereaved ones, and take all the glory to his own worthy name.

A. TOMLIN.

LACY, Arkansas.

DIED—At Elizabethport, N. J., January 2, 1884, after a brief illness, **Charles Scott**. The subject of this notice was an old and highly esteemed member of the Ebenezer Church. He was formerly a member of the Mt. Zion Church in this city, and was received into the membership of the Ebenezer Church in May, 1858, when the two churches were united. He dearly loved the church and truth of God, and for this reason was much persecuted by those who were near to him by the ties of flesh and blood, and his illness and death was not made known to the church until some weeks after his burial had taken place. We deeply mourn our loss, and feel to rejoice in the assurance that our dear brother is one of the precious sheep for whom our Savior died, and that when Christ, who is his life, shall appear, then will he also appear with him in glory.

R. M. S.

NEW YORK CITY, April 24, 1884.

Our aged sister, **Ruly Simmons**, departed this life February 26, 1884, aged 80 years and 4 months. When in her nineteenth year she was married to Thomas Mazy, professed a hope in Christ when quite young, but did not join any church until in her fifty-third year. She was afterwards married to Shadrack Guthrie, and had four children. She was afterward married to John Simmons, and was a widow when she died. She was a christian, a good wife and a loving mother. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Hopewell Church, by Elder Jerry Persell. She leaves five children, twenty-nine grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, a brother and sister, the church and other friends, to mourn their loss.

"Dearest mother, thou hast left us,
Here our loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God who hath bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal."

Your little sister in hope,
MINERVA MATTHEWS.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Tuscarora Church, Juniata Co., Pa., to convene on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May (14th), 1884, and continue three days.

The brethren and friends wishing to attend this association will take tickets for Mifflin Station, Juniata Co., Pa., where they will be met on Tuesday at all trains stopping there, and also on Wednesday morning. Those coming from the south will take the Baltimore R. R. to Harrisburg, and from thence the Pennsylvania Central R. R. to Mifflin, Juniata Co., Pa. A cordial invitation is given to all desiring to attend, and especially brethren in the ministry. The association will be held one and a half miles from the depot.

ARNOLD VARNIS, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (21st), 1884, and continue in session three days.

Brethren and friends coming to our meeting will take the morning trains on Tuesday, from Baltimore and Philadelphia, for Rowlandville, Cecil Co., Md., where they will arrive a little before noon, and be met and taken to the neighborhood of the meeting. Those coming from Wilmington, and places along that line of road, will be met in the evening of the same day. We extend a cordial invitation to all desiring to attend, and hope to see many of them who love the truth. Brethren in the ministry, come and see us.

GEORGE JENKINS, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Kingwood Church, at Locktown, Hunterdon Co., N. J., to begin on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 25th), and continue until Friday evening following.

G. M. FETTER, Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Middletown & Walkill Church, in the village of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (4th), 1884, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

Those who contemplate attending the Warwick Association can come on the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R., from the east or west, and from the north on the New York, Ontario & Western R. R., directly to Middletown.

Those coming through the city of New York can reach here at 10:56 a. m. on Wednesday, by taking the cars at the foot of Chambers Street about 8:00 o'clock a. m.

Excursion tickets from New York to Middletown and return, good for five days, at a reduced rate of fare, can be purchased at the foot of Chambers and Twenty-third Streets, New York.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the assembling of the saints.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association will be held, providence permitting, with the church at Riker's Hollow, Steuben Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (11th), 1884, and continue in session three days.

The friends will be met at Blood's Station, which is situated on the Rochester branch of the Erie R. R., also the western division of the D., L. & W. R. R. All trains will be met on Tuesday, from Buffalo, New York and Rochester. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

M. VAIL.

THE Turkey River Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists will be held at the house of Paul Sohner, five miles north-east of Waterloo, Blackhawk Co., Iowa, beginning on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1884, and continue three days, (being May 31st, June 1st and 2d), to which we cordially invite our brethren, especially our ministering brethren.

Those coming from the east and southeast will be met about noon; those from the west at 5:00 p. m., all on May 30, at Waterloo.

PAUL SOHNER, Clerk.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with Eagle Creek Church, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 6, 1884.

Those coming on the cars will be met at Findlay, Ohio, on Thursday, June 5, at the Lake Erie & Western R. R., also at the branch of the I. B. & W. R. R. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

THREE DAYS MEETINGS.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish in the SIGNS that a three days meeting will be held, providence permitting, with the Fryng Pan Church, beginning on Saturday before the second Sunday in May, 1884. The meeting will close on Monday, in time to take the afternoon train to Washington, so that time will be ample to get to the Baltimore Association. A general

invitation is extended to our ministering and other brethren.

Those coming to the meeting will take the train leaving both Washington City and Alexandria at 7:20 a. m., Saturday, May 10.

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va., March 31, 1884.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

Wm C Thomas 2, Mrs A Rippy 2, Byron Bowers 2, S T Riggs 2, B C Holland 2, H C Roberts 2, W C Hagan 2, Eld Sylvester Hassell 6, Eld George W Stout 2.—Total \$22 00.

CHURCH HISTORY NOTICE.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—From the liberal manner in which the subscribers have responded to my request, I am glad to be able to inform the brethren that, with the permission of providence, the publication of the Church History at no very distant date is now assured. Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, our oldest publishing house in the United States, have the contract to publish the book. I hope that all the remaining subscribers, who have not yet remitted the amount of the subscription (two dollars per copy), will at an early day send on the proper amount, in postal order or registered letter to the brethren Beebe, so that the latter may issue the whole edition of three thousand copies at one time.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., Feb. 7, 1882.

"DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES."

PART I.

Truth versus Error.

PART II.

A controversy between the Rev. W. H. H. Hays, who is a modern disciple of Andrew Fuller, of Missionary Baptist notoriety, and the author, upon the fundamental doctrine of the Bible and church identity.

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A FIVE DAYS DEBATE

ON

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We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size of the "Editorials" or "J. P. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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Opposite the name on the slip pasted either on the margin of the paper or on the wrapper will be observed a date, this date denotes the time at which such subscription expires, and when a remittance is made to renew the subscription the date should be watched to see that it is forwarded to such time as the remittance pays to, and if neglected, by informing us, it will be corrected. By this method each subscriber has his own account, and can see that the proper credits are given for his remittances.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1884.

NO. 11.

POETRY.

MORNING WITHOUT CLOUDS.

O BLISSFUL dawn of endless day,
When sin shall cease, and death shall die,
And Christ his glory shall display,
And beam upon my longing eye!

Then, then, my God, this soul of mine,
Bought, dearly bought, and made thine own,
In thy bright righteousness shall shine,
And have its portion on thy throne.

Then wrapt in everlasting bliss,
Midst heaven's innumerable throngs,
Thy love shall all my powers employ,
And be the theme of endless songs.

UNSPEAKABLE LOVE.

WERE the seas turned to ink, and to paper
the skies,

And all that is mortal should write,
Through the weeks, months and years of all
time as it flies,
With pens that were guided aright;

It ne'er would be told all the riches of love
That has to poor mortals been given,
To save and prepare them for mansions
above,
And dwell with their Father in heaven.

Unutterable glories, and wonders untold,
Would still be not brought into view;
Should the seas be dipped dry, and the skies
be unrolled,
With all that was written anew.

Prepare us to praise thee, O Savior divine;
For mercies again and again;
And when in bright glory with thee we shall
shine,
We'll praise thee forever. Amen.

THOMAS COLE.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PARABLE OF THE WEDDING GARMENT.

(Matthew xxii. 11-14.)

DEAR BRETHREN:—In compliance with the request of brother Benson, of Little Creek Church, Delaware, I will write a short sketch of such thoughts as seem to me connected with the above parable, for the perusal of the readers of the SIGNS, if the beloved editors shall deem them worthy of a place in their columns.

If those who may read this will turn in their Bibles to Matthew xxii., they will see that this parable is part of another parable, that of "the wedding feast." Jesus made use of common things to illustrate the kingdom of God and its reception and progress among men. This parable of the wedding feast was occasioned by what is recorded as having taken place in the closing part of the preceding chapter. There it is said that the Pharisees "sought to lay hands on him." And this opposition to him and his word he proceeds to illustrate and condemn in this parable of the wedding feast. Some were simply wedded to other things, and treated the message with indifference; while the enmity of others was aroused, and they slew the servants of the

king. It will be remembered that in another parable they are represented as slaying the son also. Now there is no doubt that all this was meant to rebuke and condemn the Pharisees of that generation. This was the way they treated the king's son and all his servants; but of what interest is all this at this day? Is this parable a mere matter of history, a mere relic of former days, or does it touch us in this day and generation? It is the glory of the Bible that it is good for all time. Human nature is always and everywhere one and the same; divine truth is also the same always, and therefore the reception of that truth by men is always the same. This parable touches us to-day, and is as true to-day as it was then. The words of Jesus are not dead formulas, but living, breathing truths, warm from heaven, and expanding more and more the more we behold them.

In this first parable two classes of men are spoken of: those who had no use for the wedding feast; and, on the other hand, those to whom the wedding feast would be a boon and a blessing. On the one hand, those who had farms and merchandise; and, on the other hand, weary travelers and beggars from the highways. On the one side, the rich; on the other, the poor. On the one side, the full; on the other, the empty. This is as true to-day as then. The poor are fed with good things by the gospel, but the rich are sent empty away. And those who are rich, ere they can ever share the wedding feast, must lose all their riches, and become poor as the beggars of the highways. Thus in this first parable the broad distinction between a child of God and a carnal man, or a merely worldly professor of religion, is pointed out.

Now, in the second parable, the one concerning which brother Benson wishes me to write, another and quite a different theme is presented. Here we are called to contemplate the guests themselves, who have been gathered in from the highways and are sitting at the feast. These are not the men who are married to their own possessions and esteem them more than they do the favor of the king, and who so hate the message of salvation that they slay those who preach it; but these are they who are among the weary and the poor, now feasting as they never conceived of doing before. These are christians, professed followers of the Lamb. Only such ever sit at the feast of the marriage of the King's Son. But even here we find two classes of men. The king comes in to see his guests,

and he finds one man who has not on a wedding garment. The king inquires about it, and he is speechless, and he is cast into outer darkness. The literal meaning of this parable every one in that day would understand. Great men, when they made such a feast as this, were accustomed to send a wedding garment to those who were bidden, which they were expected to wear, and which would show to all in the house that they were lawful guests. Not to have on the wedding garment would either show that one was not bidden to the feast, and had no right there, or else that he despised the king and the occasion that was being celebrated. In either case severe censure would be deserved by the delinquent. To bring the matter down to our own times. When the queen of England gives a reception, a certain dress is prescribed for every guest. If any man should present himself at the door without this appointed mode of dress, he would not be admitted; or if by some oversight he was admitted, he would soon be arrested and driven forth. His presence without the appointed dress would be considered an insult to the queen, an act of insubordination, and of direct disobedience to her authority. Or, to bring the literal figure closer home. If any of ourselves should make a wedding feast for a son, and one among the guests should present himself unshaved, unwashed, with dirty garments, in his shirt sleeves, and pants inside of his boots, while all the rest of the company were cleanly and decently clad, we should consider it an act of gross disrespect to ourselves and to our guests, and should feel indignant at his conduct. Now this is the literal force of the parable, which the Savior uses to illustrate matters pertaining to his kingdom.

What, then, does the wedding garment represent? First, I will say that as used in this parable, it does not represent the imputed righteousness of Christ. No one can come to this feast in the kingdom at all, except as they stand and are viewed in the righteousness of our Lord Jesus. Here is one, however, who, like all the rest, has been brought into the banqueting hall from the highways, the place where the Lord's redeemed are all found; but there is a garment which he has not on, which they who sit at that table must have on, or be guilty of insulting the king. He ought to have put it on, but he had not. It had been provided, but he had despised it. The robe of Christ's imputed righteousness is provided for none who despise it. It is for those

only who have no covering of their own. This was not this man's condition. No one ever received any condemnation because of having neglected to put on the righteousness of Christ. It is not to be put on or off by any one at pleasure; therefore this wedding garment must represent something else than the imputed righteousness of Christ. In trying to ascertain what it does signify, I would say, in the second place, that by the feast we may understand all the rights and privileges of the Lord's house, fellowship with believers, the ordinances, the christian conversation and love which exist there, and in short every privilege that exists there, which are so well calculated to strengthen and make glad and build up those who truly share these privileges. To be entitled to these privileges something is necessary to be seen in those who seek them; and these qualifications, whatever they are, are in the parable compared to the wedding garment. These qualifications, like the garment upon us, must be such as can be seen and known in the house of God, and by the servants of the King. Personal obedience to God and an outward conformity to his will are then what is signified by this wedding garment. Are there any direct scriptural references wherein this personal obedience is compared to a garment? Let us see. Revelation iii. 4: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments." Revelation xvi. 15: "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments." Many places will occur to the careful reader of the Bible where righteousness is compared to a garment clean and white, while unrighteousness is compared to an unclean garment. In the two places just quoted the personal obedience of the child of God is alluded to as a garment; and so in the parable the same thing is meant.

Now the lesson taught is this, that in order to the enjoyment of the privileges of Zion there must be a conformity to the law of Zion. If we regard merely the outward fellowship of saints, this is true. As servants of the King, we must admit none to the privileges of the house but those who are conformed to its laws. If we regard that inner fellowship and communion which is with the King and in the Spirit, it is equally true that if we keep his commandments we shall abide in his love; but not otherwise. The King himself comes in and scrutinizes all his guests. O! in his sight how many of us have not on the wedding garment, who before the servants and our fellow-guests

seem to be all that we ought. How many times has the writer of this article, right in the midst of a time of feasting, been cast into outer darkness by the coming in of the King, whose coming has shown him his own shameful disobedience and lack of conformity to God. Truly I have mourned and been angry at myself and my hard, stubborn heart and unyielding will, which naught but a blow from that hammer which breaks the hard and flinty rock could subdue.

It is in this sense that "many are called but few chosen." Of how few can it be said that they are Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile. How few can say, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith." Of how few can it be said that they always have on the wedding garment, their whole lives being a witness to the truth. When Peter denied his Lord he had not on the wedding garment; and the same was true afterward when Paul withstood him to his face, censuring him for his double dealing, concerning eating with the Gentiles. All are called to wear the wedding garment of obedience and conformity to the will of God all the time, but how few are the choice ones who do thus wear it. I do not, for one. Perhaps many will plead guilty. Brethren will understand what I mean if they will recall that in every epistle of Paul he finds much to censure in the churches, and that of only now and then one does he speak in unqualified praise. And in the addresses to the seven churches of Asia there is constant censure, and but few words of approval. Many were called but few chosen.

How many things are woven into the woof and warp of this wedding garment. All the law of Zion, all that pertains to the conversation which is in heaven, is found there. And as the believer has upon him this garment, he is prepared to enter into the joy of his Lord. Still it is true that the willing and obedient eat the good of the land.

Lastly, how glad we ought to be that our salvation beyond is secured in Christ. In that heavenly land none shall ever be found lacking, nor go out into outer darkness, who once behold the light. May we live in this hope, and walk as obedient children here, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

As ever, your brother in hope,
F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., May 6, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I will present a few of my reflections on the fifth chapter of John, which will be at your disposal. The first four verses read as follows: "After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the

troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatever disease he had." On this portion I am not able to offer any very satisfactory remarks. Suffice it to say that this pool was a public resort; and the ailing ones going down into the pool at a certain season, and being healed, might serve to set forth the benefits derived from the ceremonial institutions among the Jews, and which, being perverted by modern work-mongers, is perpetuated in the figurative import in revival meetings, anxious benches, salvation armies, &c., at the present day. But however this may be, we find that there was one at that typical pool who was not able to make use of the means which others, who were not so entirely helpless, could so adroitly use.

"And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, [where was the preacher, or pious layman?] when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another step-peth down before me."—Verses 5-7. See how utterly helpless was this poor man, being bound down with disease. He could not for the life of him avail himself of the means which were so effectual in the cases of those whose native strength was adequate in their extremity. But this one's strength, like David's, was weakened in the way. If he had been a free moral agent, the difficulties would soon have yielded to the freedom of his will. This poor man, I think, is an apt illustration of the helpless sinner's case, as he stands related to the gospel of the grace of God, who finds by sad experience, though that experience may be of thirty and eight years standing, that he is utterly helpless in himself, and also of the people there is none to help.

But having dwelt long enough on this part of the chapter, for my present purpose, I will pass to the consideration of the marvelous power of our Lord Jesus Christ, as manifested by the healing of the impotent man. It will be observed that the healing was done without the ordinary methods as applied at that pool, for it was done immediately. "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole," as was demonstrated by his taking up his bed and walking. Let it be further remembered that the man did not go down into the pool at all, but the healing was done without any visible appliances whatever, and his taking up his bed only showed what had been done previously. Here the divine power was visibly shown, in that a great miracle was performed, which no unbiased mind could deny. "And on the same day was the sabbath."

It will be proper in this place to remark that two grand points are in controversy in this chapter: the Sonship or divinity of Christ Jesus, and his authority as man; both of which

he affirms, and both of which the Jews denied. His Godhead he shows in the miracle of healing; his authority is shown in the command, "Take up thy bed, and walk." The subsequent verses are intended to elucidate this fundamental truth, his power and authority as the Son of man, in his mediatorial office, as the King of peace in the new Jerusalem of his grace. It will next be observed that this day was the sabbath; and it will be remembered that all through the old or Jewish dispensation the sabbath law was very strict, the penalty for the smallest violation being death. It is expressly commanded, "Thou shalt bear no manner of burden on the sabbath day." Now we can begin to see how the Jews, denying his divine commission, could hold Jesus amenable to the law, in the letter of which they had an understanding. And they, finding that he commanded the man to bear a burden on the sabbath, held him to be an outlaw and a sinner. Therefore they could not believe that he was of God, much less that Messiah which should come into the world.

Passing on to the sixteenth verse, it is said, "And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus." "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." Now, this was the difficulty: they could not believe that Jesus was the true Messiah, for their eyes were blinded; for if they could have understood this, they would have been the subjects of his tuition, and would have understood that he was the end of the sabbath law, and the substance of all the laws and ordinances of the receding dispensation. "For the law and the prophets were until John." And they could have understood that the end of the world had come upon that age, or that the beginning of the gospel was with the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist; and that the end of the law dispensation, or the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, would be at the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and that subsequently the great mystery, that the Gentiles should be admitted to favor, should be revealed. They failed to see the germinal and initial truth, which opens the understanding, letting in the first ray of light from the Sun of righteousness, ushering in the anti-typical sabbath rest. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," or sabbath. Had these Jews, or any one else, been able to receive this soul-vivifying truth, be they Jew or Gentile, in that age or this, they would have been able in the same gospel light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day, to see that he was Lord of the sabbath day. And as the glorious Sun of righteousness mounted to the meridian of the new heaven, and shed forth his effulgent rays upon the new earth, they might have known what this means,

"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" and also understood this Scripture, "The priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless." They would not have condemned the guiltless, who, under the pure eye of their Lord, as well as the Lord of the sabbath himself, rubbed the ears of corn and did eat. They were guiltless, as the priests in the temple were blameless; for they were the temple of God. As he hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them." For the good Shepherd had entered into the sheepfold, called his own sheep, and was leading them out, and by inductive steps was teaching them as they were able to bear it, and was training them for the gospel ministry, in which they were to let no man judge them in respect to carnal ordinances and sabbath days, which are shadows, but the substance is of Christ.

I do not understand, like the modern Pharisees, that Jesus was giving practical examples of how far his followers might disregard the law of Moses and yet be guiltless, while yet bearing allegiance to God under it; for he taught that every jot and tittle of the law was binding on its subjects. But, on the contrary, he who is its author is also its fulfiller. "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." This will fulfilled, this sacrifice made, opens up the dispensation of God's grace to the fallen sons and daughters of men. In this channel that eternal purpose of God finds the only way through which to enter and embrace the objects of his electing love, and by faith to bring them into the enjoyment of that grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. This eternal purpose survives the ruins of the fall of man, surmounts the wreck of time, raises the palm of everlasting victory over death, hell and the grave, and eventuates in the fullness of its fruition in that holy Jerusalem which John saw in vision on the isle of Patmos. Now, I understand that it is the blood-bought privilege of the redeemed and newborn subjects of grace to sabbatize in this gospel day, and antedate the eternal rest of lasting bliss, drawing sustenance from the tree of life standing on either side of the river, and in the midst of the street of the new Jerusalem.

Perhaps the reader will not have the patience to follow me through my rambling discourse, so I will turn more directly to the subject intended to be treated. This sabbath Rock is the place at the foot of which we shall find more broken arrows and shattered bones than at almost any other place in the battle-field of Immanuel, for this is the citadel of God's people in all ages of the world; for this sabbath Rock is Christ. He says, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." Take this away, and there is no rest, no hope, no life.

Therefore the devil opens his sally-port right against this Rock; and if antichrist could cut off the saints from this retreat, then it would require a miracle indeed to preserve life in them. But this, we are assured, can never be done; for the highest authority has declared, "The gates of hell shall not prevail." And, "Because I live, ye shall live also." It is enough. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Wherefore, my brethren, let us labor to enter into this rest.

"Six days shall work be done; but the seventh is the sabbath of the Lord. In it thou shalt do no work." "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest." "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Now, in these quotations we have the type and antitype brought together, by one of the judges in Israel, who are possessed of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, with power to bind and loose; and this same judge and witness of Jesus has in this same epistle, and in others, given an exhaustive argument in proof of the perfect priesthood of Christ; and also his decision, in the plainest and most simple terms, that the old covenant, with all its types and shadows, is taken out of the way. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." In this decision he refers his brethren to the institution of the seventh day sabbath, and holds the original institution as observed by the Creator of the world. He holds it but as a type of good things to come. When God gave it to Moses in commandment, he gave as the reason that he had rested on that day from all his works. Now then, if it was only typical in its original institution, and was commemorative of his works in the old creation, then we argue, from the reasoning of the apostle, that it is passed away, with all other things that were typical; and its fulfillment is realized by the saints in its antitypical import when they believe in Christ, and its obligations are fulfilled in the newness of the Spirit. If the observance of the seventh day under the law was the sign between God and his typical people that he had delivered them from Egyptian bondage, in the letter, then faith, or rest in Christ, in the new creation, is the sign between Christ and his antitypical Israel. Hence it is said, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved;" or, in other words, he that believes, and proves his faith by his works, which are the appropriate fruits of faith.

We will now call attention to the third chapter of second Corinthians. The whole chapter is full to our purpose. "Who also hath made us able

ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." Here we have the old covenant of works and the new covenant of grace contrasted. We are informed that only death is ministered by the law written on tables of stone. It was the law, as the minister of death, that Jesus fulfilled; and having obeyed it both in precept and penalty, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him. And having abolished death, by suffering the death penalty of the law, all that believe on him are justified; which justification they could not have had by the law of Moses. So believers are not under the law, as the means of their justification, for he became the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Hence the sabbath law, with all the other writings on tables of stone, having met ample satisfaction by the atonement which was made, have no more power to condemn the subjects of the new covenant, as delivered from the curse, that being dead wherein they were held, that they might serve God in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. In the new covenant, or ministry of righteousness, the law is written in the hearts and in the minds. In this covenant God has granted to them the knowledge of himself, which consists in a knowledge of his goodness in the forgiveness of their sins. When this is given, through faith in Christ, there sabbath rest begins.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

JANUARY 20, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I have delayed sending my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on account of the following letter, which I have long desired to send you, but could never get my mind in a frame for writing, until the last few weeks. I trust the Lord has enabled me to again give utterance in part to what I humbly hope have been his dealings with me. Though written in an awkward manner, I hope it will meet with that same spirit of forbearance which has heretofore characterized all that I have seen from your pen. When you shall have carefully examined all that I have written, please give me your judgment on what is written, through a private letter; for if ever there was one poor, mourning soul who desired to know his true condition, it is I. You need not fear that I will become offended at anything you may say, for I have long since learned to know that the wounds of a friend are more faithful than the kisses of an enemy. I will now copy

what I have previously written for your perusal.

I have commenced at the beginning of my life, for I cannot tell the time when I did not believe there was an all-wise Creator and sovereign Ruler of the universe. Even in my most tender years have I often sought some secluded spot, where I could kneel in prayer to God, asking him to forgive my sins and lead me in the only true and living way. Young as I was, I often noted the great difference there was in professors of religion, and have felt perplexed to know who was right. My mother was a very firm Old School Baptist, and I always felt, when hearing her relate her experience, that there must be something real in what she was saying, for I never knew her to tell a falsehood or try to deceive. But I never felt the power of this work so greatly within my own heart until the second summer after I was married, which was in the year 1867. Previous to my marriage I had been very wild, and engaged in all the gayeties of life. Now that I was more settled, the thought came to me what a giddy distance I was from God. I began to feel troubled, and a kind of gloom and melancholy settled over my life, which I could not account for. Each day my spirits grew more and more depressed, until the burden on my heart seemed greater than I could bear. I tried in every way to dissipate the gloom; but turn which way I would, death and decay seemed pictured upon every object, and I felt that I was fast hastening on to a something I knew not what. I cannot say that I felt I was a great sinner, but I felt a longing desire for something I did not possess. In short, I wanted to feel that the Lord was my God, and that Christ was my Savior. Thus time passed on until the following winter, when my babe was taken sick, and lay for five long weeks between life and death. As I hovered around his pillow, believing that death would rob me of my boy, bitter rebellion arose in my heart against God for making my life so desolate. As I sat by his cradle one night, watching the pale, emaciated form and hurried breathing of my helpless child, something made me feel that I was an awful sinner in the sight of God, and that was why he was taking my child from me. In the anguish of this moment I sought for my Bible, which I had read often before without receiving much comfort. I opened it, and began reading about the crucifixion of Christ. All at once the scene on Calvary opened up before me, and something seemed to say that his blood was the propitiation for my sins, and that it was shed for me. Such love sprang up in my bosom at this moment that I closed the book, and went off, and knelt down, and asked God to take my boy, or take all I had, but give me Jesus. Immediately the burden was lifted from my heart, and I felt a joyous, happy feeling, which I never had experienced before in my life. I then went to the lady of the house with whom I lived, and tried to tell her

how I felt. She told me I was crazy about my child. I saw that I could not make her understand me, and therefore I said no more. But I soon felt an earnest desire to unite with the church. As my husband's father was a Presbyterian, and seemed to desire me to join them, I attended their meeting, to see how I would like them; but it was only when I would go to a Baptist Church of the Regular order that I could feel that their people was my people, and their God my God. I thought the preacher told my feelings better than I could myself; and the members, especially the old ladies, looked so pure and holy, I longed to kneel at their feet and tell them how I loved them. But I could never summon courage to go before the church until the next year. My mother was taken sick and died. This great trouble crushed me so that I was humbled sufficiently to lay my case before the church, and was received, greatly to my surprise; for I could tell them but very little. For several years after I joined the church I know there never was any one who enjoyed the meetings more than I did. Peace and harmony ruled, and I felt that the Lord was in our midst. After this, trouble arose, both in our church and in my family. I never could understand the exact nature or cause of the trouble in the church, but I knew only too well the cause of the trouble in my family circle. My family had increased to a considerable extent, and I began to feel that without an over-exertion on my part a maintenance for my little ones could not be kept up. This led me to devote my time and energy to the care of my home, greatly to the neglect of my church duties. Sometimes I would feel such a thirst for spiritual nourishment, I would lay aside all and go to the church, only to meet a disappointment, for the most I could hear would be a rebuke of some kind; and as I was of a very sensitive nature, I would take it all to myself, and would go home feeling that I was sorely beaten. I sometimes thought the pastor reproached the members for what he allowed himself, and this led me to sometimes speak unadvisedly. I believe he became offended, for he began to treat me coldly. This troubled me so much, I would think about going to him and having a talk, that we might understand each other better; but I kept deferring the matter, until my mind became so much engrossed about home affairs that I felt I was wrong, and that everything around me was wrong. In trying to mend matters, they only became worse. I then began to feel that the whole world, as far as I could see, was but a seething mass of corruption. Then it was that the prayer recorded in the sixty-fourth chapter of Isaiah entered my heart, "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!"

I wanted to see an illustration of God's power, so that I could feel that he did still reign. Little did I know that I was praying for the sore destruction of my sinful flesh. About this time a heavy weight was laid upon me, which I cannot describe. I felt that I lived in an element of impurity. The very air that I breathed seemed impure. In reviewing my past experience, I felt that I had caught the shadow and missed the substance. My sins, as well as the sins of others, which heretofore looked wrong, now appeared exceedingly sinful. All the sins I had ever committed rose up before me, and, as a dear brother has described it, at first they looked no larger than a man's hand; but they kept increasing until they stood before me as a huge mountain. God's holy law and its righteous demands were presented to me in a light I had never before seen them, and I felt that the wrath of an offended God was being inflicted on me. So great was my torture, I would think I was being trodden in the wine-press of the wrath of Almighty God. About this time I received a number of the SIGNS, which contained a piece written by a brother in New Jersey, upon the defilement of the temple. As soon as I read it, I believed I had found the solution of my trouble, and fearful indeed was my case. My friends, neighbors and relatives began to forsake me, believing, I fear, that I was bewitched, or that a dreadful curse had fallen upon me. My health failed, my nervous system gave down, my mind wandered, and I would sometimes stagger in utter blindness. This was during the extreme drouth of the year 1881. So with me there was not only an inward scorching and burning up of the sordid matters of earth, but all nature bore the same glaring, desperate appearance. I struggled on in this way for eight or ten months. One evening, as I sat leaning my head on the window, the moon arose, looking unusually large and red. One of my children came to me and asked me what was the matter with the moon, and if I thought the judgment day was coming. I told her I felt like it had already come to me. As I spoke these words such an unearthly feeling came over me, I turned to my Bible, which I kept constantly by my side, and tried to find something that would fathom the depth of my feelings; but no light was shown me. I then began reading my hymn book, and as I read the portions of hymns upon the subject of sanctification, I was made to feel in some way that God's special purpose was being fulfilled in me. At first I was somewhat alarmed; then a deep sense of unworthiness was experienced, and I began pacing the floor with uplifted hands, crying, Unworthy! unworthy! Then again I turned to the Bible, and these words were applied with much force and comfort, "Whatsoever thou shalt ask in my name shall be given thee." For the first time in months a sense of peace and quiet stole over me, and I lay down that night feeling that I could once more sleep; but no

sooner had I fallen into a doze than something came like a peal of thunder. I thought the judgment day had come; and as I arose from my bed these words involuntarily escaped my lips, "Great is the mystery of godliness." I thought I heard the thunders of Sinai, and looking out of the window the whole heavens were in commotion. The clouds were flying hither and thither, and dropping down like they would touch the earth. In terror I ran to my bed and covered my face in my pillow, when a voice spake, saying I was in Babylon. "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever." I arose and burst into tears. My husband said to me, "What is the matter? What do you want?" I told him I wanted that bread of life which comes down from heaven. He replied, "Why, you are a christian. I have depended on your prayers saving me." I told him not to do that, for I could not save myself. I then told him to look how sinful we were, and how could God be merciful to such worthless beings as we were? Toward morning I fell on my bed and went to sleep, and as I awoke these words came to me, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity." What does this mean? The morning was bright, and everything looked so natural, that I thought I was laboring under an hallucination of mind or a disordered brain. But it was not long before I again felt that mysterious something around me, and one passage of Scripture after another came pouring into my mind, such as these, "So is this nation before me, saith the Lord; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean." "I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother." "I have chosen thee." "Jesus, thy elder Brother." "Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; but believe them not." Now, this is what I remember most distinctly. I cannot tell the state of my mind at this time. My family believed I was losing my mind, for I felt so different from every one else. Were it not for my Bible and the SIGNS, I would never have known what had happened to me; and even now I am at times so perplexed and bewildered that I know not what to do. I have tried to obey the injunction of the Scriptures, to "remember those that have the rule over you;" but when considering the end of their conversation, I find it is not always in harmony with my experience. I know I have not the gift to expound the Scriptures, but I think I know when the truth is preached. Our pastor says there is no such thing in the Bible as eternal vital union, and it is unscriptural doctrine. I know

there are no such words as these in the Bible, but there are such words as these, "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched," &c., "but ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."—Heb. xii. 18-23. What does the apostle John say concerning this church, or city, which he saw while on the isle of Patmos, or while in the spirit on the Lord's day? "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—Rev. xxi. 2. He did not say he saw her springing up out of the earth, being prepared and adorned as a bride for her husband; but he saw her coming down from heaven, already prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I do most firmly believe that in being born of the Spirit we come forth of that life which has always existed in Christ as our spiritual Head; just as in being born of the flesh we come forth of the life which was given to Adam as our natural head. Being the subjects of two births, we are in possession of two natures, which are so antagonistic to each other that it creates what is called the warfare, which I believe every christian experiences. I know the contending emotions in my breast are at times so great that I am made to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I have thought my experience and afflictions were for the benefit of others as well as myself; but in trying to tell all, and what my belief is, I have made many blunders. I know I should not have made the attempt if something had not said, "Go, and I will put upon you no other burden." I could not conscientiously leave my church without telling my reasons. When I did, they asked me to defer the matter, which I did for several months. I again made the request, and they again desired me to give my reasons before a large and intelligent audience. What I want to know of you is this, Do you think I am a subject for the visibly organized church or not? Could you see how I am plagued, and the evils that attend me, you would think I was not.

I am your unworthy, suffering servant,
A. S.

BUTLER, Md., Feb. 27, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—With your kind permission I will note some cheering and grand truths which the Scriptures, the revealed word of inspiration, contain, and are given to the church, which is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone.

Dear brethren and sisters composing this building of mercy, which shall be built up forever, being built upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and the

gates of hell shall not prevail against it, an inspired writer has told us, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." We have found this true in our individual, personal experience. Satan, sin and unbelief, allied with natural reason, the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, are the inveterate foes that war against the Spirit. This warfare every child of God is called to pass through. Therefore may we all heed the injunction of the apostle, addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth."—Eph. vi. 10-14. I do not think the church ever saw a more wicked and evil day than the present, being surrounded with "Lo heres" and "Lo theres." But none, except those who have on the whole armor of God, can stand in this evil day; and this armor is the Son of his love, the called, the faithful and true. The church having put on the Lord Jesus, the author and finisher of her faith, is arrayed in love, righteousness and peace. Her good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep, has brought them forth conquerors over all principalities and powers. Though tempted and tried, we are more than conquerors through Christ, who loved us, and in every temptation makes a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. Long standing makes the loins weak; so we are not able to stand the temptations of the flesh, the world and Satan, unless the loins of the mind are girt about with truth. Christ says, "I am the truth." The truth as it is in Christ is a girdle to brace up and strengthen the mind of those who delight in the law of God after the inward man. But they see another law in their members, warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. In this spiritual warfare we must have the whole armor. "The breastplate of righteousness." This is no other righteousness than that in which we stand perfectly justified in the sight of God, the everlasting righteousness of him who is "The Lord our righteousness."—Jer. xxiii. 6. "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." When the archenemy has strewn so many difficulties and perplexities in the pathway of Zion's pilgrims, and the road is rugged, we would turn back, our foes being too strong, unless we have this precious peace which is revealed in the gospel. Christ is our peace.—Eph. ii. 14.

And "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," according to his rich love and marvelous grace. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."—2 Peter i. 4. "Above all, taking the shield of faith." Fiery darts, shot from the bow of Satan's burning rage and malice, fly thick around us, such as strong temptations, horrid thoughts against God, distressing and despairing thoughts of the hope of salvation, by suggestions like these: You a child of God? you a believer in Christ? you an heir of glory? Your faith is a fancy and your hope a delusion. You are an accursed sinner. Such darts can only be resisted by the shield of faith, in holding up the work of Jesus, which always repels them. The blood of Christ, the dear Lamb of God, cleanseth us from all sin. My Savior's blood atoned for my sins. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. viii. 33, 34. "And take the helmet of salvation." "Let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."—1 Thess. v. 8. "Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. In this gospel, which the inspired writer calls "our gospel," we stand perfect and complete in the will of God. It is this glorious gospel that guards us against the corrupt doctrines and commandments of men. "And take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." By this sword we guard ourselves against every intruding, insulting foe, all the lying accusations, soul-dejecting, Christ-dishonoring suggestions of Satan. When the Spirit applies the word of God to our hearts, neither wicked men nor devils can stand against us. He bids us call upon him in the day of trouble, saying, "I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."—Psa. l. 15. "For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."—Rom. x. 11. This was verified and proved by that sorely tempted and tried one, the prophet Daniel, who seems to be a lively type of the church of the living God. His enemies said of him, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."—Daniel vi. 5. So I find it is with the Old School Baptist Church; her enemies can find nothing against her, except they find it concerning the law of her God. They assail her upon her doctrine, and deride her faith, hope and baptism, which are more precious to her than

life, as the law of Daniel's God was more desired by him than an eminent station. The king threatened him with death by a law that could not be changed; yet he remained steadfast and immovable, being kept by the power of God, and constrained by his love to obedience. The elect bride also says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice."—1 Peter i. 3-6. The apostle Peter was generally the spokesman for the other disciples, so he now speaks for and in behalf of the church, the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." This highly favored and eternally beloved people have ceased from their own works and entered into rest, that sweet sabbath of which the Jewish sabbath was the shadow or sign given them, "that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."—Ezekiel xx. 12. The sabbath of rest which his people under this gospel dispensation enter into, is the kingdom of the Son of God, they being translated out of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."—Col. i. 14. "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah."—Psalm lxxxvii. 5, 6. The Son of the Highest "shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."—Luke i. 23. These Scriptures prove two grand truths. The sabbath into which his people enter and rest is an eternal, perpetual one; and they enter it by a birth. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Then surely the seventh day, as a sabbath, has passed away. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his."—Heb. iv. 9, 10. Why then does the apostle in the very next verse say, "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief?" Surely here we are again reminded of those inveterate foes which are of our own household, Satan, reason, unbelief, and all the works of the flesh, which war against the Spirit, and against which we are called upon to wrestle, even these principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. But thanks be to God, the mighty Angel which John saw when on the isle of Patmos, standing with

his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, has the sea of the wrath of all the enemies of his redeemed under his foot, as well as the opposition that is in the earthen vessels of his purchased possession. All those whom he purchased with his own blood are not under condemnation. Therefore we are admonished to labor, or wrestle against these enemies, and not let them prevent our entering into that sweet, perpetual, everlasting rest that remaineth to the people of God. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Heb. iv. 15, 16. May he sanctify our afflictions to our good, and give us grace humbly to submit to his righteous will in all the dispensations of his providence concerning us.

Yours in bonds of fellowship,
THOMAS H. SCOTT.

SCIO, Linn Co., Oregon, April 23, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have again taken pen in hand to trouble you reading some more of my scribbling. I received a letter a few days ago from our esteemed brother, John Downey, of Varna, Marshall County, Illinois, who takes exceptions to some things contained in my communication published in the SIGNS of April first; and as the brother has misapprehended me, and called upon me for an explanation, I feel it to be my duty to comply with his request, and I hope the brother will excuse me for doing so through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am truly sorry to trouble you again with this matter, and thought I would answer the brother's letter privately; and then I thought that if through my bungling manner of expressing my views, brother Downey misapprehended me, it might be that other brethren had done so also. But even now, if you judge what I shall write to be unworthy a place in the SIGNS, which doubtless will be the case, please remail it direct to brother Downey, and all will be right with me.

Brother Downey writes thus: "I acknowledge that what is said about the multiplicity to Eve is a mystery to me; neither have I seen anything without objections. When sin entered the world there was a sentence of punishment passed on each character. First, 'Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle,' &c. Second, 'Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception,' &c. Third, 'Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife,' &c. Now we learn that God created everything with seed in itself after its kind, and God ended his work on the sixth day, and rested on the seventh; and all that came after is a multiplying of what he had already made. Now, if the increased multiplying pronounced against Eve as a punishment is bringing in an-

other seed, and that seed had no standing in Adam as a seminal head in his creation, please tell me where they had a standing in a created head. The woman could not have seed in herself separate from her husband. Multiply admits of but one definition, and that is to increase bulk of what you have, or are multiplying; hence no person can multiply that which he has not. Again, if we say this cursed seed was brought in then, or created then, would it not contradict the word of God, which says he ended his work on the sixth day?" I answer, Most assuredly it would contradict the Scriptures. But permit me, my dear brother, to say to you, I do not blame you for misapprehending me, but please do not misrepresent me. You, my dear brother, have coined words which you neither found in the Bible nor in my communication referred to, and cast them into my teeth. You say, "Now, if the increased multiplying pronounced against Eve as a punishment is bringing in another seed, and that seed had no standing in Adam as a seminal head in his creation, please tell me where they had a standing in a created head," &c. Now, my dear brother, did I say that the increased multiplying pronounced against Eve as a punishment was bringing in another seed, and that seed had no standing in Adam as a seminal head in his creation? I positively affirm I did not. It is merely your construction. Now, brother Downey, when God created Adam, did he create him without seed? And when he said to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply," did he then create seed in them? Why, according to your criticising my writing, it would be even so. But did he not rather command them thus, because he had in their creation created them with their seed in themselves? Do you not think so? I do. In like manner, when he said to mother Eve, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception," he did not then create that seed in them; but he said so because in their original creation they were created with their seed in themselves, and the conception of that seed was greatly multiplied in Eve after transgression. See my communication in SIGNS, page 74, at the bottom of first column: "So the whole world originally sprang from Adam and Eve." Now, lest I might be misunderstood again, I will ask the question, Were those of the first multiplication better by nature than those of the second? I answer, No, by no means. If they had been conceived and born into the world before transgression, they would have been better; but they being conceived and born after transgression, partook of all the direful consequences of the fall, for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Brother Downey says further, "Again, Noah was righteous in his generation, and of the first multiplication, and Cain's seed were all drowned. How is it there is a generation of vipers after the flood?" To which I will answer, I did not suppose that any one would understand

me to mean that Cain was the only person added. It would be no multiplication at all. It would in no wise fill the promise, "I will greatly multiply," &c. And we read, "And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters." How many of these were of the first or of the second multiplicity we do not know. But you take a very meager view of things. Do you suppose that the command given to Adam to multiply was only applicable to him in his distinct personage? Did not you and I receive the law in Adam? Did not we receive the sentence of death in Adam's transgression? And when God said, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground," &c., were not those words just as applicable to you and me as they were to Adam when spoken to him? Have we not realized it all the days of our lives? Even so, when God said to Eve, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception," &c., they were applicable to every daughter of Eve; and they continue multiplying, and will continue until the end of time. Every mother realizes the multiplicity of sorrow, which is an evidence that the multiplicity of conception continues to progress also, although not as readily perceived. And as the first multiplicity is still multiplying, even so also is the second. Rebekah conceived twin brothers, Esau and Jacob, at the same conception, and they were both born at the same birth; yet Esau was a child of the flesh and (I believe) of the second multiplicity, and Jacob was a child of promise and of the first multiplicity. So you see it was not necessary that Cain's progeny should survive the flood in order to produce the generation of vipers, as there have been many millions of Cains born since Cain the first-born from Adam was born into the world. The Scriptures evidently do establish the fact that there are two multiplicities or generations of human beings in the world, the generation of the righteous and the generation of the wicked; and daily observation tells us that each is multiplying, and that the wicked are greatly multiplying, *i. e.*, more abundantly than the righteous. John says, "In this [*i. e.*, being born again] the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil."—1 John iii. 10.

Excuse the many mistakes. I was very much interrupted by company while writing.

Your brother in Christ, as I sometimes hope,

JOHN STIPP.

TOUCHET, W. T., April 18, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—At the request of Elder G. E. Mayfield and myself, our dear old brother, Elder J. A. Bullock, has written a letter, giving us a relation of his call to the ministry of the gospel, and closing with a little advice to young ministers; all of which I now send to you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you think proper to do so. I have the consent

of Elder Bullock to send it for publication, if we thought it would afford any encouragement to any of the dear children of God. And as we have been greatly comforted in reading the dealings of our dear Lord with one of his ablest servants, I feel that others might realize a pleasure in reading it.

Yours in bonds of love,
R. CUMMINS.

GOLDENDALE, W. T., March 3, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—

After some delay, I will now try to comply with your request for a relation of my call to the ministry of the gospel of Christ. Though I realize my weakness and inability to such an extent that I am almost inclined to shrink from the task, yet I will try to give some of my reasons for exercising such a high calling; and in order to do so, I shall have to go back to the time that I believe I received the first impression, which was, if I mistake not, in the month of May, 1859. One day, while engaged at work on my farm, very suddenly and unexpectedly the impression settled upon my mind that I should preach the gospel of Christ and comfort my brethren; but the thought shocked me with surprise and astonishment. I could not think it was of the Lord, for he is all-powerful and wise, and I was all weakness and ignorance. I was so doubtful of my hope that I had not yet been able to go forward in the ordinance of baptism, and felt so unworthy that I did not think I ever could. Besides all this, I was so uneducated that I could hardly read the Scriptures. So, taking all things into consideration, I could not think that I was the man to fill that place. Still my mind was burdened with something that I could not account for, and such Scriptures as the following, "Strengthen thy brethren," "Comfort one another," would be constantly on my mind. Sometimes I would find myself tracing these Scriptures out in their application. Then I would feel relieved to some extent, but still my mind was burdened with something, I hardly knew what. Yet I thought it would wear off soon, for I could not think the Lord would call a man to preach when he had not enabled him to make a public confession of him as his Savior. But this gave me very little relief, and my mind became so troubled that I knew not what to do. I could not be at rest. Thus it went on until November, when I went to the church, and was received into the fellowship of the church. I thought that now I would be easy in my mind, but such was not the case. I was still burdened with the subject of preaching the gospel. I thought I could to some extent realize the feelings of the prophet Jeremiah when he said that the word of the Lord was like fire shut up in his bones, and he was weary with forbearing. I felt to adopt the language of the apostle Paul when he exclaimed, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." But I kept the matter to myself. Finally I concluded that if ever the oppor-

tunity offered for me to go forward in prayer, I would try to do that; but to try to preach, I thought I never could, as I viewed the subject with such sacred awe, and felt myself such a poor, sinful creature, that I dared not think of engaging in such a high and holy calling. Thus I went on, cast down in mind for some months. One day, while riding in company with our pastor to meeting, he said that he should call on me to go forward in prayer. I requested him not to do so. However, when we got to the place of meeting, he asked me to go forward in prayer, and I went forward, and made my first attempt to speak in public, and a very weak effort it was. I felt some relief, but my mind was still sorely pressed with the subject of preaching. I could not get the consent of my mind to venture forward, until one day I went to meeting and the preacher was not there. The church said that I must go forward in prayer, so I complied with their request, having no thought of making any attempt at preaching. But while I was engaged in prayer, a portion of Scripture was forced upon my mind with such weight that I had to close. The Scripture was, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" So I quoted the Scripture, and talked for about a half-hour before I thought of myself. Then I stopped short, and asked the church to pardon me, for I thought that I had disgraced the cause and wounded the feelings of my brethren. But they said I had done no harm, and that they wanted to hear me again on the next Sunday. I thought I would never attempt to speak in public any more, and that I would quit going forward even in prayer, for then I would be sure not to try to preach. I did quit for some time, but finally went forward again in prayer, and before I could close these words came with force into my mind, "All the promises in him [Christ] are yea and amen, to the glory of God by us." I took the words for a text, and went on with the subject, talking at some length. When I got through and sat down I felt completely whipped, and condemned that I had no control over myself, and that if it was the Lord's work, the church would find it out and judge of the gift. I believed that she was honest, and would deal faithfully with me. So I continued to speak occasionally, and the church took my case under consideration, and gave me liberty to exercise my gift. I continued through much weakness to preach Christ and him crucified, as our only hope for salvation. I often thought in my youthful days that I would fill up my appointments and quit trying to preach, for I had such doubts of the reality of my call to the work of the ministry that I feared I was doing wrong; but I have never yet been able to fulfill those promises. I feel that the church has been very lenient with me these many years; and were it not that I placed such confidence in her judgment and faithfulness, I should

have been as miserable as I am weak. But believing that the mind of the Lord is with his people, I am glad to be their servant, and content to be the least of all; for I think that the church is and should be the judge of her servants' gifts, which God gives her. We read that she shall judge angels, or ministers. She must try the spirits; and if any bring not this doctrine, receive them not into your house. Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel than that which we have preached, let him be accursed. The church at Jerusalem was so cautious that she would not receive one of the ablest preachers God had sent her, until he was recommended by a brother whom she knew to be faithful. I refer to the case of the apostle Paul. He was recommended to them by Barnabas. The apostle Paul was called and qualified of God to preach the gospel of Christ; and he preached Christ to the Jews at Damascus, and then went to Jerusalem and wanted to join himself to the brethren there, but they were afraid of him. Barnabas took him, and told them that he had preached Christ publicly at Damascus; then they received him. And in every instance when they sent ministers, they sent them recommended. When the apostle Paul gave instructions to the church in relation to her gifts, he said she must first know that they were sound in the faith of the gospel of God, and had a good report of them that are without. "Not a novice," or one newly come into the faith. So in every instance the church should prove her ministers before she lets them go out into the world; for if she does not she is liable to be misrepresented in faith or doctrine, or both, or to impose on the brethren wherever they go. For this reason she should be very cautious, and hold them until she has tried them, and found them to be faithful. I would here say to younger brethren in the ministry, You are much safer in the hands of the church than in the hands of the world, or in your own counsel. When you would be great, turn and listen to the words of your heavenly King, "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." When the servant pleases them, they will let him know it by their actions, for the church will show by her actions to what extent she approves of his services. If she manifests her approval by giving him license or ordination, let him receive it with humble gratitude, knowing that we are at best but poor, unprofitable servants, and that it is safe for us to receive counsel of our brethren at all times.

J. A. BULLOCK.

NEEDMORE, Pa., Dec., 1882.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—After closing the business part of my letter, I feel as though I ought to write something for our paper; but I feel as though my thoughts were sealed, and that nothing worthy of notice could proceed from one so vile as I feel myself to be. But God, who is always present, and willing to lend a

helping hand to those who are his called and chosen, will help me and direct me what to write, if my desire is of the Lord. He is a powerful God, and is able to accomplish his will; for he holds the power of earth and hell in his hand, and nothing is beneath his notice. Even the smallest insect that crawls upon the earth, and the king upon his throne, are under his protection. Then, if he watches over the insects, he surely will provide for those he has called and chosen according to his purpose. Although we may not understand his purpose at all times, yet he will make himself known. For he has said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." The Lord is powerful to deliver those who call upon him by faith. Jonah said, "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou hearest my voice." Jonah had not learned that salvation was of the Lord until he had delivered him from the whale's belly; then he could praise God with a true heart. Before this, he had tried to flee from the command of God, and was going his own way, to establish his own ends; but the Lord showed him that he was God, and that he had power. So God shows his children to-day that he is God, and not man. Although we may not learn it in as strange a school as did Jonah, yet we learn it of him who formed the heavens and the earth. As Jonah was taught the power of God, he supposed that the earth with her bars were closed about him forever. Most of the grand truth of God has to be learned by trouble. It has to be burned into us by affliction, otherwise we should not truly receive it. We are not taught salvation by the will nor by the power of man, but by the power of God. The whole work whereby men are saved from their fallen estate of sin and ruin, and are translated into the kingdom of God, and made heirs of eternal life, is of God, and of him only. No human or created being assisted God in planning salvation. He purposed the way, even as he himself carried it out. It was purposed before the existence of angels. God had purposed to save man, whom he foresaw would fall. He did not create angels to help him plan; no, he did all himself. We might ask, With whom took he counsel? Who instructed him when he purposed the great work of mercy? With whom took he counsel when he digged the deeps of love, that of them there might well up springs of salvation? Who aided him? None. He did it. If angels had then been in existence, they could not have assisted him. If he had put the question to the angels, "How can these things be? How can justice have its demands fulfilled, and yet mercy reign?" the angels would have remained silent; they could not have dictated the plan. But the plan was of God, and of him only, and he is the one that deserves the praise; for without

him there could not have been salvation. As it was his in purpose, so it was his in execution. No one has helped God in providing salvation. He gives it to as many as he will. The Arminians may preach that all may have salvation if they will comply with the easy terms of the gospel, as they call it; but, poor creatures, how can they comply with the teaching of God's word, unless aided by him? They will tell you to exercise faith in God. How can they exercise faith if they have not got it? And how can they get it, unless it is given to them by God? They will tell you that if you are not a christian it is your own fault; but Jesus says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." They will tell you that you can. Now, shall we believe them, and make God a liar? "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." If God were to require the first step of the sinner dead in trespasses and sins, he would require that which would make salvation as impossible under the gospel as it ever was under the law; for man is as unable to believe, unless helped by the power of God, as he is to obey. It is just as consistent to say that the man who is actually dead has the power within himself to arise and walk, as it is for one who is dead in trespasses and sins to change himself from nature's darkness into the light and liberty of the gospel. It was just as easy for the dead Lazarus to break the chains and fetters that bound him in the grave, as it is for one who is blinded by the god of this world, and in the service of Satan, to turn by his own will, without being led by the Spirit of God, and serve God; for it is "By grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." When we hear men, who claim to be the chosen of God, say that we must first seek Christ before he will seek us, we may set it down that Christ has never revealed himself to them. They have never had the fallow ground of their hearts broken up. They have never been made to mourn and weep on account of sin. If they have only had their fleshly passion aroused, it was not that true and genuine repentance which has its origin in God. A work of this sort will not last; it will not stand the test, when God comes to make up his jewels. Then they will pray for the mountains and hills to fall on them, and hide them from the presence of God; while those who have been led about and instructed by the Lord will hear the welcome plaudit, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." May this be our happy lot, one and all, is our prayer for Jesus' sake.

I have already written more than I intended to, and it is very imperfect, like the writer. If you can find anything in it worth your notice, you can publish it; if not, let it fill its place in the waste-basket.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
D. A. MELLOTT.

CANTON, Texas, April 29, 1884.

ELDER WM. J. PURINGTON—DEAR BROTHER:—Write to ask you if the word "die" is translated from the same original word in every place where the word is used in the Scriptures, as I find there are several kinds of death spoken of. Now, what I want to know is, Were not words used in the original tongue to express or signify what kind of death was meant or understood, whether of the body or some faculty, &c.? If you are minded to comply with this request, please do so, and publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so that others may be instructed as well as myself, and much oblige one who wants to know and love the truth as it is in Christ the Lord.

E. J. PARSONS.

[The letter containing the preceding requests, having been wrongly directed, did not reach me until recently.—W. J. P.]

REPLY.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—If you think proper to publish this reply, do so; and if not, please return me the manuscript. I shall not comment on any of the expressions, or elaborate any of them, but simply give the definitions, as brother P. requests, because I cannot write an article without controverting error; and as you have prohibited controversy, I shall only, in a brief manner, define the terms, &c.

The true and just meaning of the term "death" in the Scriptures is separation, and nowhere in the Bible does it mean annihilation, or non-existence; but it has various meanings in the Scriptures, according to the context in which it is found, and the careful reader will certainly discover that; and it is from different original words, as shall be presently shown. There is a death to uprightness or innocency; there is the death of the body; there is a death in trespasses and sins; there is a death to the law; there is a death caused by the disobedience of God's dear children; and there is a death which is everlasting separation from holiness and God. Now all these different conditions are recorded in the Scriptures, and, as already stated, mean separation.

Now, my brother, your particular requests shall be attended to. It was said to Adam, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In the Hebrew, when it means the act or state of expiring, the word is *gava*, to gasp or breathe out; but when the verb "die" was applied in the case of Adam's transgression, the word is *muth*, or die, involving both separation from his uprightness as a creature of God, and death of the body. When one died in the presence of witnesses or his brethren, the word used is *naphal*. In the New Testament, when the literal death of persons is referred to, the word used is *apothnesko*, to die off, &c. When it was said one should die for the people, the word used was *apollumi*, to loose of. When it was pronounced that one should die, the word is *teleutao*. When the verb is in the past tense in Hebrew, the word is *maveth*. Having given a number of examples where the verb is used, now we will give some where the word "dead" is used, either as an adjective or a noun; also the word "death." As a noun, or substantive, the word

"dead" is from *nekros*; for said the Savior, "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." In this case the word *nekros* has its two-fold meaning, dead literally, and dead in trespasses and in sins; the one separated from natural life, the other from God and righteousness; and when the word is used as an adjective it is from the same original. When Christ said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live," the dead here spoken of are such as are dead in trespasses and sins, although the same original word *nekros* is used. But another class is immediately spoken of; for said the Savior, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." The graves spoken of is not a metaphor here, for it is from *mnemeion*, graves, receptacles, or the charnel-house of the literally dead; and the damnation spoken of is one of the true meanings of the term "death," and is from *apoleia*, a loosing away. Where the apostle Paul says, "I die daily," the same word *apothnesko* is used, and shows that in his experience there was a daily separation from trusting in himself. This word is used to represent death in its various forms seventy-four times in the New Testament, the context always showing what death is meant. When the apostle says, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved," &c., the word used to represent death is *kataluo*, to loose down, to liberate from, &c.

I might go on, my brother, to make many quotations showing the different kinds of death recorded in the Scriptures, and the different original words from which they are derived; but the matter can be brought to the one awfully solemn point, that death simply and positively means separation, and not annihilation. The only safe way for any of us to know what death is meant in the Scriptures, is to carefully notice the context, for there always is something preceding or succeeding that word "death" to tell what it is. I have briefly complied with your request, and hope that I have not darkened counsel by uttering words without knowledge.

Affectionately yours,

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 19, 1884.

KILGORE, Texas.

DEAR BRETHREN:—If I am saved, it is in and through the meritorious righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is the language of every child of grace. And such as are "born of the Spirit" are the only ones who can use this language in spirit and in truth. They not only say it, but they truly feel what they say. And why? Because they have tried everything else in the world. They have fled to the law of Moses for justification, and have tried to live up to the re-

quisitions of that law, but all to no purpose. They find the Scripture staring them in the face, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Again, "No flesh shall be justified by the deeds of the law." Again, the Scriptures say that Jesus Christ is the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. Here the individual is at his wits' end. He has sought justification in the sight of his God by living up to the requisitions of the Mosaic law. He has done all the good works he could, and has done them in the best manner he knew how. He has sought religion in the way that he has often been told to by those whom he has always regarded as good men, too good to tell him a falsehood. In short, he has worked himself out of material, and has found that instead of getting better, he gets worse and worse all the time. He finds by woeful experience that he is full of putrefying sores and bruises from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. He feels that he is justly condemned in the sight of a just and holy God. He has tried everything but Jesus, and now he finds that his is the only name through which a mortal can be saved. While in this most miserable condition, with a feeling of condemnation on his mind wherever he goes, he is made to cry out, like the publican of old, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." But a light bursts upon his darkened and benighted mind, and O how surprised he is. His great burden is gone, but he knows not where. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Here Jesus Christ is revealed to him as the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely. Here he can adopt the language of the psalmist, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Then it is often the case that he comes to the conclusion that he never shall see any more trouble. He has previously thought that christians never experience trouble. But he soon finds to the reverse, for christians have more trouble than any one else. He finds that he cannot live as he thinks a christian should; for when he would do good, evil is present with him. Then how foolish it sounds in the ears of such an one to hear one say that there is any good thing in man. Such an one can truly say, If I am ever saved, it will be in and through the merits of the crucified Redeemer. He can now rely on the precious promises contained in the holy Scriptures. He is willing to take the Bible as the man of his counsel. He cannot help, in some instances, applying the Scriptures to himself, although he feels utterly unworthy of the least blessings that in the Scriptures are promised to those who love and serve God. He knows

that he has passed from death unto life, because he loves the brethren.

"I love to meet thy people now,
Before thy feet with them to bow."

He knows that he loves the brethren, that is, those of like precious faith; and he has the same right to know that he has passed from death unto life. Yet he feels so unworthy that he hardly ever dares to use the term, "I know." But there are seasons with him when he can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." O happy thought! "We know that we have passed from death unto life." There is a vast difference between knowing and thinking. We may think a thing, without any evidence that it is a fact. To know a thing, we must have evidence. In this we have evidence, if we "love the brethren," because "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." At this stage of his experience the child of grace is not left without a work to perform. Prior to this time he is not in a condition to work. He is dead in trespasses and sins; consequently he cannot work spiritually. He is not commanded to do any work by which he may inherit eternal life; neither is eternal life offered in the Scriptures on any conditions whatever. But now that he is "made alive," "born of the Spirit," he is live material. He is therefore commanded to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that works in him both to will and to do. "Work out your own salvation," by going forward in the precepts and examples laid down by the Master; by going before the church and telling her of your travels, and receiving baptism at her hands. Then he is admitted to the privileges of God's house. Then if he goes on to do whatsoever his hands find to do, with all his might, as a member of the church, he saves himself—he saves himself from many things, such as delusion, error, and from the chastening rod of his Master. Paul exhorts Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Then the glorious finale will come, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

H. B. J.

BLOOMVILLE, Ohio, April 21, 1884.

VERY DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—I send you this letter for publication in the SIGNS, if you see proper, without asking the parties from whom it was received. The joy and comfort it was to Honey Creek Church, to hear from those old soldiers from whom she had not heard for many years, is beyond description. Your brother, as I hope, in the Beloved,
BENJAMIN SPITLER.

MARSHALL, Minn., March 26, 1884.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—We received your kind and brotherly letter three days after date, and were highly gratified with your kindness. We were truly overjoyed to hear from our dear old brother, Elder Seitz, and the Honey Creek Church, as that was once our home, and a dear, good home, and we have never had a home since. We have been urged beyond measure to unite with a number of New School Baptist Churches and other denominations, but we still had our Bible, and took that for our counselor and guide. We find none of the isms and devices of the present day in the good book. We likewise took the SIGNS. In that sheet we have always found sound doctrine. By the power of God, and nothing else, we have been kept from falling in with the world's pernicious ways. There was no goodness in us. We have great reason to rejoice that the children of God are safe in Christ Jesus. What a comfort to know that we have a kind Protector, who knows all our needs, and keeps us as the apple of his eye. We have been in Minnesota twenty-eight years, and in all that time we have not heard a gospel sermon. All the preaching we hear comes in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We went to Iowa in 1865, among strangers, to an association. There we found our own dear kindred in Christ, and there we heard the gospel preached in its purity. It was hard parting with those dear brethren and sisters. It is needless to say that we were made very welcome when they found we had come seventy miles to attend the association. Now we are about three hundred miles from there, still we correspond with some of them. That association (the Turkey River) was held with Otter Creek Church, in Fayette County, Iowa. Soon after we came to this place we were greeted by a dear brother and sister Patterson, who came from New York State. They are sound in the faith of God's elect. We have had many good meetings. It has truly been verified to us that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there will Jesus be in their midst. Four was invariably our number, and I verily believe we worshiped in Spirit and in truth. We are still left, but for what purpose we know not. God knows. We feel that our days are nearly numbered. We are very feeble, not able to accomplish anything much. My husband is very lame, and has been for the last twenty or thirty years. He cannot get about the house without a staff. We are living with our youngest son. We have no care of anything. I have often heard my husband say that he would give more to see dear old Elder Seitz than any other man living, and I know it was the sentiment of his heart. We have greatly yearned for the home we left behind. We have been blessed in temporal things, but the one thing needful, the better part that Mary chose, we have lacked. O how often we have been made to cry out in sorrow on account of our leanness!

Dear brother, do you wonder at our barrenness? We have the assurance in holy writ that "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, and shall be fat and flourishing." We have had some happy seasons, notwithstanding our loneliness. Brother B. F. Hamilton, of New York, spent the holidays with us this winter. We had a very enjoyable time with him for two weeks. He had been a New School, but left them. He came out well refined. We saw in the SIGNS an account of the ingathering in that church a few years ago. We rejoiced with you in spirit. There are four of us here who wish to be remembered in your prayers and your meetings. Brother and sister Patterson send love to the brotherhood. A letter coming from any brother or sister will be cheerfully received.

I will now give you our ages, and close. I was born August 22d, 1807, and consequently will be seventy-seven years old next August. My husband was born June 20th, 1803, making him eighty-one years old next June. Now, dear brother, write as often as you can make it convenient. Letters from our dear kindred in Christ are like cold water to a thirsty soul. Pray for us, dear brethren and sisters, that we may be kept, as we have hitherto been, by the power of God unto salvation. Farewell, dear kindred in Christ.

MOSES & POLLY BARNES.

SULLIVAN, Ind., Feb., 1884.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—You have entered upon a new volume of the SIGNS, and with all my heart I wish you, our editors, God-speed. I with others, do feel greatly cheered and strengthened by your sound and comforting articles; also by the many evidences which are given through the SIGNS of the blessed reality of the holy religion of Christ, and that the Maker and Redeemer of Zion is surely performing his good will in the heirs of salvation, in making them to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. We have been made to rejoice in the Lord by his manifest tokens of love to us in our little church, Good Hope. Within the past year we have received twelve by experience and baptism, all giving very satisfactory evidence of a work of grace, some being remarkably clear and pointed; most of them dating their experience back for years. One dear old brother dated his back twenty-five years; thus showing how many dear saints feel their timidity and unworthiness to take up their cross and follow the footsteps of their blessed Savior. But O! this sinful, doubting nature. When we would do good, evil is present with us. We wait and long for brighter manifestations of his wonderful love, until we are made to feel that it is only through his great mercy that we have not the one talent which he has given us taken from us, and given to others who are less doubtful. But, doubting hu-

manity, instead of calling on him who is our all-sufficient Deliverer, we begin to doubt that we have any part or lot in the matter. We doubt our heirship, knowing full well that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwells no good thing. But, my beloved brother, or sister, the Captain of our salvation is ours in time of greatest gloom. He never leaves nor forsakes those who put their trust in him. He makes us willing subjects. We then go back to our past experience, when we were made to see our sinfulness and guilt, our just condemnation in the sight of a holy God, with no way of escape. All hope seemed gone, and we could only cry, "Lord, save, I perish," or, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." But at an unexpected moment the blessed Deliverer was made manifest, in giving us peace and joy unspeakable. Can we ever forget this? Methinks not. Have we not the Scriptural evidence? "If ye love me, keep my commandments," says Jesus. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Do we love? If so, the nearer we live up to the requirements of the gospel, the greater will be our peace and enjoyments in the Spirit. But when we become negligent in duty, we begin to get cold and indifferent. Doubts and fears arise, and we may look for chastisement. The dear Shepherd will bring us to the fold. O, my dear brethren and sisters, I know I am sensible of my weakness and inability; but if I know anything at all, I know that I love our Father's children; therefore I am trying in my weakness to write, to encourage the little ones, the weak ones, like myself. I know, if I am saved, it is by grace, and not for any merit within myself.

"Though I have him oft forgot,
His loving-kindness changes not."

Forgive all errors. My heart's desire and prayer is for the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom. With love and esteem for the household of faith, your sister in hope,

ANNA M. THOMAS.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May 12, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Will you indulge me by printing in the SIGNS the following? I would say to "Ed. Williams," of Jefferson, Alabama, concerning his request for my views on Matthew xix. 28, that I refer him to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, volume xxxvi., year 1868, numbers 3, 6 and 7, in which he will find some remarks on the important principles involved in the Scripture to which he has referred. And although the publication of those articles had the effect to draw forth both commendation and bitter opposition, my mind to-day remains unchanged concerning the true meaning of that text, as already written out by me and published; and I feel that instead of becoming weakened relative to the views given in 1868, I am the more firmly fixed in the points therein elaborated.

Affectionately yours,

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

THE HOUSE OF GOD.

AMONG the worshipers of every grade of idolatry it has been customary from early ages to build houses devoted to the supposed deities to which adoration was rendered; and these houses, or temples, were as magnificent as their devotees could make them, in order to express their regard for the objects of their reverence, for their zeal in this work was supposed to be gratifying to their idols. The most stupendous works of ancient art are relics of religious edifices, and in modern times untold treasures are expended in the erection of similar temples which are miscalled churches. But while the pride of their builders is flattered by the gorgeous appearance of their structures, the awful voice of God has rejected all those dwellings, and reprobated the presumption of their builders. "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."—Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2. This man who is accepted of God is no other than Christ Jesus, who is anointed with the Spirit of the Lord God as "Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." In this temple God will dwell forever, for it is his own chosen habitation, whose builder and maker is God. There can be no earthly house worthy of comparison with this dwelling place of the Most High; yet the natural man can see no beauty in the church. The gaudy show of worldly institutions is far more attractive to the carnal mind than the afflicted and poor little flock of the people of God. Still does the world love his own, and hate the chosen people of our Redeemer. This peculiar mark is one evidence which God has given to assure the saints of their claim as heirs of that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for them. It is very important to the afflicted and poor children of grace that they should consider the inspired testimony in regard to the house of God, where he has given them an abiding home as sons and daughters; for every correct view they have of this safe abode will assure them more fully of the perfection of every appointment of infinite wisdom for their comfort and protection while sojourning in this enemy's land, and confirm their hope of the everlasting bliss which they shall certainly enjoy in the presence of God when they

shall be released from this bondage of corruption. As their rest is not here, they can only enter into their sure retreat by the faith of the Son of God. The natural man cannot receive this evidence of things not seen, and that is the reason why the carnal mind of the saints continually doubts the testimony of faith on which their whole confidence is founded. This produces that warfare which disturbs their peace while they remain in this world. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other."

While the whole church of his chosen people constitute the house of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and as the fullness of the body of Christ the special care of her Creator is her continual preservation and support, it is also recorded for the comfort of the poor, the needy and the destitute that he dwells "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." As the Lord has been the dwelling place of his saints in all generations, so his chosen abode is in them. "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—2 Cor. vi. 16. They are the temple of God, both as the whole church, and each of them as his redeemed individually. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"—1 Cor. xii. 27; iii. 16. This is a house composed exclusively of living material, the life of every stone being in Christ the foundation and chief corner-stone. Nothing like this was ever built by created beings. God alone is the builder and maker of this glorious house, and he has ordained it for the dwelling place of his own children. No others can even see it, much less can they enter its sacred portals. The Lord Jesus is the door as well as the foundation, and his life is the vital principle which animates the building.

Every stone which is built upon the living foundation of this house, is thoroughly purged so as by fire. Only the chosen material which is kept by the power of God can endure this severe test; but each of the lively stones which are of the house is made to glorify the Lord in the fires. Chosen in the furnace of affliction, they are there purified and brought to know that all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags; then they are prepared to receive the perfect righteousness of God which is treasured in Christ as their sure foundation. As this is all they can claim as commendable in the sight of God, each of these lively stones must glory in the Lord. The severe experience through which their confidence in the flesh is consumed, leads them often to feel that they are ready to perish; but they shall come to the place prepared for them in this temple of God, and the very ordeal of fiery trials through which they have passed

shall serve to manifest more clearly the glory of that divine grace by which they have been kept. While passing through the fires it seems that they must be utterly consumed; but when they are fully tried they shall come forth as gold. As their God has chosen them to declare his own glory in salvation, they are secure in his keeping, Neither fire nor floods can destroy them, because God is their refuge and strength. It is not possible that one of them should perish, for that life which animates them is the same eternal life which is in Christ their living foundation. He says to them, "Because I live, ye shall live also."—John xiv. 19. All these lively stones must therefore ever live while God, who is their life, shall not perish. There can never be any defective material in this glorious house, nor shall there be any vacant place in consequence of the failure of any stone to be made ready for the building. Infinite wisdom has appointed for every stone its own place, and fitted for every place the chosen stone.

In the development of the eternal purpose of God they who are elected to be manifested as comprised in this glorious house are not only brought to their places in the church of the living God, but they are "built together" so wonderfully that they are vitally united as members one of another. The apostles and prophets are not more closely connected with the living foundation than are the feeblest of the little ones which tremblingly believe in Jesus as their only hope of salvation. If one of these could perish, the house would be incomplete, and the will of the Father would be defeated. But there is no possibility that such a terrible thing could be as that the most unworthy one should fail to be made perfect and blameless, for any defect in them would detract from the glory of the Redeemer. Their own merit is not the ground of their election, for they were the objects of the great love of God even when they were dead in sin. That love chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. And as they were chosen without regard to their own merit, so their unworthiness cannot separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. The exceeding riches of his grace is shown in his kindness toward them through Christ Jesus, in that when they were enemies against God by wicked works, they were reconciled to him through the death of the Son of God. In consideration of this wonderful display of the love and mercy of God, the final salvation of these subjects of his grace is assured. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—Rom. v. 10. So, there can be no contingency which might result in the failure of one of these chosen lively stones to occupy its place in this house of God. Sin, which is their most cruel tormentor, is washed away by the precious blood

of Jesus, and cannot separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; and though they feel its power still working in their members, it is a conquered enemy, from which they shall at last be triumphantly delivered. Then in the perfect likeness of their Lord they shall see him as he is, the inconceivable glory of the house of God shall be clearly revealed to their unclouded vision, and the full mystery of redemption shall tune their song of never-ceasing praise and thankful adoration to God and to the Lamb that died for their redemption.

This house of God is not a mass of incongenial material brought together by the efforts of zealous mortals. It is composed only of those who are "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." These are lively stones quickened by the Spirit which is in Christ their living Foundation, and so completely united that they are "one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."—Romans xii. 5. "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."—1 Cor. xii. 26. This perfect unity is unquestionable evidence of the fact that the Spirit of Christ dwells in those who are so builded together, for this is the fulfillment of the word of the Lord concerning his people. "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."—Jeremiah xxxii. 38-40. Truly, the glory of this house of God infinitely surpasses that of the typical house of natural Israel, as the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus excels in glory the law of sin and death; and all the glory of this spiritual house is borne by the great Builder.—See Zech. vi. 12, 13.

The perfection of this glorious house forbids that any pollution should defile its sacred precincts. Hence, full instruction is given in the inspired rule for the conduct of the favored inmates, who both constitute the living building and are its only inhabitants. In telling Timothy how he ought to behave himself in this house of God, Paul explains that it is "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground [or stay] of the truth."—1 Tim. iii. 15. And as it was needful that Timothy should attend to that instruction, so must it be essentially important to all the saints. Carnal reason may suggest that it does not matter how they walk, or what their conversation may be, since their final salvation is secured in Christ; but those who are led by the Spirit of God desire to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, for it is God which worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. With Paul, they may find a law, that, when they would do good,

evil is present with them; but the leading of the Spirit must ever be in perfect accordance with the instruction written by inspiration of God, in which the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. However it may seem right and commendable, no work can be good for the saints which is not included in this perfect rule; and nothing therein enjoined upon the disciples of our Lord can be disregarded without loss to them, even to the extent of feeling themselves shut out from the privileges of their home in this house of God, and carried into captivity. For even the dear children of God must experience the rod of chastening if they forsake his law, and keep not his commandments.—Psalm lxxxix. 30-32. If one who claims to be a child can walk in forbidden ways without receiving this chastisement, the Lord does not deal with him as a child.—See Heb. xii. 5-8. But the inspired benediction secures the peace of God upon as many as walk according to this rule.—Gal. vi. 16. The house of God is the happy abode of all such. Here they rest under the shadow (that is, the protecting care) of the Almighty; for this is the secret place of the Most High.—Psa. xci. 1.

In the confusion of this enemies' land, where they sojourn as strangers and pilgrims, these lively stones are often allured by the vanities of earth to forget the glorious house which is their home. The gaudy toys of wealth or fame seem desirable, and ere they are aware they are pursuing these delusive shadows, to the neglect of their nobler privileges in their Father's house, the church of God. The friendship of the world offers ease and honors, while the tempter cunningly suggests that there can be no harm in such innocent enjoyments as are accounted respectable and refined in the religious world. Especially attractive do the benevolent inventions of men appear, which are professedly religious. Often even the eyes of true believers are dazzled by the false lustre of these vanities. But they cannot bring these things into the house of God. They are forever excluded by the law of the Lord. Consequently they are unprofitable to the people of God, whose dwelling is in this holy house. The deceitfulness of sin may present the glittering bait of pride to draw away the heart from this glorious rest of the saints. Of course, like all other devices of the enemy, this does not appear in its hideous character as the concentration of selfishness, but it claims perhaps to be a burning zeal for the Lord. Yet the real motive is exposed in anxiety to let that zeal be known of men, as in the case of Jehu.—2 Kings x. 16. Instead of following after "the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another," those who are allured by this false zeal will be puffed up with vain imaginations of their own importance and ability, and resentment will be aroused whenever their vanity is crossed. The rod of chastening will humble the saints when thus exalted, and they must learn the

lesson of their own nothingness before they can enter into the house of God. While mansions of everlasting rest are prepared in this house for all the innumerable company of little ones who believe in Jesus, there is not an apartment in the whole building of God large enough for one who is grown so great as to be satisfied with himself. Except such be converted and become as little children, they shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, which is the house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

By the power of God alone the saints are kept from falling into the snares of their crafty adversary, for they are so weak that they cannot keep themselves even for an hour. The love of God has provided for them not only their mansions in the house of God, but also the abundant grace which preserves them from all their enemies, and will not fail to bring them to their everlasting rest in the spiritual church of God; and all will be done "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The recent frequent unavoidable absence of the gentleman whom I have employed as my principal assistant teacher, and the necessity of my own labors for the support of my family, have so hindered me in my work on the History that I shall be obliged to take my summer vacation for its completion. My present feeling is to send you the manuscript by the first of September, whether it be complete or incomplete, as it seems impossible for me to devote any more time to the work. Besides, if my life and health are spared, I do not think that I shall need any more time for its completion.

Providence permitting, the fall session of my school is to begin the first Monday in September, at which time I shall be obliged to resume my labors in the school-room.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., May 20, 1884.

MINUTES

OF ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

We would call the attention of brethren throughout the country to the fact that we are prepared to print and distribute the Minutes of meetings as cheap and in as good style as any office in the United States. We frequently receive copies of Minutes printed by parties who do not belong to our order, and therefore have no idea of what is meant by the writers, and consequently frequent serious blunders are made. It costs but a trifle to forward the manuscript or return the printed Minutes by mail from any part of the country, and we therefore solicit our brethren to send us their Minutes for printing. We are but few, and our patronage should be kept within our own borders.

MARRIAGES.

MAY 7, 1884, by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, at the residence of the bride, Fauquier Co., Va., Elder J. N. Badger, of Loudoun Co., Va., and Miss Maggie C. Hunton, daughter of the late Deacon Thos. E. Hunton, of Fauquier Co.

APRIL 22, 1884, by Elder J. W. Timmons, at his residence near Berlin, Worcester Co., Md., Mr. George T. Rodney and Miss Mary C. Birch, both of Worcester Co., Md.

By the same, April 23, 1884, at the residence of the bride's parents, near Berlin, Worcester Co., Md., Mr. Cyrus Mitchel and Joanna Baker, both of the same county.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I sit down to record the death of our dearly beloved Elder and pastor, **James Bicknell**, who departed this life and bid adieu to all sublunary scenes, and entered, as we humbly hope and trust, into that rest which is prepared for all those who are prepared for it. He died January 24, 1884, at half-past seven o'clock p. m., aged 88 years, 3 months and 3 days. He went as a shock of corn fully ripe in its season, and in the full assurance of the christian's faith. About the last words he uttered were, "God and glory are here, and I am going into the arms of my Savior." Those who were so happy and favored as to be present, declared it to be a thrilling scene, as the aged saint passed from earth. Such words came from his mouth as mortals do not often have the blessed privilege of hearing. This was while he was sitting up in bed, and his daughter sitting by him. All at once he said, "I am going; lay me down;" which was done, and he sweetly fell asleep, without a struggle. His face immediately put on a remarkably peaceful expression, entirely unlike the one it had worn for some days previously; for it had worn for two or three days a peculiarly haggard and distressed appearance. He was gone to be in the presence of the blessed Savior, whom he so much loved, and whom he has preached so faithfully to his fellow-men, being instant in season and out of season. He was truly a chimney-corner preacher, for he possessed a remarkably happy faculty of turning the conversation into a religious channel at all times and under all circumstances. He was baptized in the year 1818, on the 31st of May, in the fellowship of the Second Westmoreland Baptist Church, and on the 4th of April, 1833, was ordained and installed as pastor of a branch of the said Second Westmoreland Church, in the town of Rome, to whom he preached about two years, I think, and then the Second Westmoreland Church divided, and the Old School portion built a meeting house in the northern part of the town of Westmoreland, and called Elder Bicknell to be their pastor, to whom he preached unremittingly for about forty-eight years. His labors were very much blessed, and the church increased in numbers, and such union and harmony were maintained as is seldom seen in a church for so long a time. The Lord seemed to bless the Elder's labors in a very marked degree for thirty years or more, and then the great divider got among us, and split us in pieces again. For ten or twelve years the church has been dwindling away, and there are but few of us left, and without a pastor to lead us. We feel like sheep without a shepherd; but the Lord's will be done with us, be it what it may. I hope we may be enabled to acquiesce in it. Elder Bicknell was in some respects a remarkable man, and was a good preacher. He almost always preached with unction and feeling, and I very seldom heard him preach a cold, dry discourse. He has truly been a power in Westmoreland, and he will be very much missed in the vicinity where he has so long resided. People have looked up to him as a counselor and leader. But his Lord has called him up higher. Four years ago he had a very severe fit of sickness, and we thought his work was done; but the Lord knew best. He has preached very many excellent sermons since that sickness, and ever since that sickness he has seemed to be ripening for heaven. I have heard him say many times within the last four years that

he was ready to go at any minute. The grave had formerly at times looked dark to him, but ever since that sickness it looked sweet and peaceful to him, and he could realize that his Savior had laid there and hallowed it.

Dear brethren, I hope you will publish this, and also send me half a dozen copies to distribute among my friends. I believe I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since its publication.

Your brother,

D. C. BESSE.

WESTMORELAND, Pa.

SISTER **Mary T. White**, eldest daughter of Levi and Cynthia White, died February 19, 1884, in the 24th year of her age. There are not many now living who are better acquainted with sister Mary than myself, apart from her own family, for I was intimately acquainted with her parents from their marriage. I was very frequently at their house, and often nursed the deceased in her infancy. From personal knowledge I will mention the traits of her character as she grew up. She differed in her childhood from other children, possessing a calm, quiet disposition, and never engaged in the amusements that are common to childhood and riper age. Her choosing the company of elderly persons was noticeable, and was remarked by many. Early in her teens she became fond of our meetings, and gave evidence that she heard the word and rejoiced. Her mother, sister White, was a member of the Baptists, and she attended no other meeting. When about in her nineteenth year she made known her intention to offer herself to the church for membership. She was not opposed by her parents, but being so young they felt it their duty to caution her, and urged the propriety of her waiting a while. But her mind was so fully made up that nothing would satisfy the dear child but baptism. After she was baptized I met with her, and saw the grace of God, and was glad. Her words were weighty, doctrine sound, and her willingness to talk on the subject of religion was such as is not often found among young professors. In her walk and conversation she honored her profession. Last August, the last meeting I ever saw her at, when Elders Beebe, Gold and Eubanks preached in the grove in my neighborhood, during intermissions, when the young would be gathered together and enjoying themselves, sister Mary would be at the stand, talking with the members and the preachers. She was asked by my wife how she liked the preaching. She replied that it was delightful and grand, and that she did not know there were such men. Her disease was consumption, and made rapid progress, and brought her to her bed last October. I visited her often, and she daily sighed for release, to be at home with Christ. She had no fear of death. On one occasion I was standing by her bed, sister White being near, when she had one of her spells of severe suffering. I said to her dear mother how hard it seemed that one so innocent as she should suffer so much. I did not intend that she should hear me, but she did, and as soon as she could speak she said to me, "Do not say I am innocent. I am a poor sinner." The last words she was heard to say were, "I shall soon be at home in his arms." Brother White had also visited her, and he and myself were sent for to attend her funeral. He preached a very comforting discourse from the words, "Mortality shall be swallowed up of life," to a large congregation. The parents and other relatives could give her up freely, under the circumstances. Scarcely ever has a more triumphant death been witnessed in our community, if ever equaled. May such be our happy end, for Christ's sake. Amen.

JOSEPH FURR.

Mrs. **Laura Weimer** died April 19, 1884. She was the daughter of Burrel Lyman, known to the older residents of this region, and a sister of Leroy Lyman. She was born in the year 1826, in Roulette, Potter Co., Pa., and was married to George Weimer, in 1842. They celebrated the forty-first anniversary of their marriage last "Thanksgiving Day." Their wedded life has been singularly characterized by mutual confidence and agreement.

Mrs. Weimer was the mother of eleven children, nine of whom are living, three sons and six daughters. There are also eleven grandchildren living. Her death occurred at her home in Pleasant Valley, on the farm where she had spent her whole married life. Her death resulted from heart disease. As a wise counselor and an affectionate wife and mother, she was dearly beloved, and will be sadly missed. Society has also lost a valued member.

We now come to speak of her christian experience, a thing of greater moment to her than all things else. About thirty-four years ago she was led to consider her soul, its condition and needs. By divine grace she was enabled to discover her lost condition, and to turn to Christ, in whom she found forgiveness, rest and peace. She was baptized by Elder Pasco, and during these years she has been enabled to say with great confidence, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." As the end approached, she seemed to gird herself for the conflict with the promises of God, and to enter into the enjoyment of "the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." The greatest desire of her heart for the loved ones she was leaving was that they all might become savingly acquainted with Christ. May her fondest hopes be realized, so there shall be at last a glorious reunion in heaven. Just before her death she was talking to her brethren concerning her hopes and anticipations. The bereaved family have the kind wishes and sympathy of their many friends. The funeral, which was largely attended, took place at the residence of the deceased, April 21, at one o'clock p. m. An appropriate sermon was preached by N. Hart, from Rev. xiv. 13. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

I have written this at the request of my mother, who was an Old School Baptist in faith, but living so far from any church of this kind, she never joined it, although she was baptized by an Old School Baptist minister.

NELLIE WEIMER.

WILLISTON, Pa., April 28, 1884.

My dear wife, **Mary Jane Wilkinson**, the daughter of J. D. and Elizabeth Roberts, was born in the year 1851, and died January 5, 1884. She joined the Methodist Church at the age of thirteen years, and was converted in 1869, when the Lord made known unto her the exceeding sinfulness of sin. She, like Joseph's brethren, was taken with great fear, but in due time Jesus came to her relief and removed the load of guilt and manifested himself to her as a Savior. Then she could say, "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God, and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears: the joy that thrills through the throbbing heart, such a joy as this will last as long as life lasts." Mary and I were united in matrimony in the winter of 1869. We lived together in peace and harmony fourteen years; but death has broken the tie and left me with a heart filled with grief and sorrow. She was the mother of seven children, three of whom have gone before her. She died with that dreadful disease, consumption. She was taken three years ago with a cough, and the scrofula set in, baffling the skill of the physicians. Nothing checked the disease. She was troubled with hemorrhage for two years, yet she bore her afflictions with christian fortitude. On the 4th of last July she was confined to her bed until death came and found her ready. She remained conscious to the last, and said that we would find her in heaven. Her brother asked if Jesus was still with her, and she tried to say yes, but could not speak, and being conscious that she had not spoken, she bowed her head for "Yes." She passed away calm and easy, like one going to sleep. Although she cannot come to me, I humbly hope that by and by I will be permitted to go to her. Mary was a kind and affectionate companion and a loving mother. The cheerful smile that made home sweet will be missed. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of a risen Savior and salvation by grace. Her only hope was in what Jesus had done for her as a poor, lost sinner, and she has often said to me, "I have so many doubts and fears that I wonder if there is any one like

me." But her walk was orderly, as a devoted christian's should be. I will say in conclusion that her husband has lost a kind and devoted companion, her children a fond mother, her parents an obedient child, her brothers and sisters a loving sister, and her neighbors and friends will all miss her. Yet the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." Sleep on, dear Mary, and take thy rest.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep;
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes.

"Asleep in Jesus! O how sweet!
To be for such a slumber meet!
With holy confidence to sing,
That death has lost his cruel sting."

"Methinks I see them now at rest
In the bright mansions love ordained;
Their heads recline on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin and sorrow pained.

"Why should our eyes with sorrow flow?
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh;
When Jesus calls the saints must go;
'Tis their eternal gain to die."

Yours in great tribulation,

Z. J. WILKINSON.

LIBERTY, Miss., May 5, 1884.

Elizabeth Simpson was born March 7, 1849, and departed this life March 21, 1884. She was married to Rees Simpson in the year 1866, and was his widow at the time of her death. She professed a hope in Christ about the year 1880, and joined the Missionary Baptists, and remained with them about two years. The first Old School Baptist sermon she ever heard after she received a hope, was in Parker County, Texas, and she said it was the best sermon she ever heard. She never did believe in the "do and live" system. Being dissatisfied with the Missionary Baptists, she went to Springtown, a distance of twelve miles, and joined the Primitive Baptist Church. She was taken sick March 4, 1884, with bloody flux. On the same day she did a large washing. She afterwards went into the house and took up her daughter-in-law's dress, and began to sew on it, when she said it seemed as though some one spoke to her and said, "Your work is finished on earth." She then went and lay down on a bed, and wept for an hour or two. That night she was taken worse, and three physicians were called to her assistance, but they did her no good. She said she had tried to desire to get well, but could not, and said often that she was only waiting the Lord's time to go home. She wanted every one present when she was dying to thank the Lord. She said she had always thought that she should dread death, and to leave her people, but she did not. She had belonged with the Old Baptists about two years, and never missed but one meeting, and then she was on her death bed. She leaves two children, (a boy and a girl), four sisters and two brothers in Parker Co., Texas, and two sisters and one brother in other states, with many friends to mourn their loss. The Old Baptists and others, from far and near, came to see her. She was beloved by all who knew her. The neighborhood has lost a good neighbor, the church a beloved and faithful member, and her brothers, sisters, children and friends mourn her departure.

M. V. B. COCKBURN.

ELDER BEEBE'S SONS:—Death has again visited our family, taking another little **Hiram**, son of Z. J. and Mary J. Wilkinson. He was born March 24, 1883, and died May 20. Though his stay with us was so short (fifty-eight days) the tender tie that bound him to his sorrowing parents none can know only by experience. On Sunday before he died he took the fever, and on Tuesday night following, the chill resulting in congestion. In a note addressed to the writer the father writes, "My dear father, remember Mary and I at the throne of grace, that our faith may be firm and unshaken. Pray the Lord, if consistent with his will, to remove the rod of chastisement and so rule over us that we may

ever be found with a submissive will and walking in the discharge of our every duty. We feel that the sufferings of our dear babe have ceased, that he has gone from a world of sin and sorrow to one of joy and peace." The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. We feel that the Lord doeth all things well. Little Hiram leaves father, mother, two brothers and three sisters and many relatives and friends to mourn.

ALSO,

AGAIN these afflicted parents are called to mourn the loss of their dear little darling, **Maud Wilkinson**, who was born October 21, 1882, and died September 22, 1883. This dear babe may be called a child of sorrow, being afflicted with scrofula almost from birth.

May the Lord sanctify these afflictions to our good and his glory, is the desire of the unworthy writer.

J. C. WILKINSON.

LIBERTY, Miss., May 5, 1884.

ANOTHER of the faithful few has crossed the river of death, gone to receive the adoption. Our aged sister and mother in Israel, **Mrs. Rebecca Whitt**, widow of the late John Whitt, died March 25, 1884. She was born in Russell Co., Va., in 1803, and united with the Deep Spring Baptist Church in 1833. At the time of her death she was a member of the Rock Spring Baptist Church. She was well informed in the doctrine and discipline of the gospel, and was a faithful servant of the church. She was firm in the doctrine of electing grace, and earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints. In the division of the church at Rock Spring, caused by the development of Arminianism, she stood firm in the truth, not giving heed to the seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. She is done with the trials of this life, and she is delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. She fought a good fight, she kept the faith, and has forever entered immortality through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

H. M. CURRY.

SANDY HOOK, Ky., May 13, 1884.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association is appointed to convene with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, in the village of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (4th), 1884, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

Those who contemplate attending the Warwick Association can come on the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R., from the east or west, and from the north on the New York, Ontario & Western R. R., directly to Middletown.

Those coming through the city of New York can reach here at 10:56 a. m. on Wednesday, by taking the cars at the foot of Chambers Street about 8:00 o'clock a. m.

Excursion tickets from New York to Middletown and return, good for five days, at a reduced rate of fare, can be purchased at the foot of Chambers and Twenty-third Streets, New York.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association will be held, providence permitting, with the church at Riker's Hollow, Steuben Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (11th), 1884, and continue in session three days.

The friends will be met at Blood's Station, which is situated on the Rochester branch of the Erie R. R., also the western division of the D., L. & W. R. R. All trains will be met on Tuesday, from Buffalo, New York and Rochester. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

M. VAIL.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with Eagle Creek Church, Hancock Co., Ohio, on Friday, June 6, 1884.

Those coming on the cars will be met at Findlay, Ohio, on Thursday, June 5, at the Lake Erie & Western R. R., also at the branch of the I. B. & W. R. R. A cordial invitation is extended.

J. P. CONAWAY.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church of Halcott, Greene Co., N. Y., on the first Saturday and Sunday in July, 1884. Brethren and friends will be met at the depot in the afternoon and evening the day before the meeting.

J. H. SCUDDER, Church Clerk.

RECEIVED FOR THE CHURCH HISTORY.

J P Randolph 2, Mrs N Mercer 2, Henry C Swelt 2, D T Ellis 2, Martin P Cooper, 2, Saml Durham 2, Elder J J Crider 2, W B McGehee 2, Geo M Pendleton 2, S P Rogers 2, W Amis 2, Bessie Harlan 2.—Total \$24 00.

CHURCH HISTORY NOTICE.

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:—From the liberal manner in which the subscribers have responded to my request, I am glad to be able to inform the brethren that, with the permission of providence, the publication of the Church History at no very distant date is now assured. Elder G. Beebe's Sons, Middletown, New York, our oldest publishing house in the United States, have the contract to publish the book. I hope that all the remaining subscribers, who have not yet remitted the amount of the subscription (two dollars per copy), will at an early day send on the proper amount, in postal order or registered letter to the brethren Beebe, so that the latter may issue the whole edition of three thousand copies at one time.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.
WILSON, N. C., Feb. 7, 1882.

"DIAGRAM OF THE CHURCHES."

PART I.

Truth versus Error.

PART II.

A controversy between the Rev. W. H. H. Hays, who is a modern disciple of Andrew Fuller, of Missionary Baptist notoriety, and the author, upon the fundamental doctrine of the Bible and church identity.

PART III.

A "Diagram of the Churches," illustrated by a supposed interview between the Arminians' all-wise and omnipotent God of the universe, and his Arminian ministers.

PART IV.

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We have just finished printing in book form the stenographic report of the above debate between brother J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Mr. Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages the same size of the "Editorials" or "J. F. Johnson's Writings," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1884.

NO. 12.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW MARKET, Mo., April 22, 1884.

MRS. E. THEOBALD—DEAR SISTER IN AFFLICTION AND IN THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL:—I, who, I trust, am your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was permitted to receive a kind and very welcome letter from you a few days ago, by which I have evidence that I, though an afflicted and poor one, am still had in remembrance by you who are very dear to me, I hope, for the "truth's sake, which dwelleth in us and shall be with us forever," and also for the sake of that loved one now at rest from his labors and at home in glory, ever to be with the Lord. He was indeed a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord. And while I rejoice that you still remember me, "who am less than the least of all the saints," I rejoice much more that you do not fail to remember our Lord Jesus Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. "For he must in all things have the pre-eminence." "For God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." "He hath set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." He says, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." He is surely seated upon a kingly throne, and it is said, "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary." How consoling that the sacred place set apart for the broken-hearted, the humble and the contrite ones, is the seat of our enthroned Jesus, the habitation of our God. "For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

I will now try to write some in answer to your request, asking for my views on Job xix. 26, particularly the latter clause, "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." To properly comprehend the subject of this connection, it is necessary that we should rightly understand the design of the book of Job, and particularly what Job himself represents, and what his life as given in the history, his afflictions and sufferings, his deliverance and vindication, all shadow forth to us; recognizing it as a portion of the "All Scripture given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in

righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." If Job represents men and women in general, or even believers in their fleshly nature, and earthly man, then it would seem to follow that he must mean, Though after my natural skin, worms destroy this mortal body, yet in my same fleshly nature and earthly man shall I see God. But to my mind Paul contradicts such a theory when he says, "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Hence I do not believe that Job meant it, neither do I think the spirit of inspiration teaches it. For I believe that Job was speaking of the deep things of God. If Job represents believers as they stand experimentally in union with Christ, their Head, their Life, their Embodiment, then can we discern the harmony, beauty and sweetness of the language. When we examine the book of Job, noticing closely his life and experience, it appears to me that he stands forth in a most glorious and sublime character. It is recorded, "And that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil." To whom can this more fittingly apply than to him "who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth?" But further, he had a family. "And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters." His substance also was great and he had a "very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters, to eat and drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sin, and cursed God in their hearts. This did Job continually." Does not all this emblematically show the glory of God as typically revealed in the first covenant, his sons and daughters, his substance, the glory of his household, his greatness, and then his care for that family in choosing and sanctifying them, giving them the law, and the priests and the prophets, and the offerings and burnt offerings for sin? But I cannot follow all these bearings. I can only advert to a few

things, and will first refer to the temptation of Job, with its attendant circumstances: it appears to vividly portray the humiliation and temptation of Jesus, his sufferings and afflictions, his care for his people; his intercession in their behalf, his prayers for them, and his submission to the will of God. We next notice the false teachings, the vexing reproaches and the cruel mockings of those professed friends who "had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and comfort him." These exemplify the ways of false prophets, hirelings and false teachers, in their profession of love for Jesus and his people. "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Hence they heap reproaches upon Jesus, and afflictions upon his people. We come now to some things in the chapter containing our subject, and let us remember that in all things wherein Job represents Christ in his sorrows, afflictions and grief, he also typifies his people as partakers of the same; for it is written, "In all their afflictions he was afflicted." Again, "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." We view Job as being in exact harmony with the psalmist, and with the prophets in many instances; in that he sometimes speaks personating Christ, and sometimes personating his people; or perhaps it would be proper to say that he personated both Christ and his people. And this being the case, it is "Christ in them" and "Christ for them." Now, when we consider Job as the type we find that everything was taken according to his complaint: his wife was estranged, his children taken, his substance, his household, his greatness, his health and comfort of body, and perhaps in some sense we might say, his life also, were all stripped from him, and he was left in misery and wretchedness. Let us notice his complaints a little. He says, "Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me in his net. Behold I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment. He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths. He hath stripped me of my glory, and hath taken the crown from my head. He hath destroyed me on

every side, and I am gone, and mine hope hath he removed like a tree." A little further along he says, "He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me. They that dwell in my house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight. I called my servant, and he gave me no answer: I entreated him with my mouth. My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated for the children's sake of my own body. Yea, young children despised me: I arose, and they spake against me. All my inward friends abhor me, and they whom I loved are turned against me. My bone cleaveth to my skin, and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth. Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me. Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?" Let us pause for a moment. Surely the antitype of all this is found in the "all things that are written in the law and in the psalms and in the prophets" concerning our Redeemer; and surely the substance of all this shadow is realized in the experience of all God's children, as testified to in every age of the world, and proved by the holy Scriptures. But we desire to follow Job further. Paul says, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." And it is recorded by John, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Now both of these expressions meet and are exemplified in the faith and testimony of Job. He spake by the spirit of faith of the things that should be done in himself as the type; and by the spirit of prophecy of the things that should be done in Jesus and his people as the antitype. Notice him further, "O that my words were now written! O that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Now, may we not consider that all those emissaries sent by Satan to afflict Job, that is, the Sabeans, the Chaldeans, the wind from the wilderness, the sore boils, &c., were destroying worms, consuming his family, his substance, everything that was in the embodiment of his greatness, yea, his very typical body,

which is properly called his flesh? And view the spirit of faith in him, confiding in God as his Redeemer from all this evil, laying hold of his promises, trusting his faithfulness, and declaring the wonders of his love, power and wisdom. It is testified, "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." This is his typical latter day, being after all the destruction and sorrow that he had endured; wherein his Redeemer stands upon the earth, to reveal himself unto him in pleading his cause, saving him from his enemies, confounding his foes, shaming his pretended friends, raising up his family, and giving unto him, even unto the double. This certainly was seeing his Lord, or receiving the rich blessings of his saving and providing hand. And thus is it written, "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every man an earring of gold." Now, let us briefly consider the sum of all these things. We see Jesus, the Just One, the beloved Son of God, the anointed Savior; who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, taking the form of a servant and coming in the likeness of men. He was tempted of the devil, in mourning and groaning; "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." The name Job means sorrowful, and how suitable it is. "Who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." And he suffered all this for his body's sake, the church, which is his body, his flesh and his bones. This is the spirit of prophecy which is in Job's words. Jesus said, "Destroy this temple and I will raise it in three days;" speaking of the temple of his body. Though the gates of hell should rise up against his church; though all the powers of darkness, as worms of destruction, should seek to destroy his flesh and his bones, (and until the law is taken out of the way they do destroy), yet in that very body, the church, is the glory of God revealed, and he sees him there. It is him that God glorifies, and not another, and he is glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe. Now, dear sister, you have indulged in the hope of eternal life, through Jesus Christ. His work is perfect; you are perfect through him; but O the weakness of the flesh, the temptations of Satan! He would strip you of everything, lay you low, yea, destroy you; but you are saved by hope, that hope which is "an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that

within the veil." "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Brethren Beebe, I wrote the foregoing at the request of sister E. Theobald, of Kentucky, at first intending to send it to her, but as she asked me to give it through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I will send it to you, and if accepted, through the SIGNS to her, and to all who may read it; praying you to bear with the weakness of the poor, trembling writer, who is not sufficient of himself to think anything as of himself. Grace be with you all. Yours in love and hope,
R. M. THOMAS.

CRESWELL, Oregon, April 21, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has been numbered with the past, and the time for a remittance to renew our subscription for our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, has come. And I feel like I would be glad to add a few words by way of encouragement to the poor, afflicted and tempest-tossed children of our Father. "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."—Isaiah liv. 11-13. Dear child of God, do you know that this is addressed to your mother? Yes, this is addressed to Jerusalem, which Sarah, the free woman, represented, which is the mother of us all. She is also called Zion. And the prophet calls on her to "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." And our Savior quotes from the prophets, and says, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God." They are no more required to be circumcised in the flesh, as the Jews were under the old covenant; but the time has already come of which the Lord spake when he said, "Behold, the days come saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the great-

est of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. xxxi. 31-35. They know him, because he has established this new covenant in their hearts, and because he has circumcised them in heart. They know him because Jesus, their great High Priest, has revealed him unto them. He said, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." These are the same characters that he called his sheep. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." He says he will give (not offer) them eternal life. And that is exactly what God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began. Then, have you a faint hope of that eternal life? Do you see you are a sinner of the deepest dye? And have you been made to mourn on account of your sins? Have you groaned because you could not mourn? Have you been made to hunger and thirst after righteousness? Can you look back to a time when you could say with one of old, "O that I knew where I might find him!" which was Jesus? Again, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Can you say that the great burden was removed? And if you were not made to rejoice with your whole heart in God as your Savior, you were in a calm, peaceful state of mind. And with that could you not say, "I know that I love the brethren and sisters?" If so, John tells you that by this you know that you have passed from death unto life. This was one of the first things that caused the unworthy writer to begin to feel a little hope; for I was several years without any hope. After I had been burdened on account of sin, and that burden had been removed, it had not been revealed to me that my sins had been forgiven, although Jesus had told me in a dream, at the time my burden was removed, that it was needful that he should suffer those things which he did suffer for me; yet I could not gather any hope that my sins were blotted out, but it gave me a faint hope that he would give me true conviction and a bright manifestation, at some time, that my name was written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The first gospel sermon that I heard, I was greatly disappointed. I expected to hear a sermon that I could not understand, for I read in my Bible that "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." And I considered myself a natural man, and I understood the sermon from beginning to end. I thought the man had not

preached the gospel, because it looked too plain. It looked to me like any child could see through the whole arrangement as he presented it to my mind. But I have since thought that he had help, or rather it was that Spirit that Jesus spoke of sending, that made it look so plain; for I know he said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he shall take of the things of mine, and shew them unto you." "He shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." And right here is a great and precious promise which he has left for us. He said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." No, it was that which the world could neither give nor take away. Then, my Father's children, be not despondent. You may expect trials, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son he receiveth. And if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards, and not sons. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him." Remember, that "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them and carried them all the days of old." He said also, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." He is our God, a God of love, who is all-powerful, all-wise, omnipotent and omnipresent. He has said, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." But it is not so, dear brethren and sisters, with the god of the Arminians, who is wooing and beseeching sinners to do their half of the work, and let him save them. He acknowledges that he has not done more than half the work, and that he is unable to save them unless they do their part. He is eager and anxious to save all, but says that he has done all that he can do, and if they are lost they need not blame him, as he has given them fair warning. He is pained and grieved at heart to see their carelessness in the matter. But our God has first saved us, and then called us, and that with an holy calling; and blessed be his holy name, it is not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ

to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

Your little brother in hope of eternal life,

DANIEL BRIDGES.

"GLORIOUS things are spoken of thee, O city of God."—Psalm lxxxvii. 3.

The psalmist in the above language was speaking of the church or kingdom under the appellation of a city; for he says, "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, [Zion] O city of God." He evidently, in the above language, was speaking of Zion, the church, as a city. The church is spoken of as a city in quite a number of places in the Bible. Cities, in ancient days, had walls built around them, to make them secure from danger. It appears that they had watchmen placed upon the walls, to fight off the enemy if they saw them approaching, and also to watch the city and give them warning of approaching dangers. There is a mayor in every city, who is the chief magistrate, and under him are policemen, who watch to see that there are no disorders carried on inside of the incorporation or wall. We have thus given a short description of a natural city; but the city we have under consideration is far superior to earthly cities. There are glorious things spoken of this city. Yea, the Bible is filled with the glorious things, for they are innumerable. What a glorious thing for the city that she was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.—Eph. i. 4. She was saved in the purpose and mind of God, not according to her works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given her in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.—2 Tim. i. 9. God hath from the beginning chosen her to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.—2 Thess. ii. 13. She is spoken of as the elect according to the foreknowledge of God.—1 Peter i. 2. She is of lively stones, built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.—1 Peter ii. 5. She was ever foreknown in the mind of God, therefore he predestinated her to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. And at the appointed time of the Father, he calls, justifies and glorifies her. Hence we see from the foregoing quotations that many glorious things are spoken of this city. But another of the glorious things spoken of is the great love that Jesus had for her in coming into this sinful world to redeem her from under the law and from under its curse. He declared, "Upon this rock [which is Jesus] I will build my church, [or city,] and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." No, all of the wrath of the world cannot reach her, because she is inclosed by a wall. "Salvation

will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Well might the poet express it,

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He whose word cannot be broken,
Form'd thee for his own abode:
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou mayest smile at all thy foes."

She is so completely walled in on every side that Satan, with all his malicious arts, cannot hurt her. And Jesus has a number of under-shepherds placed upon the walls, and to walk the streets, to keep order inside, and to keep the filth cleansed out. The city is founded upon a rock. They do not admit drunkards, hypocrites, nor pharisees into this city, for there is no room for them. None can enter the city unless they can say, "Shibboleth." The great Mayor, to-wit, Jesus, furnishes the watchmen (servants) with all the weapons they need. He also furnishes them with food for the hungry, so that they can supply them with many blessings. Not that they have any power whatever to give life; but after they have been born of the Spirit, then the servants of God can feed them. A person cannot eat until they are born into the natural world; neither can one eat spiritual food until they are born into the spiritual world. If a natural child does not eat he will die. If a spiritually born child does not eat, he will die to his spiritual enjoyments. The preacher has no power to save them eternally, but by warning the believer of the many false ways and systems, and warning him to live in discharge of duty, he saves him from many things he would otherwise have to pass through. If any of the citizens who dwell in a city get into a disorder they are imprisoned. So it is with a child of God who gets into disorder; they are often imprisoned, and shut off from all their spiritual enjoyments. Then it is the preacher's duty to warn the children of God against violating the laws of the city, or church. You cannot find in the Bible where the preachers make believers out of unbelievers, but they only serve those believers that take heed or hear their warning voice.—Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 22; 1 Tim. iv. 16. Consequently none have the power to prepare them for the city, but God alone. "He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." You see it is all of the Lord from first to last. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." Yea, that river, which I believe represents all the glorious blessings with which the church is blessed, is flowing to this city continually, to give drink to the poor, thirsty souls; which blessings cause the children of God to be glad and rejoice. Sometimes clouds of darkness cover this city, and not a ray of light can they see apparently; but after a while the clouds empty out their water upon them, and the clouds are removed, and the inhabitants feel like they are in a new world. Every little herb looks green, and we

can forget the past, and look forward by fond anticipation to our final triumph over all the losses and crosses of this world.

I have hardly touched the subject, but I must now close, hoping that what I have said may be to the comfort of God's children.

Yours in love,

LEE HANCKS.

NORCROSS, Ga., March 8, 1884.

TOWSON, Md., Dec. 30, 1883.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Some time ago I received a letter from sister Turner, of Kearneysville, W. Va., and as it has given me much comfort I thought perhaps some one of the dear children of God might receive some comfort from it. If it meets with your approval, you may publish it.

For some time my mind has been dwelling upon the passage of Scripture found in Psalm xxvii. 10, "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Will you please write upon the words through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and give us the spiritual meaning of the terms "Father and mother?"

Yours in hope,

J. N. HENDERSON.

KEARNEYSVILLE, W. Va., Dec. 9, 1883.

DEAR BROTHER HENDERSON:—Your highly appreciated letter was received, and its contents read with pleasure. I had almost concluded that you had forgotten us. It is something I prize very highly, the fellowship of the brethren and sisters, although I feel unworthy of their confidence; yet through it all I have still been kept from being a castaway by them. I once could not sympathize with one that would doubt the reality of religion, for I had never had such thoughts; but now I know what it is to have such wicked thoughts. But I have been troubled so much with them since our association, and I am glad that you received comfort here. I hope you may never regret your visit among us. It is one of my greatest pleasures to know that my brethren and sisters have enjoyed themselves during their stay with us, for my enjoyments in spiritual things are few and far between. I once felt that I could say with the poet,

"Jesus all the day long
Was my joy and my song."

But now I have to say,

"Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse,
Who have never heard his name."

Once the Bible was my daily study, and I felt that I could read it from one week's end to another without getting tired. I realized what the poet said,

"Give me the Bible in my hand,
A heart to read and understand,
And I desire no more."

But now it seems to be a sealed book to me, the most of the time, and my mind seems so dead to spiritual things that it leads me to fear that my former feelings were all imagination. But this one thing I know, they were much more pleasant, and I hope they were a reality. O what a terrible thing it is to doubt the exist-

ence of God, and that he has all power in heaven and earth, and controls all things by the word of his power, and that he gives eternal life to as many as the Father has given him, and that he will raise them up at the last day. You, my dear brother, perhaps, have never been left to such temptations as these, and I trust I may never have them any more. Did John really doubt when he sent to Christ to know whether he was the Savior, or should they look for another? If he did, we may take a little courage. He had seen the Spirit descending upon him, and hearing the voice, "This is my beloved Son." I am aware that the tempter can make us doubt, no matter how certain we may have been, when he is permitted to try our faith. And truly if we have faith as a grain of mustard seed, we could say unto this mountain of unbelief, Be removed, and it would be done. But we are incapable of making one hair white or black; and if we cannot do that which is least, how can we do that which is of so much more importance. Faith, we are told, is the gift of God; and we cannot get it or exercise it until he sees fit to give us the power. The apostle tells us to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run the race with patience, looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. I think unbelief is the sin which so easily besets us. When we feel that the Lord has caused us to rejoice in times past, and then when darkness comes, to doubt it all, looks as if we expected to be rewarded according to our deeds. But he told the children of Israel that it was not for their sakes, but for his holy name's sake, which they had polluted, that he had mercy on them. So it is with us; not for any worthiness in us, but because he has mercy on whom he will. And because he changes not, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. If I believed that the Lord loved his people because they are good, then I would give up all hope, for I cannot see one good thing that I can do. Sin is mixed with my best performances. The only thing that I can take any comfort in, is that I trust I have a desire to live without sin; but how to perform that which is good I find not. I can truly say with Paul, In my flesh dwells no good thing. But it is useless to tell you these things, for I know you realize them. Yet I know there are some who keep their body more in subjection than others, and I fear that I do not let my light shine, that others seeing my good works may glorify God which is in heaven. But I will bring this to a close, for I fear that it will not interest you, as I feel to be writing in the dark.

Elder White comes to us every fourth Sunday. Truly he is a dear brother to us, and I do not see anything in us to cause him to be so faithful. I would love to attend your association in the spring, but it is so far from here, with no direct route, that I fear I will not be able to attend. I would love to meet with

Elder Grafton and hear him preach again. The last time I heard him was at Springfield, Pa. His text was, "How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of them," &c.

S. A. TURNER.

TIPPECANOE, Pa., April 14, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I am writing to you on business, may I drop a few thoughts to the faithful in Christ Jesus? I am always thinking about something, but I often think that very many of my thoughts are evil, and proceed from the evil one, or from the flesh; but of all things that I desire to think of is Zion and her King, for here is the grand center of all genuine christian experience. But while we are in the flesh we are subject to temptations, and such temptations as the world knows nothing of; for those who are not subjects of the saving grace of our God cannot discern spiritual things, for "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned." They are strangers to the teaching of the Spirit, and are willingly led by "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," and anything suggested by that spirit is no temptation, hence it is no trial, but enjoyed more or less, according to the degree of depravity of the individual thus led. "The Lord's portion is his people," and they are said to be "an afflicted people." And it is also declared of them that they shall show forth his praise. There is no doubt that the chief cause of their affliction is the knowledge of sin in their fleshly members; for the body is dead to spiritual things because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. This people whom God formed for himself, when called to consider their inheritance, partake of the Spirit of our God; for they are "partakers of the heavenly calling," and are led by the Spirit; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." We cannot for a moment entertain the idea that the old Adamic nature in the saints is subject to the law of God. But when he declares, "The carnal mind is enmity against God," it agrees with the experience of this afflicted people. This people had their conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, and are in that condition compared to the strong man armed, keeping his goods in peace. In this connection there is nothing said about dissatisfaction of any kind; but he is fully satisfied with his strength and armor. When the stranger comes he does not destroy the strong man, but binds him and spoils his goods, such as his full stock of self-righteousness, self-dependence and man's peculiar glory. The child of God in his early experience is often disappointed in regard to this proud and vain man, supposing that he will never cause any more trouble. But in time he finds his supposition to be unfounded, for the dear child of God when left to himself has many conflicts with his old nature, and cannot do the things that he desires to do, which grieves him very much, and

this is really an affliction. The world cannot know anything of these trials, because they do not come to any but those who are exercised by faith, this faith being a fruit of the Spirit, and the Spirit magnifying the law. The works of the flesh are seen by an eye of faith, which is given us, and are seen in the proper light, and are opposed to every principle of the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The apostle declares to the saints that if they live after the flesh they shall die, but if they through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, or body, they shall live. Now this is written for our benefit, that we may take heed to the temptations that so often beset and afflict us while we sojourn as pilgrims in this land of sorrow and disappointment. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." We are sensible of sin, and the great warfare is to keep it from reigning, or being the leading or ruling principle in our walk and conversation. This afflicted people can find peace only in Jesus, for it is settled by his word that "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." When they are left to themselves to battle against Satanic influence in their fleshly members, they are continually brought into captivity, and mourn their inability to extricate themselves from the body of this death, and are sorely distressed on account of sin. If Jesus appears, glad are they, for his presence disperses their gloom, quiets their fears, and makes them peaceful and happy. But cloudy days are for the good of the Lord's people. It teaches them where their great strength lies; it tries their faith, that it may shine as it were more brightly in the glory of God, the giver of such good gifts as love, faith and hope, to cheer them in this cheerless land, where they are now convinced they have no abiding city, but look for a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. May all of God's dear children be enabled to look to him for deliverance from every evil thought, word or deed, and be made to rejoice in him for his providence and grace in the past, present and future. May they also realize that in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. "Who rideth on the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. Who knew the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." O, is not this the mighty God, the everlasting Father whom we adore? "In all their afflictions he was afflicted." Then we cannot have any affliction but what Jesus was familiar with, and he was tempted in all points like unto us, yet without sin. May we rest satisfied in his love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, not striving for the mastery over one another, but laboring in love, that as we are partakers of his sufferings, we shall also be partakers of his glory. Now we see through a

glass darkly, but when that which is perfect shall come, we shall meet him face to face. Now we know in part, then we shall know as we are known.

Yours in the fellowship of Jesus,
JEFF. BEEMAN.

WESTON, Oregon, Nov. 12, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed I send you a letter written by sister Martha Walden, (now Lee), for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, provided you in your judgment see fit to do so.

Yours in gospel bonds,
G. E. MAYFIELD.

WESTON, Oregon, Feb. 22, 1882.

WM. LEE—DEAR FRIEND IN GOSPEL BONDS:—Your favor of February 1st is at hand. I have found and tried to understandingly read the Scriptures to which you referred, but my knowledge of the great mysteries of godliness, and the lack of spiritual understanding, make it difficult for me at all times to draw in the wanderings of my mind, and to rest my weary soul, as it were, on the "Rock which is higher than I." The eighth chapter of Romans contains many sweet promises for the weary, afflicted saints, and to-night I doubt not that many of the dear saints, scattered abroad through this unfriendly world, are contemplating the glory of that precious promise, "And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." How perfect is that love which even to the end abounded, not rewarding us according to our deeds, but according to his mercy. The apostle reckons that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. And how often do we seem to grow unmindful of all these great things, and like the weak, groveling mortals that we are, sigh for the fleeting pleasures of this vain world, and follow the dictates of our sin-polluted natures, into the very depths of sin and ill-doing. But the children of the heavenly King should show forth their near relationship, by such a walk and conversation as the world cannot gainsay. "The Lord is nigh unto them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." How plainly is shown God's love and power to save. Yet daily are the things of this world allowed to supercede these great promises, and the trials of the hour seem to consume what should have been the time of praise and thanksgiving. In lieu of all that is ours to be, while dwelling in communion with that holy Spirit which cometh down from above, is it not strange that for an hour of earthly happiness the soul would be so tempted to leave its holy habitation, and mingle with the empty vanities of this unhallowed world? But I write unto you as though all were alike guilty of such folly, while it may be that those who know the truth as it is, do not suffer such trials and afflictions; for surely none manifest it in their walk and conversation as I, who am not worthy to be numbered

with the followers of that dear Savior whose life and death are manifestations of his divine relationship to the Father which is in heaven, and also of his power to forgive sin and bring salvation. To-day has been a season of joy. In many ways has been shown the unchanging love of God to the creatures of his care. The icy fetters of winter have yielded to the mild influences of warmer sunshine, and winds from summer lands, so that earth has lost the robe of snowy whiteness, the mountain streams are loud and free, and sing in wild, fantastic strains. The solitude of mountains is not solemn, for everywhere the voice of nature sings songs of praise. O that man could swell the song and prolong the lay. The ways of the Lord are past finding out. His immutable laws are above anything that we can comprehend, so that worse than mockery are the services that poor, sin-defiled human nature would offer to the Maker and Sustainer of all worlds. But in the heart of him whose trust is stayed in the Lord, there is a glad song of praise, a sweet assurance of a blessed immortality. The trials and vexations of the day are all forgotten in the evening's twilight hush, when round the sacred altar of the soul shines, dimly though it be, the light of everlasting light. For a season it seems well that we have been counted worthy to suffer for his name's sake, and then only do we have witness of the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are heirs of that immortal crown, and sharers of the day which shines forth from the bosom of the Father. The chain of love which binds our hearts as one is from the beginning to the end, and not a soul for whom the ransom has been paid, but must be drawn by its tender embrace into the presence of light, that the darkness may be made to flee away, and the true light permitted to shine. Then are the called according to his purpose made to rejoice in one hope of their calling; for old things have passed away, and all things have become new.

"The soul for joy then spreads her wings,
And loud her heavenly sonnet sings,
Vain world, adieu, vain world, adieu."

This is my prayer, that we may all be able to sing that song when done with the cares of this world. Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain yours truly,

MARTHA WALDEN.

HIRAMSBURG, Ohio, Oct. 11, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE, AND READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—While engaged with the occupations of this life, how much good it does the child of God to spend a few moments in singing hymns, reading gospel truth, or in conversation upon the hopes of the christian. O that we, as the people of God, might be found at all times in the path of duty. How much more enjoyable are such places than the associations of worldlings. Instead of occupying our time in the reading of secular news, why not read the Scriptures of divine truth? Are not

the rewards in obedience enough to encourage us in good works? Instead of spending time in some light remarks or foolish engagements of some sort, how much more real pleasure would be realized in talking of what Jesus has done for us. The God that forgave our sins for his Son's sake, is he not enough for us now? Some may say, I felt dark and cold, and thought it would do no harm to take a little worldly pleasure. Have we forgotten that if we are in Christ Jesus we are new creatures? Are we not commanded to crucify the old man, and to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness? It is only truth that should be uppermost in our minds. To know this is to know Jesus, for so he hath declared himself to be. We ask, with Paul, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" We do not understand that God's children are to have no trouble, for this is their appointed lot here in time; but we must look to truth. The truth is Jesus, and he has left upon record his inspired truth. He has commanded us to look to it. In reading it we are rewarded. Some may ask, What is to be accomplished by perusing the sacred pages? Paul told Timothy that they were able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. The salvation here referred to has no reference to a life beyond the grave; but there is a salvation here in a time world. It is a present salvation. This salvation we must work out "with fear and trembling." The Old School Baptists are not a set of do-nothings, as is slanderously reported of them. People of the world say that works are essential to salvation, and they think the Baptists ignore them; but there are none so zealous of works as these despised people, but it is because they feel the importance of them. Good works God has before ordained that we should walk in them; and while doing these works, the children of God have their salvation. Then, brethren, may we know nothing save Jesus. May we cast all our care upon him. Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. All this we are not commanded to do in our own strength, but we are to look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. We have received him, and may we so walk in him. O may the unity of the Spirit be kept in the bond of peace.

Yours in hope,
 GEORGE A. BRETZ.

ELDON, Iowa, March 23, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since its publication, although I never had the pleasure of seeing your dear father; yet I have been greatly comforted and encouraged by reading his editorials in the SIGNS. I have also been well pleased with your editorials. Write on, for it is food for God's dear children. I feel like writing a few lines, as I feel that there is a relationship existing between us; not a flesh-

ly one, but I hope a spiritual one, so that it causes in me an attachment, and makes me feel anxious to express some of my thoughts to you, notwithstanding you might not be willing to acknowledge the relationship, if you only knew what a poor, unworthy creature I am. I feel the least in all my Father's house, and if a saint, the least of all. In reading the communications of the dear brethren and sisters in our family paper, which comes to us twice a month, richly laden with precious truth, I feel to say to them, Write on. Although I never saw many of you, and perhaps never may see you while in this vale of tears, yet I am looking forward to a period when I hope we shall be brought nigh. Dear brethren and sisters, if it is ever my happy lot to reach the blissful climes of everlasting felicity, it will be by grace, sovereign, eternal, free, electing grace, that grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. God loved his Son before the foundation of the world, and he loved all his elect in him, and they were ever precious in his sight. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance, and we love him because he first loved us. He loved his people with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he draws them. When he draws them, and not till then, they will run after him. He sets them as a seal on his heart, and the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

I want to say to sister Loretta Loofbourrow that her experience, which was published in the SIGNS for February 15th, 1884, I received great comfort in reading, for it told my feelings better than I can write them.

In conclusion I want to say, I hope the brethren will be punctual in sending their remittances, as it is a small amount to us, and is a great help to the publishers. I am seventy-six years old, and according to nature I have not many years to stay here. I hope that peace, love and fellowship will dwell among the churches; and I hope the Lord will bless you, brethren Beebe, in your labors. This is the prayer of your afflicted sister,
 REBECCA FLINT.

NORTH TOPEKA, Kansas, Jan. 2, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year has come to a close, and I feel under renewed obligation to send for the SIGNS again. It is a welcome messenger to us, because it is seldom we get to hear preaching, being a distance of about forty miles from the regular place of holding our meeting; but we have meeting occasionally here, which is very acceptable to us. We would be glad to have any of God's dear people call on us when convenient to do so, for we are living where the enemy has a strong hold. Those who will not take part in sabbath schools are not reckoned among the nations that seek after such men-made institutions. When I first came here their influence was used to gain me. They offered me the position of teacher,

and said I would make a good one; but none of these things move me. They wanted to know my objections, and I told them that such things were not of divine authority; and if Jesus did not go after nor institute such inventions, we should not follow their works. Since then they have dropped me, for which I am very glad. We are to rejoice and count it all gain when we are rejected for Christ's sake. They say that after they have done all they can do to get people to come to sabbath school, and they will not come, they ought not to be recognized in society. This is only a hint at what they would do if they had the power.

"The soul that would to Jesus press
 Must fix this firm and sure,
 That tribulation, more or less,
 He must and shall endure."

May the God of Israel be with you, and enable you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. The communications of Elders Purington and Durand, in last number of the SIGNS, were both edifying and comforting to the people of God. It seems to me that brother Durand can tell my experience so much better than I can, that it is useless for me to write upon that subject. I want to say that our paper is a great comfort to us. Through it we hear from the dear brethren and sisters far and near, and can learn of their welfare in Zion. It brings sweet messages of love and fellowship from one to another. This surely is comforting and beneficial to the dear saints.

Dear brethren, these are a few of my thoughts, for you to dispose of as seemeth good unto you. I know this is written in haste, and is very imperfect.

A. D. JONES.

MORAVIA, Iowa, Feb. 3, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As my remittance is due, I will write you a few of my thoughts, the Lord being my helper to guide me in the right way.

I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It is always a welcome visitor, and never fails to bring glad tidings of great joy to me; and often it revives that spark of burning love which we have for all the dear people of God, which is an evidence to all the poor, trembling children that they have passed from death unto life. This is one great comfort to me, for I do know that I have a peculiar love for all the dear family of God. And why do we love all our brethren with such burning love? It is because God first loved us. I feel to say, Of a truth he has loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness has drawn us. What more could his children ask, than to be loved with an everlasting love? When I look for a moment and see how good he has been to us, blessing us with multitudes of blessings, keeping us so tenderly, as poor, dependent beings, I feel like praising him. For myself, I feel very poor, and dependent entirely on my Lord for everything, both natural and spiritual; and I think I can ever trust

him, for he has promised to keep us as the apple of his eye. Did you ever think, my brethren, what a tender keeping that is? And what a blessing it is to have the gift of faith, to believe in such an all-wise and powerful God, who is not slack concerning his promises. The truth as it is in Jesus is all that will do any of us any good.

Dear brethren, I will close this scribble. If you see anything in it that would be of any comfort to any of God's little ones, you may publish it, if it will not be too much trouble to correct mistakes, for I am a blunderer at best. May God bless you with wisdom and knowledge, and the truth as it is in Jesus, and ever keep you as the apple of his eye, is my prayer to God for you. I hope the dear brethren and sisters who write such able pieces will still continue to discharge their duty by filling the columns of our dear old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; for I feel for one that it is very precious to me, and I cannot do without it as long as I can be blessed with means to send for it.

I am your very little sister, if one at all,

HETTA STEVENS.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., April 27, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I cannot think of doing without the precious communications in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In the last number I read a short article from Elder R. M. Thomas, of Missouri. It was such a comfort to me, I thought it was worth the subscription price. Dear brethren and sisters, continue to write. You do not know whom you may comfort. There are many poor, lonely and feeble ones, like myself, who cannot meet with the brethren and sisters for worship, but they can read the epistles of love in the SIGNS, which often cause them to rejoice in God their Savior. O how thankful we should be for such a medium. I have been a reader of the SIGNS ever since its commencement, and it is more precious to me now than ever before. It contains all the preaching I shall have. I do not know of an Old Baptist in all this great city. If there are any here, I do hope they will come and see me. I have been thinking much of late about our churches and ministers. We are too negligent concerning our ministers who go in and out before us. Most of them are poor in this world's goods, and have families to support. Some of them have quite a distance to go by rail, and are absent from home three days. Sometimes they go on Saturday, when not a male member will be present at meeting. They cannot spare one-half a day, while the minister is losing three days. Brethren, let us not forget to minister to them in temporal things, while they minister to us in spiritual things.

Dear brethren, please bear with me. I am quite aged, and have been a Baptist almost sixty years. I have seen a great deal. I hope the dear brethren and sisters who have written to me, but who have received no answer, will excuse me, as I seldom feel able to write. I will be glad to have a letter from all of them. I would love to hear from sister Myers, of New Jersey. Cannot brother Cornelius Myers write again for the SIGNS? Also brother E. R. Myers, sister Sallie Bartley, and many others. My address is Kansas City, Missouri.

Now, dear brethren, please publish this for the information of any who would like to know of my whereabouts.

CYNTHIA A. BOBBITT.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association, in session with the sister church called Tuscarora, in Juniata Co., Pa., to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year of our pilgrimage is ended, and the time has arrived when according to a long standing custom you will expect from us a token of love and fellowship in what we have been in the habit of calling a Circular Letter; and if led by the Spirit of God, what we may write will not be entirely in vain. If we have been led in right paths, if we have been led in the way of wisdom, (Prov. iv. 11,) then what we may write while being so led, though devoid of human wisdom or learning, will be of interest and comfort to those who are led in the same paths and taught in the same wisdom.

We feel, brethren, like writing briefly of some of the way in which our glorious Leader leads his people in these low grounds of sin and sorrow here below. As we look upon God's ancient people Israel as a type of his chosen spiritual people, perhaps it will be well for us to notice what inspiration says of them. We find it recorded in Deuteronomy xxxii. 9, 10, "The Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." The psalmist in a wonderful manner recites the way in which they were led in the wilderness, and the marvelous things which God did in the sight of their fathers in the land of Egypt; how he divided the sea and caused them to pass through; how he led them by a cloud in the daytime, and with a light of fire by night; how he clave the rock in the wilderness and gave them drink; how he rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. But how oft did they provoke him in the wilderness. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and destroyed them not; for he remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passeth away. Yea, they provoked him in the wilderness, and turned back, and limited the Holy One of Israel; yet he made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. He led them on safely so they feared not; but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. He led them forth by a right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

Now let us for a moment turn our thoughts to that people of which the Israel of old was but a type. The Lord by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." The prophet Jeremiah, too, looking for-

ward to the glorious advent of this heavenly Leader, says, or rather the Lord says by him, "Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble." "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he." "And their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all." Then, again, we have in the prophecy of Isaiah a "Thus saith the Lord" that created the heavens and spread forth the earth. "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." Dear brethren, have we experienced that within ourselves we are wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked? Then how precious the thought that we have in this glorious Leader eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, ears to the deaf, food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, covering for the naked. What more can we want, when doubts and fears assail us, than to be reminded of the same things which we have experienced? "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." For a little while we are sojourners and pilgrims in a strange land, journeying forward to our promised rest, a celestial city, a glorious abode, eternal in the heavens. O how precious to have such a wonderful Leader, who leads us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake; and though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, to fear no evil, for he will be with us, and his rod and staff they shall comfort us. If so led, we have the blessed assurance that we are the sheep of his pasture; and it is ours to give thanks and adoration forever, and to show forth his praise to all generations. Do we feel that we are hungry, and poor, and helpless? We have the promise, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." How careful for the very weakest of the flock. "He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." Nor need we fear his love for us will ever cease,

for he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Although this blessed Leader, the good Shepherd of the sheep, is not with us in the flesh, as with the disciple who heard these words and recorded them, yet he said for the comfort of all his disciples that he would send the Comforter. "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

Finally, brethren, if we are led by the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; for the lusts of the flesh are these, "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like." "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." If we are, brethren, what we profess to be, the blessed Jesus says unto us, "Continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

In conclusion, brethren, may "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

The Delaware Baptist Association, to the several churches embraced in her connection, addresses the following letter.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We cheerfully speak and write one to another, if thereby we may hope to be profitable, and impart to each other some spiritual gift, to our mutual furtherance in the divine life and the knowledge of divine things. From among the various subjects that abound in divine revelation as profitable for the instruction and comfort of the saints, we propose to select one, and offer such reflections upon it as the limits of a letter of this kind will admit of. The theme to which your attention is invited is the being, attributes and perfections of Jehovah.

It may seem presumptuous in us to

attempt to deal with the perfections of this great and fearful name; but if we remember that he is glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, and that he has been pleased to make known all that is or can be known of him, we perhaps need not shrink from the undertaking. He has revealed himself to men, to be not only admired, but loved and revered. It is said that "In Judah is God known, and his name is great in Israel." But he is known both in Israel and Judah by the judgment which he executeth. It is difficult for creatures who are altogether imperfect to comprehend perfection, or the terms necessary to be used in setting it forth. So we find even the inspired writers, in addressing the children of men, frequently using terms and phrases which as understood among men, and as used between man and man, would not only imply imperfection, but absolutely weakness and folly.

The Scriptures abundantly expound their own terms, and vindicate themselves from any imputation of detracting from the harmony and perfection of the divine attributes. In a few instances, such terms as "repented" and "grieved" are to be met with in reference to the dealings of God with men. It is said that "He repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and he did it not." Again, "It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." If these and other such like terms were taken as they are understood in reference to the affairs of men, they would imply an utter want of foresight, a failure to accomplish the end designed, and serious grief and disappointment at the result. If we understand that "his work is perfect," all terms or expressions implying in any sense the contrary must be taken in a figurative or qualified sense. The terms referred to are used among men to designate the shortsightedness of mortals, and the mistakes, errors and disappointments to which the children of men are always liable. If we were to allow at all their application in the same sense to the divine being, we would discard and set at naught all those attributes that are essential to Deity. His immutability, his omniscience, the supremacy of his power, the perfection of his wisdom, and the illimitable nature of his government, would all be set at naught. Without these he could not be the Jehovah. If we undertake to assume that he is altogether such an one as ourselves, he will reprove us, and set these things in order before our eyes. There is another class of words used sometimes in the Scriptures, when treating of the dealings of God with men, which, as used among men, and in reference to their conduct one toward another, are expressive of wicked and base passions, the outgrowth of depravity, and that appertain exclusively to a fallen, sinful state. A moment's reflection must satisfy us that such terms as anger, wrath, hatred, jealousy, &c., when used in relation to the Supreme Be-

ing, and his all-wise and all-gracious government over men, must be understood in a restricted and qualified sense, and not in the same sense in which they are used to express the basest passions of bad men. Even in men the display of anger or hatred is condemned; and held to be censurable, and no amount of provocation is allowed to excuse it. The man of grace is expected to rise above these fleshly passions, and as things vile and base and appertaining to the body, keep them in subjection. They are always traceable to the flesh, and not to the Spirit. If it were possible for us to tolerate an idea that Jehovah could be swayed and controlled in the administration of his government, as weak, depraved mortals are in temporal affairs, we would be repeatedly reproved by the strongest declarations of Scripture. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent." "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." "I am God, I change not." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Not only is it true as declared that he does not repent or change, and that with him is no variability nor shadow of turning, but there is no reason why there should be. "His work is perfect." He has never made any mistakes. As there is no variability with him, so there can be no variability with the work of his hands. "I know," says one, "that what God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, neither anything taken from it." Passages might be multiplied, but let these suffice for the present. Men have need not only to read the passages, but to understand them and see the force of them, in order to any profit. That Being who is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works, may be sought unto by his creatures; for all his works praise him, and his saints shall bless him. It will not be expected that the finite will comprehend the infinite, or attain unto an exhibition of the glory and perfection of the Holy One. Nevertheless we may speak of the fact that he is both holy and infinite, and that if he is known at all, he is known to be so. He has declared himself to be a Spirit, hence a holy and infinite Spirit; and unless he is worshiped and adored as such, he cannot be worshiped at all. If we know him, we know him to be the Lord which exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth, for in these things he declares is his delight. If we know this, it is something to rejoice and glory in.—See Jer. ix. 24. A holy spirit even in man is averse to evil. Lot could hate the wickedness of Sodom, while he pitied the doomed people. The psalmist says, "I hate every false way." "The Lord loved righteousness and hated iniquity." Purity abhors defilement. We should observe the distinction between hating evil, and hating the persons of those who commit evil. While a pure and holy spirit must necessarily feel an aver-

sion to the wickedness of evil doers, we should not confound this with a hatred of their persons. Cain, when he complained of the judgment pronounced against him, was challenged as to whether if he did well he would not be accepted; and if he was not accepted, it was because sin lieth at the door. If what may be known of God is at all manifest unto us, we might understand that there was no such thing as hatred with God toward his creatures, separately considered from sin. But we have the positive declarations of the apostle that God is love. "Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." Nothing, then, in conflict with the principle of love can emanate from him. Hatred, wrath, strife, evil speaking, anger, &c., are all born of the flesh. This love of God is like himself: it is immutable; it is perpetual. It is not the fickle, selfish, changing passion called love among men; but it is sovereign, it is independent. What the Spirit of the Lord is, was shown in the Redeemer when he was sent to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, &c. When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not.

"Not one revengeful, angry word
The dear Redeemer spoke."

The Spirit is known by the fruit it bears. Anger, hatred, revenge, &c., are not among them. What then shall we understand by such declarations as "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," and "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" We understand that if the righteousness of God is revealed, its beauty and excellency will be made to appear, and the blessed and happy estate of those to whom it is revealed. Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works. The revelation of righteousness from heaven necessarily discloses the sinfulness of sin, and the wretched state of those who are involved in it. Such revelation is against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. It declares that as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. The word of the Lord does not make it so. It simply declares the truth; and it would be and remain the truth even if it had not been declared. It is written, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." And then the prophet goes on to state what the blight and curse is that rests upon such. It is not that God will inflict a curse or penalty upon them for their error. There is no need that he should. The curse is in the evil. They are already under it. The terrible blight and mildew and curse of trusting in man, of loving darkness, and vanity, and every other evil, is revealed whenever the righteousness of God is revealed.

The vessels of wrath are fitted to destruction. They have all the elements of that wrath in them. The Lord bears and endures with much long-suffering; and by so doing he shows his power to protect his people, to sustain and preserve his own cause and truth, while the wickedness of the wicked hurries him on to perdition. It is their own iniquity that shall come upon them, and in their own wickedness they shall be cut off.—Psa. xciv. 23. "The wicked shall be driven away in their wickedness." But where shall they be driven from, and where shall they be driven to? They shall be driven from the congregation of the saints, and from a dwelling place in his holy hill. They shall be driven from the things that God hath prepared for them that love him. And while they do not love him, nor the blessings of his gospel, how can it be otherwise? While their depravity is such that they love darkness and hate the light, what will the light of the Sun of righteousness do but drive them to their own place and company? Into the fellowship of the Spirit, and those heavenly places where the saints sit together, they cannot come. The perfections of Jehovah are as high above the depraved and fallen state of the sinner as the heavens are high above the earth; and to that height he raises the subjects of his grace, and they shall live in his sight. There is perhaps no better pathway by which our minds can be led up to a contemplation of the majesty and glory of God than by a contemplation of the evil and deformity of the vices and base passions which are born of sin. We can hardly have a consistent view of them in their wretchedness, without some conception of the purity and blessedness of that light by which the blackness of darkness is discovered. Holiness, purity, light and life can condemn and drive away darkness, depravity, sin and death. But light does not and need not hate darkness, neither does life hate death. Truth is superior to error, as light is superior to darkness, and both are destined to triumph. There is no indignation or wrath in that light that shines in darkness and drives it away; neither is there any in a ministration of righteousness, though it make manifest the condemned state of the wicked. Nothing but purity and holiness can ever be developed from the pure fountain, and nothing can ever mar the beauty or detract from the perfection of that name, the name of the Lord. "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth."

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.
B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

The Elders and messengers of the Delaware River Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Kingwood, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1884, to the churches composing this association, whose messengers we are, send christian salutation.

BELOVED OF GOD, CALLED TO BE SAINTS:—Grace to you, and peace

from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Through the mercy, faithfulness and wisdom of Israel's God we are preserved to meet again in our accustomed manner; and for the expression of our faith and practice we will present in the usual way our Circular Letter.

The Scripture recorded by the inspired writer to the Hebrews is the solid foundation upon which we hope we stand. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."—Heb. i. 1-3. In days or times before, God spoke by men or prophets, at different times and in various manners; but now, or in the gospel day, "by one man, Jesus Christ."—Rom. v. 15. He declared unto John, "This is my beloved Son; hear ye him." In the temple Jesus opened the book of the prophet Isaiah and read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." This is truly the sabbath, or last day. That word which is spoken by Jesus is riches to the poor, a better and enduring substance which shall not pass away; health to the sick, freedom from bondage, light unto them that sit in darkness, and them who find no soundness in self, but bruised, are made to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint. Well may we, brethren, "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Who of all the race of men have such a word of power spoken unto them? The days of labor and travail are past, and blessed be his name, there shall be no word spoken after his. May we be enabled to rest in his commandments, and feel they are not grievous, but joyous. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." Who that has felt his power or lisped his praise, has not felt that precious testimony that we are not Moses' disciples? But Christ built the house, and hath more honor than the house. Believer, rejoice that a law was given, and that you were made to feel the galling yoke, for by it came the knowledge of sin. He that honored the law, that was your shame, hath made you free indeed.

While we read the Old Testament Scriptures, and behold the word of our God by the prophets, we are lost in wonder and amazement in the fulfillment of the holy commandment which he required of his people

through his Son. He hath spoken by him in the experience of the believer after his own manner. "He speaks, and it is done; he commands, and it stands fast." By the first commandment there was a remembrance made of sin. This the prophets continually kept in view. This the four evangelists have faithfully recorded that Jesus ever showed unto the people from their law, saying, "My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready." "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" The believer is made to know the conscience purged from dead or carnal works by the blood of Jesus. His flesh is truly meat, and his blood is drink indeed. It is his body that was broken for you.

"I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,
Or to defend his cause,
Maintain the honor of his word,
The glory of his cross.

"Firm as his throne his promise stands,
And he can well secure
What I've committed to his hands
Till the decisive hour."

God has spoken. He must be heard; he will be, he shall be, he is heard. "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"

"Whom he hath appointed heir of all things." "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge."—1 Cor. viii. 5-7 "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—Psa. ii. 8. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."—John iii. 35, 36. The things of the gospel are all, for there is none beside them, neither shall there be any after them. "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."—Luke i. 33. This God has appointed. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him."—Ecl. iii. 14.

"By whom also he made the worlds." "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."—John i.

3. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John xiv. 6. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 2. Passive are all the worlds in his hand, to subserve his purpose alone. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," is the breathing of every new-born soul.

"Who being the brightness of his glory." "The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens."—Psa. cxiii. 4. "His name shall endure forever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen."—Psalm lxxii. 17-19. This is the glory of God, and in the believer Christ is revealed as his brightness. Jesus said unto the apostles, "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Matthew xix. 28. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Here is truly brightness, believer, full of grace and full of truth. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

"And the express image of his person." "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."—Ecl. vii. 29. In uprightness and dominion in the earth man was in image, but not in express image, because of the weakness of the flesh to withstand the power of Satan. "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"—1 Tim. iii. 16. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. "Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"—John xiv. 8, 9. This is truly person, and not individual.

"And upholding all things by the word of his power." No other power to support than the power of God.

"I and my Father are one." "All power is given unto me." "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." Here is the resurrection from the dead; and preaching him is declaring his blood cleanseth from all sin.

"When he had by himself purged our sins." "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst." "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."—John xix. 28, 30. By himself. This is confounding testimony to all who trust in their own strength; and the believer is made to know the putting away of all things, and trusting in his blood alone. It was his blood, and not the blood of another. Purged, not simply washed, with no power to remain unstained; but are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

"Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." In the gospel there are no contingencies or mishaps, but it is the positive word, sat down; for when he is sat, who shall rouse him up? At the right hand, the power of the glorious Intercessor. No suppliant's voice shall ever pass unheard; he ever lives to make intercession for us.

"Of the Majesty on high." Not upon the earth, for this Majesty is not of an earthly nature. When the poor soul is made to bow before the Majesty of God, he is made to feel that Jesus is his righteousness; and though in the most secret place of men, he is in the full light of the eye of God's presence. He alone is the Intercessor of his people. When he asks grace for the poor mortal, he knows it shall be given. "Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." These are the blessed promises of life, and happy indeed is he who knows them. Take heed that no man deceive you in word or in doctrine. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."

WM. J. PURINGTON, Mod.
G. M. FETTER, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Middletown, N. Y., June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1884, to the churches within her bounds, sends love in the Lord.

Being favored in the kind providence of our ever faithful God with the pleasant privilege of meeting once more, according to appointment, we would express gratitude to him for this renewed manifestation of his goodness and mercy toward us. While enjoying the sweet fellowship and unity of the gospel, and exchanging cordial greetings in fraternal love with the dear saints here assembled, our affectionate regard is drawn out to those who are not permitted to meet with us, and we desire to speak to all our fellow-pilgrims in the way of encouragement and exhortation.

For this manner of address the inspired pattern furnishes the example in these urgent and tender words: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."—2 Peter ii. 11, 12.

This earnest and affectionate appeal was addressed by inspiration of God to the elect strangers then scattered throughout various provinces of the world, and it is equally applicable to the same people now. The same unity of the Spirit by which they were endeared to the apostle, embraces all who are now sojourning as strangers on the earth, and they are therefore "dearly beloved." This pathetic entreaty comes with feeling power to them, and nothing could be more impressive than the simplicity with which the apostle makes the appeal to the heart of every pilgrim and stranger. It must be a very important matter which is so seriously urged upon the attention of the saints. So indeed it is, for the entreaty is that they should "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." Too much care cannot be exercised in this particular, for this is the divinely authorized rule of total abstinence. It is not enough that the saints should carefully abstain from any one form of sin, as from excessive indulgence of a depraved appetite, or the exhibition of ill temper. These are included in the exhortation, but they do not fulfill its requirements. All the desires which originate in the natural heart, every emotion of the carnal mind, and all the will of man, are included in the term "fleshly lusts." So that this exhortation perfectly accords with the declaration of our Lord, who says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—Matthew xvi. 24. There is no possibility of following our Lord in any other way but this self-denying course, in which we must "abstain from fleshly lusts." It is not needful to tell the saints of the blessedness of following Jesus; nor do they require to be induced to walk in his footsteps by the hope of heaven as the ultimate reward of their obedience. Their reward is in keeping the commandment of the Lord. Therefore, this exhortation does not call upon them for a servile compliance with burdensome requirements, but it presents a privilege in which they delight after the inward man. Hence, they are willingly obedient to the inspired exhortation, while they mourn their captivity under the law of sin which they find in their members; by reason of which, when they would do good, evil is present with them. Such mourners are indeed wretched in themselves, but they have to thank God for that deliverance from the body of this death which is through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Will-worshippers may flatter themselves that they have complied with the exhortation in the text when they have refrained from outbreaking crimes; but the quickened sinner is distressed to find in his own heart the principle of sin which embodies all evil. This discovery causes such bitter groaning within as is experienced only by those who have been slain by sin. They see the loathsome stain of selfishness pervading their best efforts, and converting all their righteousnesses into filthy rags. When they read this entreaty to "abstain from fleshly lusts," they desire with sincere longing to comply with the admonition, but mourn their inability to control that fountain of corruption in their carnal hearts, which sends forth unceasing streams of those very abominations from which they most deeply desire to abstain. In this experience they feel their utter weakness, and are thereby compelled to cry out of the depths unto the Lord. This very feeling of the burden of sin is in perfect accordance with the entreaty of the apostle, and shows conclusively that the one who has such desire is led by the Spirit which indited the exhortation. While the carnal mind feels that it is a burden to abstain from acts of sin, the spiritual mind longs for deliverance from the principle in which such acts originate. Conscious inability to withstand this evil within, causes the true disciple of our Lord to hate his own life. Such characters will not desire to indulge their fleshly lusts, but rather pray to be kept back from them as presumptuous sins. That such lusts do "war against the soul," every saint who has encountered them can testify. They rob the soul of all sense of comfort. Peter felt their power when the Lord looked on him in his apostacy, and he went out and wept bitterly. So have many dear tempted ones been wounded by failing to abstain from fleshly lusts; but they cannot finally perish, because our Lord has prayed for them, as he had prayed for Peter. Their life is hid with Christ in God, beyond the reach of sin and lusts, so that nothing can war against it.

It is very important for the enjoyment and peace of the soul that the saints should heed the instruction in the latter verse of the text, as is clearly explained in the language recorded. In observance of this direction the mouths of gainsayers are effectually closed; and they are compelled to confess with shame that they have no evil thing to say of the saints who walk according to this rule. In this confession they render an unwilling tribute of praise to God, by whose mighty grace alone his saints are enabled to walk as children of the light, and to glorify God in their body and in their spirit, which are his. May that grace enable us, with all saints, to "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." "Now, the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen.

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church called Tuscarora, Juniata Co., Pa., May 14th, 15th and 16th, 1884, to the associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We feel to thank God for this great manifestation of his love and power in assembling us in one mind and with one heart, minding the same things, receiving your messengers and messages of love with thankful hearts, and an appreciation of the goodness and mercy of a gracious God. Our meeting has been one of special harmony and good, the love of God seeming to prevail in all our deliberations. Our churches, as you will see by our Minutes, are about the same in numbers, and all at peace one with another.

Our next meeting is appointed to meet with our sister church at Harford, Harford Co., Md., where we again hope to meet your messengers and messages of love, and that our correspondence may continue, and that all the dear saints of God may thus be united more and more in the strong ties of God's love; and that the Lord may reign in all your hearts, is our prayer, for Jesus' sake.

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., May 21st, 22d and 23d, 1884, to the several associations with which we correspond, Greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the kind providence of our dear heavenly Father we have been favored with another meeting of our association, which has been indeed a pleasant occasion, a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The meeting and greeting of brethren, the spiritual conversation, with the songs of joy and praise, in which it has been our privilege to engage, have been exceeding pleasant, and we trust profitable and comforting to our souls. The preaching has been one unbroken and unvarying testimony of the power, truth, love and faithfulness of our covenant-keeping God. The churches all report peace and prosperity within their borders; and while they do not tell of great additions to their numbers, they assure us of their continued steadfastness and love of the truth. We feel that we have abundant reason to adore and praise Zion's King for all the mercies and blessings of his hand.

Our next meeting has been appointed to be held with the Cow Marsh Church, Kent Co., Delaware, to begin on Wednesday before the last Sunday in May, 1885, where and when we cordially invite all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity to meet with us, and hope to receive your communications of love and fellowship.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Kingwood, Hunterdon Co., N. J., May 28th, 29th and 30th, 1884, to the several associations with whom we correspond, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the abounding goodness of our heavenly Father and covenant-keeping God we have been once more permitted to meet together on the shores of time as an association. We have enjoyed the blessed privilege of worshiping the Lord under our own vine and fig tree, and as we hope his Spirit has taught us, none daring to molest or to make us afraid. How little we realize of the blessings we are thus permitted to enjoy, in comparison with what the dear saints enjoyed in former times, when for thus meeting for the worship of God they were persecuted and driven from city to city, and compelled to hide themselves in dens and caves in the earth, or were imprisoned for the truth's sake. We have been permitted to hear the servants of our God, coming from the different parts of our land, preach the unsearchable riches of Christ as taught in his word, and as we hope has been revealed to us by his Spirit, proclaiming with one accord that "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people." We pray the Lord that he will ever keep us in the right way, enabling us to walk uprightly before him, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; for behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. In conclusion, dear brethren, we hope for a continuation of your correspondence, both by Minutes and messengers.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held with our sister church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1885.

WM. J. PURINGTON, Mod.

G. M. FETTER, Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Middletown & Wallkill Church, at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., June 4th, 5th and 6th, 1884, sends christian salutation to the associations and meetings with which she corresponds.

DEARLY BELOVED:—With gladness we embrace the present opportunity of corresponding with you, and we believe the love of Christ constrains us so to do. Our present session has been one of refreshing to us. Perfect harmony has prevailed during our meeting, and it is manifest that we are of one heart and one soul. The presence of your messengers has added much to our joy. Their coming was like the coming of Titus of old, and they have proclaimed the same gospel which we have received. We earnestly desire a continuance of your correspondence. For further information respecting our state and condition, and what we have done during our present session, we refer you to our Minutes accompanying this letter.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., beginning on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1885, when and where we hope again to be favored with your correspondence.

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.

BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

JEREMIAH XII. 5.

"If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

Sister F. L. Bagg, of Illinois, requests the views of Elder Durand, or the editor, on this verse, which was the one intended by sister Pettibone, in her request of brother Durand in SIGNS of May 15th, 1883, instead of the ninth verse, as erroneously printed. Hoping that brother D. will comply with the desire of these sisters, we will submit our understanding of the subject, with the trust that it may be in harmony with what he may write.

In the preceding connection of this text the Lord has denounced his severe condemnation against the house of Israel and the house of Judah, for their idolatry in the worship of Baal, declaring the terrible visitation of his judgments upon them. This chapter begins with the confession by the prophet of the righteousness of the Lord in this just sentence; yet he prays for the privilege of talking with the Lord of his judgments, and asks, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?" The same question substantially has been suggested in the experience of the afflicted saints in all ages. In the early records of the history of the world the wicked seemed to prosper, as when Cain slew his brother, Ishmael mocked Isaac, and Jacob fled from the vengeance of Esau. The psalmist was troubled with the same difficulty, in view of the prosperity of the wicked and the afflictions of the righteous.—Psalm lxxiii. Even the disciples, who were favored to hear the gracious words of our Lord, needed to learn that their portion in the world must be tribulation; and to this day, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Under this suffering the question of Jeremiah often arises within the saints. While they are assured that the Lord reigns supreme, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, they cannot understand the mystery of his providence. They see that the just upright man is scorned, and "The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly."—Job xii. 6. These things are too painful for them. The Lord answers all these murmuring and rebellious questionings in the language of the text. Running with the footmen represents the efforts of the saints to maintain their own uprightness by obedience to the law which is revealed as the standard of justice. In this they have utterly failed, and

have to confess that all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Then how shall they be able to comprehend the deeper mystery of the unsearchable way of the Lord in his providential government of the world? "He giveth not account of any of his matters." "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." Experience teaches the saints to confess with Isaiah, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." And they can never in this world attain to greater knowledge of the wonders of his providence than the psalmist possessed when he said, "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known."

The disposition to ask for an explanation of the mystery of divine government does not arise from the mind of Christ in the saints. The language of that mind is always, "Thy will be done." It is ever ready to confess that "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."—Psalm cxlv. 17. When led by the Spirit, the saints will never seek to judge the work of the Lord by finite reason. If they presume to question the justice of his way, their folly is readily exposed by the reproof in this verse. The illustrations are simple, and yet conclusively appropriate. If a man had been wearied and failed in running with footmen, it would be hopeless folly for him to contend with horses; if under favorable conditions of peace he could not sustain himself, clearly his efforts must be unavailing in the flood of the swollen river of Jordan. In the reference to this river there is peculiar fitness to illustrate the idea designed. The name *Jordan* signifies *the river of judgment*. "If in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst," the sense of sin working in the heart was too strong for thee, how will thy best works endure the overflowing flood of divine judgment? It is not wisdom in the people of God to inquire into the hidden mystery of his secret will. It is enough for their comfort to know what he has revealed of his purpose of love in their salvation. The riches of his grace thus manifested can never be fully comprehended by finite intelligence, though by faith the saints are made to rejoice in the knowledge of its sufficiency. This glorious revelation so fills their spiritual mind that no room is left for vain speculations in reference to the hidden mystery of divine providence. It is enough for those whose hope is in the salvation of God to gaze with rapture upon the treasure of his great love bestowed upon them, that they should be called the sons of God. In this contemplation they are comforted and strengthened; but when they are carried away by their carnal reasonings to search after the hidden counsel of God, there can be nothing but sorrow and disappointment for them in that fruitless effort. These reasonings originate in the enmity of the carnal mind against the sovereignty of God. The mind of Christ in his

followers finds rest in that childlike confidence in God which results from perfect love and living faith. Under the guidance of that meek and lowly mind they trust in the Lord implicitly, and are as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. Resting in this sweet confidence, they are not disturbed by the confusion and strife which surround them in the world, nor are they overcome by those terrible foes which are of their own house, dwelling in their carnal mind.

In the record of the dealings of God with the nation of Israel is presented the shadow or type of his providential government of his chosen people under the gospel dispensation. When their enemies carried them into captivity, as at the time when this prophecy was given, it seemed to them that the wicked did their own pleasure in afflicting them. They could not see that the hand of the Lord used their oppressors as his rod in punishing their iniquities, as he said by Amos, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Even the inspired prophets were not able to understand the dark dispensations of his judgment as evidences of his special mercy toward them, except as they were instructed by the direct teaching of his Spirit. Hence, such expressions as those in the commencement of this chapter were often used by them. So, the saints now, under the hiding of his face, are often troubled with the same suggestions arising from the unbelief which still dwells in their evil heart. In the text is the answer to all such murmurs and complaints. In the comforting words of our Lord the same truth is expressed when he says, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." However mysterious and dark may be the circumstances surrounding them, the saints are never forgotten by their God. All their sorrows and afflictions are given in his great love, and work together with all things for good to them. Reason and sense may lead them to say, with Jacob, "All these things are against me;" but faith shall enable them with Israel to confess, "It is enough." No loss or grief shall ever come upon one of these little ones which believe in Jesus, but that which is needful for their profit, and no good thing will he withhold from them. But they are called to deny self and bear the cross, against which their natural mind rebels. They may be envious at the foolish, when they see the prosperity of the wicked and the afflictions of the righteous; but in the sanctuary of the secret place of the Most High they shall see and understand the end of the ungodly, and be enabled to say, with the psalmist, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." And concerning

the enemies of truth and righteousness, they will be made to know that the Judge of all the earth does right, even in sparing them until the full measure of their wickedness shall be developed. His righteous judgments are too deep for finite intelligence to comprehend; yet they are brought to ascribe greatness unto our God, and to confess that "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."—Deut. xxxii. 4.

CLOSE COMMUNION.

To most of our readers the subject of the observance of the ordinance of the Lord's supper is so clearly defined in the New Testament as to require no further elucidation; but some have become entangled by the specious devices of enemies of truth, so that they have lost sight of the plain command of our King in reference to the manner in which his church is to perpetuate this memorial of him. Left to their own strength, the little children of the kingdom of God would be as powerless to withstand this deception as any other of the many false assaults by which they are continually tried.

By the expression "close communion," the intention of worldly religionists is to stigmatize as selfish the practice of obedient followers of our Lord. They claim that as the Lord enjoined the observance of this ordinance as a formal remembrance of his death, it should be open to the participation of all who profess to believe on him, however they may follow after the commandments of men and reject the doctrine of Christ. Those who profess so much liberality in this respect, however, are themselves less liberal than the church whom they accuse; for the communion as enjoined by our Lord is held by us to belong to all orderly baptized believers, while they hold a large class of those whom they claim as baptized members of their own order (infants) whom they do not receive as communicants. This inconsistency seems strangely hidden from them, while their opposition to divine authority prompts them to accuse obedient saints with restricting the privilege of communion in recognizing the requirements of the law of Christ. Paul has left on record the inspired decision on this subject in the primitive church.—See 1 Cor. xi. 20-30. In their mistaken liberality the church at Corinth had practiced open communion, "not discerning the Lord's body." "This is not to eat the Lord's supper." The Lord's body is the church, of which he is the Head.—Eph. i. 22, 23. Then to eat the Lord's supper the saints must discriminate between those who confess the authority of the Lord and those who follow after the doctrines and commandments of men. Failure to do this, is to destroy the emblematic significance of the supper, and to make it a mere ceremony without meaning.

It is necessary to the orderly observance of this ordinance that it

should be still further restricted, as directed by the law given for our guidance. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."—2 Thess. iii. 6. With such disorderly ones, even though they have been recognized as brethren, the church is forbidden to eat.—1 Cor. v. 11. Much less may they eat indiscriminately with the world of disorderly religionists, who openly defy the authority of our Lord. From the directions given it is the duty of the church to continue steadfastly in the doctrine and order established by apostolic authority, and each member is enjoined to examine himself, and so let him eat. The object of this self-examination is not to find merit in self on which to claim worthiness. By that test the boasting Pharisee might have partaken, while Paul, with the publican, would have been denied the privilege. If there is any confidence in self-righteousness, it is clearly evident that such trust forbids the remembrance of Jesus as the exclusive hope of salvation; but a heartfelt consciousness of sin in themselves, and a trembling hope in the abounding grace of God in Christ Jesus, testified by humble obedience to his commandments, are qualifications which justify those in whom they are found in partaking of the communion of the Lord. Failure to recognize this qualification in those who are participants in the supper, destroys its character as instituted by our Lord; and consequently professed disciples condemn themselves in such observance; since, if they can see no difference between those who are followers of Christ and those who follow men, they have no good reason for professing to be separate from the world. To require obedience to the law of our King as a precedent qualification for partaking of the ordinance of the Lord's supper, is not justly called close communion, since without that requirement there is no communion at all in the mere formal ceremony, which is thereby transformed into an empty mockery of the solemn injunction of our Lord.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

We would call the attention of brethren throughout the country to the fact that we are prepared to print and distribute the Minutes of meetings as cheap and in as good style as any office in the United States. We frequently receive copies of Minutes printed by parties who do not belong to our order, and therefore have no idea of what is meant by the writers, and consequently frequent serious blunders are made. It costs but a trifle to forward the manuscript or return the printed Minutes by mail from any part of the country, and we therefore solicit our brethren to send us their Minutes for printing. We are but few, and our patronage should be kept within our own borders.

MARRIAGES.

APRIL 23, 1884, by Theo. L. Cuyler, pastor of the Lafayette Avenue Church, at his residence in Brooklyn, L. I., Mr. Harry M. Hayes and Miss Lillian J. Beebe, both of Middletown, N. Y.

ON May 27, 1884, by Elder William J. Purinton, at the residence of the bride's mother, Mr. Elmer F. Ege, of Hopevell, and Miss Mary J. Hixson, of East Amwell, both of New Jersey.

MARCH 8, 1884, at No. 230 Union Street, by Elder Wilson Housel, Mr. Thomas Terry, of Port Jefferson, Long Island, N. Y., and Mrs. Amelia Player, of Brooklyn, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been requested to write you the following obituary of our dear brother, **Jesse H. Adams**, who died in the city of Portland, Oregon, on the 26th of April last, where he had been living for a year or so. His former residence was in or near Marion Station, Marion Co., Oregon, but his health becoming infirm he moved to Portland, where he had an attack of paralysis on last Thanksgiving Day, from which he never fully recovered, so as to be able to leave his house. He was born January 14, 1818, so that his age was 66 years, 3 months and 12 days. I cannot say where he was born. The first I knew of the family was in the year 1831, in the state of Indiana. His father, John B. Adams, was a member of the Regular Baptist Church called Bethel on Little Walnut, in the Eel River Association. In this vicinity brother Jesse first married a young lady by the name of Wright, after which he moved to Andrew Co., Missouri, where I think he first united with the Baptist Church. From there he moved to Oregon Territory in 1847. It was here I first became personally acquainted with him, as I landed in Oregon the year following. He first united with a church near where he lived in Marion County, but owing to some dissensions, this church after a few years was dissolved, the members being of different faiths, and brother Adams then united with the Little Bethel Church, in Linn County, where my membership was. This church finally dropped the term "little," and has ever since been known by the name Bethel. In this church brother Adams lived until his death, a consistent and useful member, one who was very faithful in filling his seat at meetings, and being a good singer was always ready to set tunes during worship. In this church he and I lived for many years in fellowship and sweet harmony. He was often at my house to stay over night during meetings, and I found him to be very sound in the faith and very quick in detecting error. He raised a family of seven children by his first wife, who died some eight or nine years before him. He lived single about two years, and then married a very fine widow lady by the name of Sarah A. Gallo-way, who writes to me from Portland, with the request that I should send you a statement of her husband's death. They had lived together some six years and six months, as she says, very happily, and she says that she believes he was a christian and a good man. He was constantly talking about the church and its members, desiring to see them, and wanted her to write to the members to learn when and where the association was to be held. He was often speaking the names of members, and at times when his fever would be quite high, he would be singing such songs as, "Heaven is my home," &c. Our consolation is that heaven is his home, and that he has landed safe there, to still sing that song, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, [the name of Jesus] be all the glory;" for in that dear name was all his dependence for salvation. I had still hoped that the Lord would prolong his days, as myself and wife contemplate visiting the Siloam Association, at which time we wanted to stop at Portland and see him. But the Lord ruled otherwise, and we humbly bow to his sovereign will. Although I am his senior by nearly eleven years, yet he has been called home first, like a ripe sheaf of grain gathered home. He has heard and

obeyed the summons, "Child, your Father calls, come home."

Yours in love,

J. T. CROOKS.

GOLDENDALE, W. T., May 16, 1884.

OUR aged and much esteemed sister, **Polly Panoast**, died March 11, 1884, at the advanced age of 88 years and 6 months. The subject of this notice was born in Botetourt Co., W. Va., August 30, 1795, came west with her parents to Ohio, and was married to Shreve Panoast, August 23, 1812. Her husband preceded her to the tomb in 1866, aged seventy-seven years. He was a Baptist in sentiment, but never made it manifest. Our aged sister deprived herself of comforts she might have had by continuing in disobedience to her Lord's commands, as we gather from her experience. She received a hope in Christ about eleven years before she left her native state, but we think she received the full wages even at the eleventh hour, the way she expressed herself when baptized. She thanked the Lord that her life was spared to do her Master's will, as she came up out of the water. She was baptized by Elder Ephraim Barker. She was a subject of general remark by the Baptists that knew her before she put on Christ by a profession, and was an example in worldly deportment to many of the Baptists. There was no compromise with her in regard to the truth, and she would chide her friends when they would run after the "Lo heres and Lo theres," and never went herself, for she thought it wicked to bid them God-speed. She was a dear lover of the truth, whether written or preached, and was very discerning. She appreciated the SIGNS OF THE TIMES very much. She had a great desire to see the Church History that she had sent for, but after her affliction took place she despaired of it, and when a notice appeared in the SIGNS of the probable time of its being ready for the press she would say, "Well, I never expect to live to see it." She was a woman of an extraordinary mind, which she was blessed with to the very last. She was extremely patient in her sufferings, so much so that a person not acquainted with her would not realize how much she was suffering. But death put an end to her sufferings, and she passed away almost without a struggle. She has left the church, children and friends to mourn their loss, but we can say that we mourn not as those who have no hope. Elder Cole spoke on the occasion to a large audience of neighbors, friends and relatives, from Luke xi. 36, 37, after which her mortal remains were consigned to the tomb to await the resurrection as in the text. I would say to our kindred in Christ that the departed one was very near to me, being a sister-in-law according to the flesh, and I hope a dear sister according to the Spirit. I am only eleven years her junior, which admonishes me that I must soon follow her.

From your unworthy brother, if one at all,
JOHN MESSMORE.

PANCASTBURG, Ohio, May 18, 1884.

DEACON **John P. Carter** was called home March 30, 1884, aged 63 years, 4 months and 20 days. The subject of this notice was the eldest son of Solomon Carter, who is still living, and is a sound, orderly member of the Primitive Baptist Church. The deceased was born in Hickman Co., Tenn., December 2, 1820. He moved with his father while young to Mississippi, and on July 4, 1840 was married to Miss Martha Meeks, and in 1850 he moved to Cherokee Co., Texas, and from there to Vanzandt Co., in 1852, where he resided up to the time of his death. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Cool Springs on Saturday before the first Sunday in April, 1875, and was ordained a deacon of said church on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in February, 1877, which office he held with credit to himself and to the satisfaction of the church. His last sickness was disease of the heart, with which he had been troubled for twelve months or more, but he kept up most of the time until a few days before his death, when he was taken suddenly worse, and declined rapidly until death came to his relief. He suffered a good deal with a feeling of suffocation and was very restless during the last week or more of his life. All

was done for him that dotting relatives and kind friends could do to make his dying hours as pleasant as it is possible for them to be. He has left the companion of his wedded life and seven children (three sons and four daughters) and many relatives and friends to mourn their loss. But they are not without hope that he is better off. He was one that adorned his profession by a godly walk and conversation, always filling his place at church meetings when able to be there. The meeting house is located near his residence, and it was his delight to entertain the brethren and friends who attended the meetings, and many have shared his hospitality. The church at Cool Springs feels her loss very much, knowing that no more will he meet with her here in her deliberations, and counsel with her members. His words were always mild and appropriate, and he was beloved by all; not only those of his faith and order, but by all others who knew him personally. His life and walk was such that those who differed with him politically or religiously could say no harm of him. May God sanctify this dispensation of his providence to the good of all concerned.

The church hereby tenders her sympathy to the family of the deceased, and bows with humble submission to him that does all things as seemeth good unto him, not asking, What doest thou?

By order of the church,

J. W. OWEN, Mod.

M. V. BURNS, Clerk.

BROTHER **Benjamin Shoots** was born on January 29, 1806, was hurt March 10, 1884, and died March 30, 1884, after suffering twenty days from its effects. On the afternoon of the 10th he was riding on a saw-log, astride, when the bob-sled struck a stone as it was going down a ravine, and tipped over, the log falling upon his leg and crushing it into many pieces. A couple of young men, who saw the accident at about one hundred yards distant, ran and lifted the log off of him, while he gave directions and held the horses by the lines. His habitual vigor and self-possession was great during the time that they were collecting boards and preparing the bobs to remove him to the house. His sufferings were great, but although he told his son-in-law that he thought it would kill him, and proceeded to arrange his worldly affairs, he bore it with great fortitude and sometimes cheerfulness. I will copy from his son-in-law's (Mr. G. D. Peters) letter to me of May 4th. "He said he wanted to feel reconciled to the Lord's will, and it seemed that the Scriptures were his meat and drink. He talked a great deal on the Scriptures. He was 78 years old January 29, 1884. He leaves a wife and nine children." Brethren Samuel Seitz and George Cottrell held meeting at his house after he was hurt, and he seemed to enjoy it well. Brother Samuel Seitz returned to attend at his funeral, I think, but to late, so there was no sermon at his burial. Brother Shoots was an old and respected resident of Logan Co., Ohio, and was vigorous, industrious and frugal in his worldly affairs. He was a member of the Old School Baptist Church for many years, although isolated much from the brethren and church relationship.

Jacob Bishop died March 21, 1884, aged 70 years, 10 months and 10 days. Brother Bishop was born and raised on the farm on which he died, and was baptized with his wife in May, 1843, shortly after the church had separated from the Missionary and kindred elements of the day. He remained a consistent member amid many sore trials occasioned by "troubles of Israel," and was of excellent repute of those who are without. Though of a quiet turn and of few words, he had a discerning spirit and solid judgment. The little church to which he belonged gave each other letters some ten years ago, and because of church troubles in many places, and signs of more to come, perhaps, he held his letter at the time of his death. On the 23d he was laid away in his bed of dust, when his family, consisting of his wife, three sons and five daughters, and a large number of sympathizing neighbors took their final leave of him; on which occasion I, by request, addressed them upon the glorious doc-

trine of the resurrection. A pleasant expression of countenance overspread the clay cold features, which gave evidence of the blessed state of those that die in the Lord. May our flesh also rest in live hope.

THOMAS COLE.

ROYALTON, Ohio.

IN compliance with the request of members of the Kingwood Old School Baptist Church, as well as relatives, I now forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of **Mrs. Mary Rittenhouse**, widow of the late Benjamin Rittenhouse. Sister Rittenhouse departed this life July 12, 1883, aged 80 years, 1 month and 21 days. She had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church thirty-one years and four months. I think that she resided in the village of Stockton, N. J., a number of years prior to her death, but of that I am not certain. Our departed sister was a true and genuine Bible Baptist, and none of the modern "isms" with which our land is filled at the present day moved her from her steadfastness, and her faith was manifested by her works; for whenever it was possible for her to do so, she filled her place in the stated meetings of the church. She has left many relatives, as well as dear brethren and sisters, who, while they miss her "society," feel satisfied that for her to die was gain. Her funeral was numerously attended on July 14, 1883, and the text used on the occasion was John vi. 37-39.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 2, 1884.

Mrs. Louisa Brown died May 21, 1884, of dropsy, at Susquehanna, aged 29 years. She leaves a husband and two children (both small) a mother, stepfather, two brothers and two sisters and many friends to miss her; for she possessed an amiable disposition and gentle, affectionate ways, which endeared her to all with whom she mingled, and particularly to her immediate relatives. She was a dear sister of my husband. Her mother has told me that while in conversation with her some time ago she asked her if she had a hope, to which she replied with much emotion, "Yes, I must acknowledge a hope, great a sinner as I am." While dying she talked much about hearing such beautiful strains of music, and when she would fail to hear it she would mourn and say, "Ah, it is gone." But soon she would say, "I hear it again. Do not weep for me; only think how soon I shall be in glory, singing praises evermore." Her sufferings were great, and she desired not to live, though she loved and pitied her children. May the mourners be comforted of God, and the Savior glorified.

Yours in sorrow,

WATIE A. BEARD.

WAVERLY, N. Y., May 30, 1884.

DIED—At the residence of his parents in Kent Co., Del., March 29, 1884, of measles, **Harry O. Meredith**, in the 19th year of his age. He was the oldest son of brother and sister William W. and Hester Meredith, of the Cow Marsh Church. The deceased was a youth of much promise, deserving as he enjoyed the love and esteem of his associates. In one week from good health and bright prospects he was snatched away. Such is the uncertainty of life and all time things. Those who know our esteemed brother and sister will share the sorrow and distress that has so suddenly and so heavily fallen upon them. May the Lord make known to them the sufficiency of his grace for them in this their hour of trial.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Western Association of Predestinarian Regular Baptists will hold her thirty-third annual session (the Lord willing) with Middle River Church, in Madison Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday, September 13th, and continue the two following days, being September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1884. All of our faith and order are invited.

Those coming by rail will stop at Earlham, about thirty-five miles west of Des Moines, on Friday before, where they will be met with conveyances and taken to the different places of entertainment.

ASA B. SMITH.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1884.

NO. 13.

POETRY.

MY SIXTY-NINTH BIRTHDAY.

JUNE 14, 1884.

ETERNAL, unchangeable God,
Thou art the great fountain of life;
Thou rulest all things with a nod,
Thy word is the end of all strife.
Thou countest a thousand of years
As but a short watch in the night;
Our life but a vapor appears,
A moment of time in thy sight.
To us the years slowly pass on,
Attended with trials and cares;
And when one sore trouble is gone,
We look for new dangers and snares.
We wonder why we do not fall,
As others are falling around;
For death is the doom of us all,
And we must return to the ground.
I stand as a wonder to-day,
Upheld by a power divine;
Supported in life's dreary way,
Till I am now sixty and nine.
I've seen many others cut down,
And pass to the land of the dead;
Some changing the cross for a crown,
And others with woes on their head.
O Savior, why am I thus spared?
Upheld by thy power and grace?
Unworthy of any regard,
Or with thy dear people a place.
O Lord, as my days pass away,
Grant me a supply of thy grace;
O give me thy Spirit, I pray,
Till I shall have finished my race.

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, Ill.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE STRONG MAN—THE STRONGER MAN—THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT.

(Matthew xii. 43-45; Luke xi. 21-26.)

DEAR BRETHREN:—Some time since a dear sister in New Jersey desired me to write about the text in Matthew xii. 43-45 through the SIGNS, and to-night I feel like complying with her request. In doing so I desire to refer to the same parable as recorded in Luke xi., in connection as it is there, with the parable of the "strong man" and the "stronger man." I do not feel that I can speak of one unless I also speak of the other, because I believe there is a contrast implied between the two. Both are intended to teach us great and important lessons. They are spoken, it is true, to the men of that day and generation; but as the motives, desires, feelings and conditions of men are the same in regard to spiritual things to-day that they were then, they are spoken for our learning also. This is one glory of the Bible, that it suits this age and every age that the world has ever seen or shall see alike; because, while forms and customs may differ as the husk, the inner nature of mankind continues ever the same. Men treat the things of God

to-day precisely as they did when Jesus, in human flesh, walked and talked among men.

1st. In the first parable Jesus says, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." And the second parable reads, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return to my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself: and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Now let us notice the difference between these two parables, and then proceed to speak about the parables themselves. In the first parable the strong man keeps his palace and his goods in peace until the stronger comes. In the second parable no strong man is spoken of. In the first parable the stronger man binds the strong man. In the second parable the evil spirit is not bound. In the first parable the strong man is not cast out. In the second the unclean spirit goes out. In the first the strong man is bound. In the second the unclean spirit walks at perfect liberty. In the first all the powers of the strong man are taken from him. In the second nothing of the kind occurs. In the first the stronger man divides the goods. In the second no better spirit ever comes in. In the first parable the condition of the house is permanently better. In the second the last state of the man is seven-fold worse than he was at the first. I think from all this it will be seen that two classes of subjects and two kinds of work are pointed out by these two parables. Let us see, if God shall enable us, what two things are here meant.

2d. Notice the occasion which gave rise to these two parables. It will serve to throw light upon them, and they will, on the other hand, show us what is in the hearts of those to whom they are spoken, and in ours as well. It is said that Jesus was casting out devils, and the people wondered. Some said that he did it through Beelzebub, the chief of devils. And others, tempting him, desired of him a sign from heaven. And he, knowing their thoughts, that is, the real motive that actuated them, reasoned with them, and confounded them by

saying that every kingdom divided against itself should fall; and if Satan were so divided against himself as to give power to cast out his own servants to another, how should his kingdom stand? And then he put a home thrust to them. Their sons, some of them, professed to cast out devils. If, therefore, it were true that he cast out devils by the power of Satan, by what power did their sons cast them out? Were they also in league with Satan? And then he proceeds to show the way in which his work might be distinguished from the work of the enemy. In substance he said, It is impossible that Satan should cast out his own. He will not hinder his own work. He may put on an appearance of righteousness to further his unrighteousness. He may clothe himself as an angel of light in order to better perform his deeds of darkness; but he will never endanger his own kingdom by being divided against himself. He is the strong man armed, and will keep his palace and his goods in peace. But there is a stronger force than he possesses. I am stronger than he, and righteousness is stronger than unrighteousness, because of the power of the righteous One. Now Jesus proceeds to describe his own work, and to set off against it the work of outward or apparent reformation which Satan may himself carry on for a time. If this was the Lord's work, then the conclusion was irresistible that the kingdom of God had come to them. And that it was the work of God could be known by its permanency.

3d. The first parable then seems to me to represent the work of divine power in the salvation of the sinner. Let us briefly trace it. The house is the man—the sinner. The strong man is the principle of sin which reigns in and over us. This is called by different names in the Scriptures, such as "the old man," "the law in our members," "the carnal mind," "the flesh," &c. By whatever name it is called, the corruption which is in our fallen nature, which controls and possesses it utterly, is what is meant. This man is strong. He holds us in chains of bondage. Of course I use the term man only in a figurative sense, just as it is used often in the Bible, meaning an indwelling and controlling principle. Every child of God has learned that indwelling sin is stronger than he. And this strong man holds fast possession of the house, and of all its goods. Sin has entered into and controls every thought, purpose, desire, affection, word, act and motion. It has set

self up as our god rather than Jehovah. It reigns and holds fast possession, so that every imagination of the heart is evil, and only evil, and that continually. And there is no warfare in this house. Sin is the sole tenant, and holds the house and all his goods in peace. He has cast out love and good will to man, and denies all allegiance to God. He has filled the house with all manner of evil things; vile pictures upon the walls, unclean furniture in all the rooms, and foul tenants occupy it and turn it into a home of devils rather than a palace of God. And this state of things we are powerless to change; nay more, we have by nature no will to change it, and so there is no warfare, and sin reigns supreme. My brethren, was not this the condition in which we found ourselves when awakened by the Holy Spirit to see ourselves as we were? But "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."—1 John. iii. 8. And so now, as in the parable, the "stronger man" comes. This is not self; it is not prayer or good resolutions, or anything in us, or in our fellow-men. This is Jesus; he comes to the man. It is needful that he should come to us; for we cannot go to him. He comes, and he first binds the strong man. Sin is not cast out. This, alas! the child of God knows too well, and to his cost. But sin is overcome and bound.—Matt. xii. 29. Not by our own power is this done, but by the divine power. And the goods are taken and divided. Jesus now reigns unto life where sin had reigned unto death. Where sin had abounded, grace does now much more abound. This is at the present time, and is a present experience of the believer. All this is a work that goes on in the heart. Not something that shall be, merely, but something which is now. Jesus comes in and spoils (or takes possession of, for such is the meaning of the word spoils in this place) the goods which sin has controlled. He takes possession of our desires, affections and love. Has he not captivated our desires? Through the renewing of the mind he takes possession of these hands and feet and eyes; he takes possession of this tongue and heart. And now we love holiness and hate sin; we love God and hate idolatry; we love Christians and Christian company and hate whatever shall be a hindrance in the heavenly race. "I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."—1 Cor. xv. 10. Now if I do that I would not, "it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in

me."—Rom. vii. 17. The old man is not cast out, but yet hinders him in his race; but wherein he has attained, it is, after all, not to his praise, but to that of grace. Grace it is that reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. The strong man is bound and his goods spoiled. What a wonderful change is here! How shall we ever praise and love God enough for it? This it seems to me is the substance of the first parable. And it is the best part of it all to remember that this work being once done, is done forever.

4th. Now let us briefly trace the second parable. The people to whom Jesus was speaking had no part in the lessons of the first parable, but this second would apply to them and describe them exactly. For a time they seem to hail Jesus as the Messiah, and to be ready to grant him their allegiance; but their conceptions of him were purely carnal, and their praise rendered to him was only temporary. They soon relapsed back into their original indifference, with the added devils of hate, malice and rage against him; and we hear the very people who had said, "Hosanna," now crying, "Crucify him! crucify him!" For a time the unclean spirit went out, but no better spirit came in. The unclean spirit was not bound; he still walked at liberty. There is an absence of hatred and enmity to be seen in the people. There is even an apparent readiness and gladness to see and hear Jesus, and a confession that he must be more than man to do such mighty works. And the people wondered at the gracious words that he spake; but how soon all this was followed by an outburst of rage, both on the part of priest and people. The unclean spirit of their unbelief had come back, and with him all manner of madness, rage, envy, jealousy, hatred, wrath, strife, murmurings and murder. Seven is the number of perfectness; and the idea of seven other spirits is, that the people are filled with all evil of every kind. Religious madness and frenzy now carries them away. This, it seems to me, is the application of this parable to the people of that day. As regards the possession of devils, we must not forget that devils are often spoken of, and the people of that day fully believed in them, and supposed that special diseases were really possessions of devils. Thus, just before the parable we read of a dumb devil. So in the parable Jesus used the term "wicked spirits," meaning, as I understand, what we would term evil passions, desires, &c.

5th. But now how does this parable apply at this day? The parable is more than a curious relic of former days. If it has no application now, it is a waste of time to talk or write about it. There is such a thing as an outward reformation when there is no real heartwork. It is not a hypocritical profession. It may be a perfectly sincere change in the life and conduct of men, yet it is purely of the flesh, and the hand of God is not

in it. The opposition of the *head* to the truth is silenced, but after all the *heart* is not touched. The opposition of man to the truth is not that his reason is logically convinced to the contrary, but it attacks the sins of which he is fond, and strikes blows at his self-esteem and pride, which, when understood, he cannot consent to. As soon as darling self or a darling sin is attacked by the truth, at once he is aroused against that truth as he never was before. For instance, some men say that they believe in "election," and "salvation by grace," and yet love their sins. They believe in the doctrine because they think they can use it as a cloak for their sins, saying, "If I am elected and saved by grace, it is all right, no matter how I live." But if grace be seen by them to strike at their darling sins, they will hate it worse than anybody else. The Jews received Jesus until he began to rebuke them for their sins. An outbreking sinner hates grace, and a self-righteous Pharisee, if it be possible, hates it worse still.

6th. I think that under the influence of some religious excitement, instances similar to this are seen. Some instances I have known where men have seemed to become earnest inquirers after the right way. Formerly careless and indifferent to better things, they have seemed to be awakened and to show a great and sincere desire to depart from iniquity. They have left off, perhaps, many habits, and have commenced a better way of living. The unclean spirit has gone out; but the parable represents him as walking through dry places, and unable to find a place to rest. In the man there is simply an outward change; but there has come into the man no better spirit; he is represented as empty. But this state of things cannot last. Sooner or later the unclean spirit returns, and the man either becomes an avowed infidel, saying that all religion is a mere pretense, or else he becomes a religious Pharisee, a bigot, a persecutor, under the name and in the garb of religion. The spirits now possessing the man are more wicked than the first, and the Savior says, "The last state of that man is worse than the first."

I believe that the modern revival system, with its periods of intense excitement, is responsible for more conversions of this kind than anything else. After the excitement is past, many men find themselves unable to keep up the extreme nervous tension under which they professed conversion, and so through great disgust with the vain profession which they have made, come to the conclusion that there is no reality in anybody's religion, no trust in religion itself. And others come to make a trade of religion, not being quite so honest as the former, and so are ready to kill everybody who does not cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

How good it is that when Jesus begins a good work no such result follows. It is, on the contrary, "per-

formed to the day of Jesus Christ. This is my hope to-day, and has been for nearly twenty-three years.

I leave this, trusting that I have not darkened counsel by words without knowledge, and that if published, it may be satisfactory to the dear sister at whose request it is written, and to the household of faith generally.

As ever, your brother in hope,
F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., June 17, 1884.

"AND Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David, king of Israel."—2 Chronicles xxix. 27.

In this chapter is recorded some wonderful things which transpired in the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. During the reign of Ahaz, father of Hezekiah, terrible afflictions had been endured by the nation. "For the Lord brought Judah low, because of Ahaz, king of Israel, for he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the Lord." When Hezekiah was placed upon the throne, "He did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done." He commanded the priests and Levites to sanctify themselves and the house of the Lord God of their fathers, to carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place. When the temple was sanctified, Hezekiah and the people offered burnt offerings and sacrifices unto the Lord. There was great gladness in the hearts of many; and no wonder, for though they had greatly transgressed, yet the God of Israel had not taken away his loving-kindness from them, nor suffered his faithfulness to fail. He gave them richly to experience his mercy and grace; he healed their backsliding and loved them freely. "Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people: for the thing was done suddenly." There is very much in this chapter that is sweet and profitable when favored with meditation therein by the Holy Spirit. Here we find recorded the manner and order of the worship of the everlasting God by his typical people in types and shadows until the time of reformation. In Jerusalem, upon the mount Moriah, stood the temple, the holy and beautiful house, where the Lord had placed his name, the priesthood, the sacrifices, the continual shedding of blood, the meat and drink offerings; and thither the tribes of Israel gathered three times a year and confessed their sins, year by year. Yet there was the remembrance of them; the blood of bulls and of goats could not take away their sins, nor make the comers under the old covenant perfect as pertaining to the conscience. O what rivers of blood was shed upon Jewish altars! Amidst all these solemn things in which all Israel engaged, there was singing, with the music of trumpets, and cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, "according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet, for so was the command-

ment of the Lord by the prophets."—2 Chron. xxix. 25. While we go back and behold in sacred wonder the wonderful things in which the Lord was pleased to make himself known to his people of old, how precious will be our contemplations if the Holy Spirit is pleased to lead us into the signification of the signs, and witness to our soul's comfort that "the substance is Christ." When the Lord gathered the tribes of Israel together in Jerusalem, every one of them in Zion appeared before God. How can that be? exclaims the poor sinner; I am too vile to appear before God. How can such a polluted worm of the dust, one so sinful, so miserable, appear before the holy One of Israel? O how far off I am from God! Unto the place of his habitation I dare not lift up mine eyes. Woe is me, for I am undone! I am not fit to appear before the Lord of glory. O that God would be merciful to me, a sinner. The publican mentioned in Luke xviii. was deeply humbled beneath the feeling sense of his own vileness, and his head was weighed down with shame and grief. But when the burnt offering began, (when the Lord graciously made known to him the way of mercy, as signified therein), the song of the Lord began also. And the poor, trembling one who smote his breast, saying, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," could, through the abounding mercy of God, with holy melody sing unto the Lord, "Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died." For Jesus says, "I tell you this man went down to his house justified." And so it is in the experience of all the elect of God in the fullness of times. All Israel appeared before the Lord in the person of the high priest. In him all Israel was named. He bare their names in the breast-plate of judgment upon his heart for a memorial before the Lord continually, and when he went in unto the holy place, all Israel went in in him, and were accepted before the Lord.—Exodus xxviii. 29, 38. The high priest was to be without blemish.—Leviticus xxi. He was to be comely, and without spot in his person, and only in the health and vigor of his manhood was he permitted to serve. And then before he could appear before God in behalf of the chosen tribes of Israel, there was one thing needful; that is, that he should offer up sacrifice for his own sin.—Heb. viii. 27. Thus the high priest was without blemish, and meet to perform those services to which God had called him in behalf of all Israel. In such an high priest, though not the very image, we see Jesus, the Son of God, made an high priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec. In Jesus the whole family in heaven and earth is named.—Eph. v. 15. In him all excellencies shine. Being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power; when he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He was made in the likeness

of sinful flesh, but in him was no sin. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. O how glorious is the view of our great High Priest, the Son of God, the Son of man, the Fellow of the Lord of hosts!—Zech. xiii. 7. He is the one fairer than the children of men, anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows.—Psalm xlv. 2, 7. He is the chiefest among ten thousand. Yea, he is altogether lovely. With this glimpse of Jesus, our High Priest, let us consider the burnt offering. The Scripture with which we began this writing says, "When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also." The Lord gave full instructions to his people concerning all their offerings. When, therefore, a burnt offering was to be sacrificed to the Lord, there was the selection of the animal, which was to be of the flock, or of the herd, a male without blemish.—Lev. i. 3. Here, again, we see Jesus. Where shall a poor, trembling soul look for a burnt offering without blemish. By the teaching of the Lord he deeply feels that he is full of blemishes, and not one of all the fallen sons of Adam is in any way meet to atone for his own sins, or for the sins of others. But how comforting to our sin-burdened souls when we are enabled to see Jesus; that he hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor.—Eph. v. 2. He is the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for you.—1 Peter i. 19, 20. Jesus is our unblemished High Priest, and our burnt offering without blemish too. He offered himself without spot to God. When by precious faith we see our holy Lord Jesus led as a lamb to the slaughter, such is the unity of the burnt offering and "all Israel" for whom the burnt offering is made, that the song of the Lord breaks forth in sweet melody in our hearts. O how wretched and sad must our state ever have been, sunken low, and condemned in our vileness and sin. We felt that we were to effect our salvation. But when there was given us a glimpse of Jesus, the mighty one, the meek and lowly, spotless Lamb of God, O then we felt he was the one able to undertake and do for a vile and helpless worm. The song of the Lord began, and our sorrows and sighing began to flee away. Let us look again at the burnt offering. The Savior is the unblemished High Priest, and the offering without spot or blemish. And now the High Priest lays the sins of all Israel upon the offering. O how wonderful, beyond our natural comprehension, is the doctrine that God hath made Christ to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.—2 Cor. v. 21. How long did we go laboring and heavily laden! O how heavy was our load of sin! It sunk us so low, and bowed our souls down in the dust in grief and shame,

and our sins were more than we could bear. The vileness of our sinful heart was such a weight, sinking us lower and lower; and we labored, sighed and cried, but found we could administer nothing to relieve us from our heavy load of transgressions. But then the Holy Spirit was pleased by faith to shew us the wonderful mystery of the grace of God; that the Lord had laid our sins on Jesus; that he bore the sins of many. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."—1 Peter ii. 24. Though the wise and prudent of this world may call it "nonsense," and may declare that "sin is not transferable," yet O what heavenly consolation do we experience by the power of the everlasting God when we view the dear Savior as our burnt offering, bearing our sins. O surprising love! O what abounding mercy and grace, that my sins were laid on Jesus; that my load was laid on him; that thou, O Lord, didst take all my sin and curse and shame, and lay them on the Lamb. "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it." Let us still look at the burnt offering; it is now made sin, and made a curse; the law must be magnified; all its holy and just claims must be satisfied. The blood of the offering is shed, and in suffering it dies. O my soul, consider Christ, our Passover, sacrificed for us. View him in Gethsemane: what sorrow here he felt! O what agonies he endured. He was sore amazed and very heavy, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. In his intense suffering he cried, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Do we not mourn for him? Are not our hearts in bitterness for him? Do we not love and pity the suffering Savior? O how awful, how vile our sin appears, that the dear Lamb of God should suffer so; but while we weep and mourn over the sorrows of our precious Jesus, there is a wonderful and unspeakable melody in our hearts. O what praises to the Lord, as we feel, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief."

"What stream is that which sweeps away
My sins like a guilty flood,
Nor lets one guilty blemish stay?
'Tis Jesus' precious blood."

"The priest made reconciliation with the blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel."—2 Chron. xxix. 24. And in the precious blood of our precious Jesus we had redemption and forgiveness of sins. He hath made peace through the blood of his cross; and though alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled us in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight. Jesus hath put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. He made an end of sin.—Dan. ix. 24.

That was what we feared, that we should never see the end of our sins. What grief it caused us! But the Lord, mighty to save, hath saved his people, not only from the effects and the punishment of their sins, but blessed be the name of the Lord, "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath the Lord removed our transgressions from us; for the Lord hath said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." How blessedly this is revealed when it is given us to see Jesus as our burnt offering. In the shedding of his precious blood is the remission of our sins and the joyful knowledge of salvation. Jesus suffered, bled and died; he gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. The fire of divine justice came down upon him; "for the transgressions of my people was he stricken." In his unspeakable love to his Father and to the church, he took the cup, full of suffering, agonies and unutterable sorrows, and drank it down to the last dark drop, and cried, "It is finished," and the cup passed from him empty. The Father's will was done, the law of God satisfied, and the church of God redeemed. Truly the offering and sacrifice of Jesus was a sweet smelling savor. The name of Jesus is as ointment poured forth, it soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds, and drives away our fears. When the burnt offering was consumed upon the altar, the sins of all Israel were consumed too. Though the iniquity of Israel be sought for, there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.—Jer. i. 20. Jesus hath made an end of sin, and everlasting righteousness is brought in. There is the skin of the burnt offering, the robe of righteousness, the unblemished, spotless obedience of the dear Redeemer, the comeliness of Jesus. How beautiful, how surprisingly fair were all the doings of the Son of God. He fulfilled the law, went to the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. In every view which the Lord gives us of the burnt offering, from the beginning until it is finished, the song of the Lord is ever present in our hearts. We do praise the dear name of our God; to him we sing, and ascribe all blessing and honor and glory and power, and sometimes in the spirit we could sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."—Isa. lxi. 10. From the beginning of the world the song of the Lord has been sung by the people of God. But not a note of the melody of the Lord would we poor sinners have known, only for the manifestation of the everlasting love and mercy of the Lord, revealed in

Christ our burnt offering. Abel was able to sing this song; Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's day; David and all the redeemed of the Lord have been singing, as by faith they viewed the burnt offering; and down to the present time, in the church of the living God, it is the same song, the same delightful melody in our hearts to the Lord, according to his power and grace toward us. Poor, trembling sinner, does your heart love the burnt offering? Is all thine hope and comfort in Jesus? Is all that thy soul delighteth in summed up in him? Then have there not been some feeble notes of song? "Yes," you say, "but it is only for a moment, and then I sink back in sadness of soul, and feel, What right have I, a poor, vile sinner, to sing such a song?" Why, dear child of God, you never could sing a note of the song, your soul would never have known any joy in Jesus, the burnt offering of sweet smelling savor, had not God prepared thee to sing; and it is because of the oneness that thou hast with Jesus that such heavenly melody was felt in thy soul. No man can learn or sing the song but the redeemed of the Lord. "God had prepared the people."—2 Chron. xxix. 36. He had shown them their transgressions, he had brought Judah low, and gathered all Israel at Jerusalem. There was the temple, the priests and the sacrifices. The priests killed the bullocks, the rams and the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar, and made an atonement for all Israel. And when the burnt offering began, all Israel sang the song of the Lord, which he had put in their mouths. No one else could sing this song, only those for whom the atonement was made. "All the congregation worshiped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded; and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished." The time of reformation is come, and all the types and shadows of the old covenant dispensation are fulfilled in the kingdom of God. We now have no need of the cymbal, the psaltery, the timbrel, the harp, the stringed instruments and organs; all these, with the blood of bulls and of goats, have now no place in the worship of the children of God. They have all vanished away because we now have the substance of which they were only the shadows. And as the substance is more glorious than the shadow, so all the singing of the assembled multitude, with all the melodious sounds made by the four thousand players on instruments of music, cannot compare with the wonderful and heavenly music which the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, causes the dear child of God to experience. Such music mortal ears have never heard. Truly it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

"Then, in a nobler sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save,
When this poor, lipping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave."

FRED. W. KEENE.
NEWBURY, Ontario.

VIENNA, Va., April 24, 1884.

MY DEAR BROTHER WHITE:—I have been thinking during my sickness that I would try to tell the dear household of faith something of the dealings of the blessed Lord with me, in leading me, I hope, out of darkness into his marvelous light, and from under the yoke of bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God; but I feel so unworthy, and am of such an unfruitful mind, that I cannot see that what I might have to say would be of the least comfort to any of the dear people of God with whom I have cast my lot; and only with them do I feel to be at home, after wandering so many years away from my Father's house, feeding upon the husks of a delusive faith, and thinking myself secure. But a time, I have hope, did come when I heard the blessed Savior say, "This is the way, walk ye in it." O how secure I then felt the foundation of my faith to be, no longer to be carried about by every wind of doctrine. At the age of sixteen I left my home to go into business as a clerk in a country store at Fairfax Court House. I was thrown among those whom I truly believed to be christian people, and for aught I know they may have been, for I believed they were sincere in their profession. Their walk and conversation exerted a powerful influence over me, causing me much concern in reference to my eternal well-being. At the age of eighteen I professed conversion. It was at a camp meeting. The sermon was preached by Wm. B. Edwards, D.D., who was regarded in those days as a powerful preacher. Consequently there was no small influence brought to bear upon my eager mind, inquiring, as I was then, with anxious solicitude the way, as I thought, to Zion. My conversion soon appeared to me to be a dream, and I had no comfort. I wondered how it was that what I took to be the open heavens around me, shining with beams of sacred bliss, so soon should be enshrouded with clouds, the blackness of the darkness of which I thought I could almost touch. I expressed my feelings to one of the preachers, and he told me that that would soon pass away, and that the way I was to be relieved was to pray to God, who would relieve the darkness and cause his light to shine in my benighted heart. And so it was all along my sojourn in the captivity of Babylon, that by the performance of certain prescribed duties, (one especially I remember, being my stated periods of prayer, which was offered three times a day, just as often as day dawned upon my Pharisaical vision), the displeasure of my heavenly Father would be turned away, and his smiling favor caused to rest upon me. It appears to me now that then it was with me as it is said by Saul of Tarsus, "After the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." But I did not know that my poor, deceitful, sinful heart loved the praise of men more than of God. O how much I thought I was doing for my heavenly Master, in leading such

a devoted life to his cause, and exerting all the christian influence in my power to win others to Christ. Especially were my efforts in that direction put forth in behalf of the rising generation, being a very active member and a very zealous advocate of the Sunday School cause, aiding by all the means in my power in its promotion. How sacred the charge, I then thought, of training the youthful mind to meditate on things eternal in their substance. And how much more, I vainly thought, would be the splendor of my crown of eternal joy, if by my influence I might be the means of leading many to righteousness. A circumstance I will here refer to that occurred during the period of my intense religious fervor. I was associated in business with a young man, the integrity of whose character I esteemed very highly, but who was not a member of any church, and therefore under no church restraint. We were keeping store, and on Sunday morning early (I very firmly believed at that time in keeping the Sabbath day holy) my partner came to me to get the keys to open the store, in order to let some one have a piece of tobacco who was not able to get to the store the evening before, and to be without it was a great privation. I planted myself firmly on my Pharisaical confidence, and said to him, "I cannot yield the keys, for in so doing I would be violating the sanctity of the Sabbath, and setting a very bad example." The poor fellow went without his tobacco, and I consoled myself in the assurance that I was doing the will of my Father in heaven. My partner, who was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, said to me, "Be mindful that you never do a worse thing than that." O how firmly I felt myself fixed in purpose, never to yield to any temptation that would bring me into condemnation. But alas! the young man's prediction has come true, and my mouth has been stopped, and I have nothing more to say. I hope I was shown how desperately wicked and deceitful above all things was this pulsating heart of mine. Done worse than that? Yes, O yes, a thousand times; and it would be a work of impossibility for me to give a catalogue of my manifold transgressions. I was a member, at the time referred to, of the Methodist Church, and remained a very active one for over fifteen years, which brought me on to about the year 1867. From that time I began gradually to lose the interest and the comfort I thought I had in the church, insomuch that I began to wean myself away from the sanctuary, proclaimed to be, and as I believed, the place where, by a united petition of his devoted people, the Lord of the whole earth would manifest his saving power and presence. But this was all taken from me, and it was not mine any longer to feast in a spiritual sense upon the good things of the kingdom. The reaction that had taken place in me became noticeable by the church, and I was earnestly solicited to retrace my steps and

take up my place in the church, neglecting the privileges of which, they said, had brought upon me this darkness of mind and loss of interest in the duties of the church, in which I had always had the name of being so devoted. But it appeared to me there arose up before me a mountain never for me to surmount, one of the blackness of darkness, from the angry summit of which descended the wrath of a sin-avenging God upon my poor, sinful, trembling soul. I felt that if my soul were sent to hell, his righteous law would approve it well. I was met on one occasion by one whose calling it had been made manifest to him was to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to all the world, and he told me that our happiness here and hereafter was at our own disposal; that is, we could make ourselves happy or miserable, just as we elected; that it was the earnest will of the Lord that all might be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth; and therefore our temporal well-being and our eternal happiness were secured to us by compliance with his will concerning us. This, to me, was an idle tale from under which, I trust, was fast being removed my foundation of dead works. No longer was it mine to fall back upon my good works, and tell the Lord how faithful and earnest I had been in advancing his cause in the earth. But, as I said before, I had nothing more to say, but with the poor publican, not even so much as to lift up my head, but with my hands upon my face, and my face in the dust, the cry of my heart was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." After a long, dark and barren period, when from Pisgah's top I was sent wandering in the wilderness, it came to me that there was a people "saved of the Lord," and for a home with that dear people I felt I was caused to set out in earnest search. The inquiry of my eager soul was, Lord, lead me in the footsteps of the flock, and tell me where thou makest them to rest at noon. I can never doubt some of the evidences of the good Lord to me, made manifest in my wilderness travel. I remember on one occasion I was harrowing in a field, and such an overpowering presence of my dear Savior was manifested to me that I stopped the horses, and sat down on the harrow, and wept; and such an incense of gratitude went up out of my thankful heart as I can never express, to him who sitteth in the heavens, and saith unto Israel, "Thou art my people." I then felt that truly "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The dear Shepherd and Bishop of my soul, I felt, now was leading me to a place of rest, and that my roaming would soon be at an end. I hope I have found that hiding-place with the dear people composing the Frying Pan Church. I told them in a stammering way what had been the dealings of the Lord with me; and feeling so unworthy of a place among them, I

could not see why they should have received me into their fellowship; but they did, and I was baptized on profession of my faith, with my dear companion, by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, on the morning of April 21, 1878, the brightness of which morning I never shall forget. How beautiful and lovely the liquid waves which covered me appeared. It was serene calmness beyond the power of speech to express.

My dear brother White, I have tried in a very feeble way to tell you how I have been brought on my way thus far, and if you think it will be of any comfort to any of the little ones of the flock, it is at your disposal. If I have been too lengthy, you need not send it on for publication; but if you desire you can abbreviate, or in any way dispose of it as seemeth best to you, and all will be right.

I am yours, I trust, in hope of eternal life,

OSCAR MOORE.

LOCKTOWN, N. J., June 2, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—As I have many correspondents, it has become a task for me to write to so many separately, so by your permission and approval you may give this a place in that blessed little messenger called the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have felt for a long time a great deal of sympathy for the dear and afflicted lambs of the Redeemer's little flock. O ye dear little ones, how this unworthy one loves you. No matter whether we have seen each other's faces in the flesh or not, if we are of that afflicted and poor people that shall trust in the name of Lord, that will draw us together. My dear, afflicted brother or sister, do you not remember, when you look back and see all the way the blessed Lord has been leading you, what dark places he has led you through? Yet in all our afflictions, when he appears to us in his glory, he can make us sing as in the days of our youth. And lest we should be exalted above measure, he brings us low again in the valley of humiliation and affliction. How many times have I been troubled about this old body; what it shall eat or what it shall put on. I cannot work, and the barrel and cruse are very low, and I would begin to feel wild and scared, and feel to say, What will I do? And right in the height of this excitement there comes a letter to me from a brother or sister whom I have never seen, with a present, a token of love and sympathy. Why should we be so distrustful? The Lord will supply all of our needs. Not a sparrow shall fall to the ground without our heavenly Father's notice. Dear, little, afflicted ones, to you I am writing, because I feel to be a companion in tribulation with you. Dear little ones, there are none but such that do really grieve for the afflictions of Joseph. Dear brethren, let us remember that if we expect to comfort any of these little ones we must go where they are, and we will be as likely to find them low down in the

valley as anywhere else. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep; be of the same mind one towards another; mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. O the sweet fellowship! what can compare with it?

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Brethren Beebe, I will inclose two letters for you to dispose of as you see proper. They are from a dear, sorely afflicted sister, whom I have never seen in the flesh, but feel very near to in the bonds of everlasting love. She says the hardest trial that she has to endure is to be deprived of the privilege of meeting with the saints. O how she prizes and prefers Jerusalem above all that is called good and great by the world. I leave these with you, dear brethren Beebe, to publish or not. I feel that such precious things ought not to be kept under a bushel.

Your brother, I hope, in Christ,
CORNELIUS MYERS.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, Aug. 9, 1882.

VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your kind letter was duly received. Words would fail to express the pleasure I derived from its perusal. I have read it over and over again, and your extreme kindness and the many expressions of love and christian fellowship are sweetly and indelibly impressed upon my heart. My dear, departed mother was a native of your state, and that would cause your letter to meet with a welcome if there was no other bond between us; but while reading your precious letter, how my heart went out to you in christian love, and I almost felt that you were here with me, a living presence, and that we were talking together face to face. What a blessed privilege I would esteem it could I see you and your aged companion, and listen to the sweet old, old story of Jesus and his love. Methinks I should never tire of sitting at your feet, and quietly learning of you. The society and companionship of the aged is always very pleasant to me, though but thirty-two myself. I feel little interest in the society of the young and giddy people of the world. Their conversation tires me, and their vain talk affords me no pleasure. You say, dear brother, that erysipelas is one of your troubles. I, too, am afflicted with Saint Anthony's fire or rose erysipelas. My limbs fill with water until the skin bursts, and the water leaps out to the amount of a gallon every twenty-four hours. The water is poisonous, and causes erysipelas. They ulcerate and slough terribly, and it is very afflicting indeed. Do you know of anything that relieves it? I have never found anything to relieve mine but cold water, which I use constantly. My dropsy is general, and since it attacked my body over two years ago, I have not lain down night or day. I sit upright on a lounge, with my feet upon a stool. Within the last month I have walked about my room

on crutches, but it causes great pain and exhaustion. I wanted to answer your dear letter at once, but my limbs had quit discharging, and I was either in a stupor or in too great agony of pain to write. A few days ago one of them again bursted, and the discharge is sufficient to relieve both the stupor and the pain that precede it. I always find comfort when I think of Lazarus, of Job, and many others who endured a great fight of affliction. And O it is such a sweet comfort to read or hear the dear children of God relate their trials and afflictions. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but out of them all the Lord delivers them. Blessed be his name, his promises are sure, and ere long I hope, dear brother, that he will come with power and great deliverance to each poor, trembling one, and give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Happy, glorious exchange! Then we shall realize that our light afflictions did work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I do hope you will write again to me. I certainly think the dear Lord put it into your heart to write to me, for I do assure you your letter is a very great comfort. Remember me in love to your dear wife. With much gratitude and christian love, I am your sister in affliction,

MARY PARKER.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, June 29, 1883.

DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS SAVIOR:—I received a letter from our precious sister, Mattie Deer, yesterday, in which was inclosed a dear letter from you. My dear father, I am so surprised that you think of or remember a poor worm like me, who feels, if a saint at all, to be the very poorest, most sinful, and very littlest of them all. Indeed I many times think I may compare myself to a poor, sickly, scrawny lamb, whom the good of the flock would be ashamed to see among them, and I am thus left alone and forgotten by all. But O how soul-cheering to think that the dear, tender Shepherd leaveth none behind to perish alone amid the stones and thorns; but that he carrieth them in his bosom, (it matters not how sickly and poor they are), and tenderly leadeth them on. And not less comforting is it to have the tender solicitude of the dear ones of this blessed flock. To receive their epistles of love, and sometimes receive visits from some of them, is the greatest earthly joy that comes to me through the clouds and darkness of my afflicted life. Many times during the past winter, amid the pain and mental despondency disease continually lays upon me, there have come to me pleasant thoughts of dear brother Myers, who in his far off home has kindly noticed and thought of me. I have been confined exclusively to my room since last September, since when I have not been able to walk one step. The dropsy has so enlarged, and erysipelas so inflamed and ulcerated my limbs that the pain

and suffering is almost unbearable, let me be as quiet as I may. But I thank the Lord that through the goodness and mercy of his dear Son, in all the clouds and darkness there has sometimes burst upon me the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings, and through the sunshine of his love I have been able to discern the finger of his love, have been sweetly reconciled to his will, have been able to realize that it is in love he chasteneth, and could quietly say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change come." Suffering as I do, helpless, leading a purposeless, useless life, death and the grave look more desirable than anything that could come to me in this life; but when under the exercise of his mighty, reigning grace, I can be still and know that he is God, and quietly submit to everything that he through infinite love and wisdom appoints for me. I wrote no letters during the winter, except a line to sister Mattie, to whom I am deeply attached and very much indebted for favors. My health remains about the same now. I get no better, no worse, save that my case seems more obstinate and pitiable all the while. Dear father in Israel, I am so thankful for your kindness and sympathy, and I want to tell you so; but I am so ashamed of this poor letter, and it seems so void and empty that I really would not mail it could I do any better. I would be glad to get another dear letter from you soon. I send christian love to your dear wife and sister, not forgetting yourself. Please pray for me, dear brother, for I am indeed very poor and very needy, spiritually. Hoping to hear from you soon, and to hear that you are improving in health, I am your sister in much affliction,

MARY PARKER.

MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

THE true minister of Jesus Christ needs more than the temporal support of his bodily comforts, more than the flattering words of approval when he is at liberty in the soaring fields of heavenly thought, more than the kindly words of brotherly correction and admonitions of the brotherhood, when he through the infirmity of his mind shall make known some weakness of judgment, or some strength of sin that may beset him in an hour of trial. While each and all of these, save flattery, are to be desired, only for the general good and spiritual welfare of Zion, they bear but small proportion of those essential elements of support that necessarily enter into the experience of the truly called and qualified minister of Jesus. While they who are called to forsake the affairs of this life are to look to the Lord for every blessing of spiritual companionship and of labor of love, it is so arranged in the divine economy that trials shall be their heritage, and weakness their sensibility. They must prove the reality of their gospel, and the potency of their Deliverer in the hours of their soul-dearth and destitution. They must share the trials common to the children of

God, and others also in which they cannot reciprocate. So, then, while the servants of the church are in common need of divine grace to qualify them for bearing the burdens common to all, they are also in need of special grace to support them beyond the necessity of the common brotherhood. That is not support which comes from some selfish aim or purpose in the giver of anything for an apparent benefit.

Should any one give through selfish aims,
His covetous heart being greedy,
I could not return grateful thanks for his
pains,
Though I should be poor and needy.

That it is not support which is given in competition for greater praise, or to the disparagement of the gifts of others. They, therefore, who give however bountifully, and yet remind us of the failings in others' generosity, make the truly worthy pastor feel humbled under a sense of the impropriety of their course. Even grant that others fail, they are also failing in their faithfulness, for the only proper place to correct an error is with the erring. That is not support which is accompanied with words of personal preferment, or flattering tales of praise that are only liable to inflate their carnal vanity, or excite suspicion of the faithfulness of that giver whose mistaken vanity supposes that all alike are votaries of personal ambition. The true ministry of Jesus Christ have their "treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Cor. iv. 7. That is not support which is spoken in words of sympathy or commiseration over the ministerial lot of poverty, or distress, or persecution, or trial, and then desert them to their loneliness, without one reference to the divine power of that God whose continual care calls for their continual worship, and remembrance of his ever faithful promises. Here, and only here, is the true support. And he alone is a witness of the gospel who can feel its power. He alone is a servant of God who can feel his divine hand ever leading him, not only in the great "congregation," where his solemn praises are continued, but when in a desert land, deserted, destitute and distressed, his desiring soul finds refuge in the bosom of his God, who alone hath time to hear and answer his prayer, and give him direction. God has a set time to favor Zion, and each saint must share the divine allotment. Ministerial labor cannot hasten nor retard, but shares the holy joys of Zion's weal. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heaven places in Christ."—Eph. i. 3. Ministry and people share alike their seasons of rejoicing from the presence of the Lord.

"All my times are in thy hand,
And all events at thy command."

"What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" While the minister would not change the divine decree, he cannot help but mourn over the lot that gives him sorrow. His expe-

rience must surpass that of the brotherhood, even as Jesus learned obedience by the things which he suffered.—Heb. v. 8. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." And as Jesus' sufferings surpassed that of the ministry and the people together, (Jesus sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground), so the sorrows of the ministry must be commensurate with the work that God has assigned them. They can only comfort God's people with the comfort wherewith they have been comforted of God. Jesus presents the spectacle of a suffering Savior, Comforter, Leader and Pattern of obedience to the will of the Father. To those who by this sweet source of support are upheld and led, every evidence of the divine favor is appreciated with joy, so that when the ministers of God are humbly led by the God-implanted zeal and love reigning in their breast, they are enabled to lay aside the affairs of life, and spend their time in visiting those places where former praise was wont to be heard, and where God showed the work of his blessed hand in writing the new covenant in the heart of his blessed ones, whose joy was great in the privilege of repeating their blessed fruits in the presence of the world, showing forth God's workmanship through their public confession. To find, alas! so little zeal, so little love, so little faith, so little time for the service of that God who hath given them so great salvation, this is a time when the minister feels great need of support, great need of that attention which not he, but his holy calling as a witness of Jesus, demands. When he leaves home he leaves all in the hands of his God, for the purpose of engaging in his cause as a witness of his faithfulness and power; and he desires to be faithful in that work to the exclusion of all other. He cannot expect that the brethren can continually meet for worship day and night, but he feels that if he can leave his home and the affairs of life to travel far and near to try to comfort the Lord's people, they could not show greater interest and support than to drop some few hours once in a week or month, or a few hours even during busy times, for the purpose of evening service, since he truly feels unprofitable at best; and when his brethren and sisters call on him to attend them, he truly feels unprofitable to spend his time in spiritual idleness. Every faithful servant feels that he needs the supporting faithfulness of the brotherhood as much as they need the services of a faithful ministry. Have we not great reason to cry to God in the feeling of our heart, "Lord, increase our faith?" While the ministrations of temporal things, given in brotherly interest and love, are, and should be, only secondary manifestations of our appreciation of the faithful ministry, the attention to their spiritual encouragement and support and cheer by faith-

ful attendance at his appointments and desires for service, is of primary and imperative necessity.

In love,

A. B. BREES.

HOPE.

GOD, in his unerring wisdom and his matchless love for his dear children, has implanted within each one a desire for things not seen, a desire that cannot be fulfilled by the lusts of the flesh or the follies of the world, a desire for things heavenly. He has given us Christ, the hope of glory, who worketh within us to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and the hope of eternal life (precious hope), kept alive within us by our faith in God, which faith the apostle tells us is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; leading us into a realization of the greatness and goodness of our glorious Lord in showing mercy on such worthless worms of the dust as we, wretched, condemned sinners, having within us (in our flesh) no good thing, being able to claim nothing of merit in ourselves; but simply by his grace are we saved and made to rejoice in a lively hope. We are his workmanship, wrought in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world. Being redeemed from the law of sin and death by the grace and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are constrained to follow in the footsteps of that meek and lowly Savior. In our meditations we follow him on his way to Calvary, hooted by the excited and angry populace, the crown of thorns piercing his flesh, causing his precious blood to flow; we suffer with him on the blood-stained cross, and by faith we hear the cry, "It is finished." He came into the world to save those that were lost. He is the Shepherd of his sheep; his sheep hear his voice and follow him, gladly coming together under the shadow of his wing, being protected by the everlasting arms of him who is mighty to save. It was necessary that his precious blood should be shed before the demands of the law could be satisfied, and that he should arise on the third day that all might be fulfilled. All has been accomplished, nothing has been left for poor mortals to perform. The experience of all those who have been brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, when trying mortal means to work out their own salvation, is invariably the same. They are brought down into dust and ashes, crying, "Lord, save me, or I perish;" their eyes being opened to the truth that in themselves they can do nothing. Our hope is revived daily in the precious promises given us in the divine record, while we are passing through the dark clouds of doubt and despair, and while that constant warfare is going on within us between the Spirit and the flesh. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation, (1 Thess. v. 8), and hope maketh not ashamed, because

the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Those dearly beloved brethren who are placed upon the walls of Zion, coming to us as they do, richly laden with precious fruit from the Master's vineyard, proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ, taking the place of the good Samaritan of old, encourage us on in our thorny way, giving us good cheer, enlivening our hope which oftentimes becomes very small and dim through the treacherous machinations of the enemies of our Lord. I have sometimes heard a dear brother or sister say, "I hope I have a hope." Here is an exemplification of the whole life and experience of the dear child of God: With fear and trembling, and with much lowliness of heart, he approaches the throne of grace, saying, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven," realizing that without the shadow of a doubt his will is always accomplished, and his grace is sufficient for us. Yet he is continually asking with fear, doubt and hope, Am I a subject of that grace?

"Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it causes anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his or am I not?"

And with faltering steps he travels through this wilderness of woe, stumbling many times, yet continually praising the Lord for all his mercies. In Paul's epistle to the Romans we find, "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Faith, then, being the evidence of things not seen, we are upheld in that hope by faith in Jesus, by the power of God's matchless love, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed unto every child of God, even before the foundation of the world, and being now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Job, in his high integrity and wonderful faith in a just and holy God, withstood all the temptations of Satan, bore all his great trials and sufferings with christian resignation, rebuked his pretended friends, proving his patience and uprightness, that the fear of God, the faith in his love and the hope in his mercy were the principles from which his religion and obedience flowed. God reigns supreme, and does his sovereign will among the armies of heaven and the hosts of hell, restraining the malice of the devil, as in the case of Job, permitting him to go so far and no farther. Amazing grace, bestowed on poor, sinful man (how sweet the thought) by the omnipotent and all-wise King of kings, who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten and dearly beloved Son to suffer and die an ignominious death, and to shed his most precious blood, that we through him should become partakers of that

grace. Of the earth, earthy, and in our flesh dwelling no good thing, but born again, of the Spirit, our spiritual life is hid with Christ in God.

Dear brethren Beebe, I submit the above for publication, if you deem it of sufficient value.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

"AND Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea."—Exodus xv. 21.

This song of deliverance was sung after the children of Israel had been brought, by the mighty power of God, miraculously through the Red Sea. The waters divided and stood in heaps on either hand. Their enemies were pursuing them, and came in the track opened for Israel's deliverance. But the sea was not opened for the enemy, therefore it closed upon them. It was the means of Israel's deliverance, as well as the destruction of their enemies. In view of this escape and protection, well may they sing, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously. O brethren and sisters, have we not been enabled to sing that same song? if not in word, the same in sentiment. When our sins pursued us, and death, eternal death, stared us in the face, there seemed no possible way of escape. We looked for deliverance, and there seemed none. We read that there was "A fountain opened for sin and uncleanness;" but it also said, "For the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem." And we had no assurance that we were inhabitants of that heavenly Jerusalem. But O when the Lord by his special grace showed us he had subdued our spiritual enemies, had triumphed over our sins, had gained the victory over death, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, our harps were no longer on the willows, but with the spirit and the understanding also we sang, The Lord hath triumphed gloriously. He had all the glory; to him it all belonged, for his own arm brought salvation. Truly the Lord hath triumphed gloriously. When he trod the wine-press alone, when he fought the powers of darkness, when he bridged the breach of a broken law, when he suffered the extreme penalty of that law for his people's sins and iniquity, and came forth from the grave a mighty conqueror, he triumphed gloriously. "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." When the first ripe sheaves were gathered in safe, it secured the entire harvest. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." He has been received into the Father's kingdom, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. Therefore, as he has become the first-fruits, and been received, he has insured the whole election of grace; none of them can ever perish. As all of the Israelites were brought safely through the Red Sea, so every vessel of mercy for whom the Savior groaned and bled upon Calvary's rugged summit shall

be brought off more than conquerors. O grand and glorious Conqueror! blessed Mediator! everlasting Intercessor! didst thou sacrifice thy life, endure that dreadful death, and pay the utmost farthing for which the church was held in bondage? All, all for love, eternal, everlasting love! Well may we join Miriam in her song of deliverance. Yes, brethren, raise the song, let it vibrate throughout this entire mundane sphere; louder, thrice louder, sound its blessed, soul-cheering notes than those national Israelites did in view of their temporal deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The Lord hath triumphed gloriously.

"Then give all the glory to his holy name;
To him all the glory belongs;
Be yours the high joy still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in all of your songs."

O children of God, how blessed your situation! how great your privileges! how high, how heavenly your calling! Your sins, sorrows and spiritual enemies are all subdued by the great, triumphant Conqueror. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. But this glorious Victor has passed through and burst asunder its iron fetters. He sweetened the grave for each of his members.

"The graves of all his saints he bless'd,
And softened every bed;
Where should his dying members rest,
But with their dying Head?"

He has led captivity captive. He "triumphed gloriously" in every battle in which he was ever engaged. If, then, brethren, this almighty Conqueror is the "Captain of your salvation," is there any cause of fear? Is not yours a sure abode, a most secure retreat? Your sins have gone before you to judgment, and can never rise up against you. They were judged when your mighty Champion was judged, they were nailed to the tree with him, condemned by him, buried in his grave, and he arose, gloriously triumphing over them.

Brethren Beebe, what I have written is at your disposal. They are poor, rambling thoughts for such a subject. O may the Lord manifest the stately stepping throughout Zion, that she may be "A crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God," is the sincere desire of a poor little sister,

SARAH A. BLAKE.

WATERLOO, Iowa, May 9, 1884.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., June 9, 1884.

DEAR BROTHERN BEEBE:—I wish to relate to my kindred in Christ afar off, my condition, and what I hope have been the Lord's dealings with me. I have put it off from time to time, hoping I might have more ability to write; but at present I feel my weakness so much, I cannot write as I wish to. I feel myself unworthy of this holy cause. I was taken suddenly down to my bed with a fever, and an abscess in my side. This was in May, 1876. I lay three months on my bed, and got so weak and low that I could not turn my head on the pillow. My doctor and the family and friends gave me up to die; but the great Physician on high

saw fit to raise me from my sickness. I then saw that the Lord was most powerful, that he would bring me down so low and so near to the grave, and then raise me up to health again. Right then I saw I was a sinner, and was sinning against God and all his commands, and if I died in this condition, what would become of my soul? I saw I was lost, and did not know what to do. I knew that God was the Savior of sinners, and I thought I would put my trust in him alone. I gained health and strength and got able to work. These words came to me one day, while alone, "You are a lost sinner." These words caused me much trouble. I felt weakened down, miserable and condemned. I could neither eat nor sleep, but would go off by myself and try to pray; but it seemed to me that my prayers did not go any higher than my head. I got no relief, and thought I was doomed to die. I would pray to God to have mercy on me, a sinner, and to show me the way to get relieved of my burden. While I was bowed down to the earth, these words came to me, "Look unto Jesus, for he will carry you through."

O what a relief this was to my poor, troubled soul. I felt so happy, I thanked God for relieving me of trouble. Time passed on, and I thought I would have no more trouble about my condition. This was in the year 1882. But in a short time my troubles came to me again, more severe than ever, so that I did not know what to do. I felt too unworthy to ask God to help me any more, for I thought it would be adding sin to sin. I could not stand it any longer. I fell to the earth, and asked God in my prayer to help me out of my troubles, when these words came to me, "Lo, I am with you always." I got up, everything looked lovely all around, and I felt very happy. I thanked my heavenly Father and praised him. I loved him more and more every hour I lived, for his love and kindness to such a wretch as I. I had a great love to go to meeting, for I thought the Old Baptists did look so happy. I thought if there was a happy people on earth, it was them. I felt like I wanted a home with them, but I felt too unworthy. I was almost afraid to ask for a home, for they all looked so much better than I felt myself to be. But these words came to me, "You never will grow better by staying away." At the regular meeting of the church I went before them, and told them my feelings. I felt so unworthy, because I could not talk or tell them my experience as I desired to do. I thought, If I am a christian, surely I am the least of all. But I felt like I loved this people with a godly love. They received me, and I found a blessed home with them. This was November 11, 1882. On Sunday following I was baptized by our beloved pastor of Salt River Church, brother S. Hawkins. When I came up out of the water I felt as though I should not see any more trouble. It seemed to me that my trouble was at an end. But how soon doubts and fears arose!

I feared I had deceived the dear people. But I enjoy, though unworthy, a place among them, and I have found a home that no one on earth can take from me. And this is a great satisfaction to me, that I hope when I leave my home on earth, I have a home in heaven.

You must excuse all imperfections in this letter. My father and mother died when I was quite small, and I was taken and raised by kind people. I had a sister and a half-brother, but I have never seen or heard from them since the death of my mother and father. I have no other connections in the world, that I know of, on my side. I feel all alone. My mother's maiden name was Rebecca Drisco, and my father's name was Ephraim K. Amsden. My mother died in Indiana.

Dear brethren Beebe, do with this as you think best. If you think it worthy a place in our dear family pater, publish it; if not, cast it aside, and all will be right. I will close by asking you all to remember me, a poor, sinful one, as I feel myself to be.

NANCY ANNIS FRAZIER.

"LEAD HILL, Ark., June 11, 1884.

MR. WILLIAM J. PURINGTON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I seat myself to ask you a few questions. There are some folks in this country that believe that Adam and Eve raised a family before Cain was born, or before they transgressed; and they quote the Scripture where God commanded them to multiply and replenish the earth, and say the word replenish means to fill again, and the same command was given to Noah after the flood, and it had the same meaning in both cases. Now what I want to know is this: Was the command to Adam and Noah to multiply and replenish the earth both translated from the same original word, and do they both mean the same? Please answer this through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, or by private letter, whichever way suits you best, and oblige one who desires to know the truth.

WILLIAM J. CASEY.

R E P L Y .

MY DEAR BROTHER:—I am not surprised in this day of "idealism" at the open manifestation of infidelity, deism and atheism amongst carnal religionists and the non-professing world; but I am pained to see the workings of a spirit in our own "ranks," not willing to receive the plain, simple, positive declarations of the inspired apostles concerning man's fall, sin, the curse of the law, how and by whom the church has been delivered from that curse, &c., but will go back into the Old Testament Scriptures and select certain portions, and tell us what conclusions certain learned and eminent men have come to concerning such and such things, and what they think about them. As to Adam and Eve raising a family before Cain was born, or before they transgressed, &c., is setting aside apostolic authority. What says one of the inspired judges? "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." It seems that the inspired Paul had no knowledge of a family raised by Adam and Eve before they transgressed; and the Scriptures of the Old and New Testa-

ments can be of no possible use to persons holding such visionary notions concerning the creature man.

I will now attend to your request concerning the meaning of the word replenish. The verb replenish, as a future act, is found twice recorded in the Old Testament, and, as a perfect participle, or act accomplished, it is recorded five times; and as a command, it is to fill, the word again is not included in its just and literal meaning; and, as the act finished, it signifies to be full or filled. The original word in Hebrew is *male*, and it is precisely the same original word when addressed to Noah, and when addressed to Adam and Eve. This is not a New Testament word, for it is not recorded in the New Testament. Our English word is from the Latin words, or the word and its prefix, *re* and *plenus*, full.

My dear brother, my advice to all who really love the truth as it is recorded in the Scriptures, is to turn away from all such caviling, and receive the Scriptures with childlike simplicity, remembering that our God has given us the record that will stand the test of all carnal criticisms; and the only safe way for you, for me, and for all others who love the Lord, in this evil day, is to adhere closely to the Scriptures. The first one hundred and eighty-two verses in the book of Genesis extend over the space of nearly seventeen hundred years; but that is all the record we have of that long period of time; yet it is all our God has given us. The following quotation from the apostle John is of more moment to God's dear children than all the theories of vain mortals: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."

Affectionately yours,
WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.
HOPEWELL, N. J., June 17, 1884.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., June 14, 1884.

DEAR BROTHERN EDITORS:—Of late years I have not been impressed to write much for publication, but now it is on my mind to write a little. I hope this will be a sufficient explanation to the many dear saints who have desired me to write more frequently, and that they will know that it is not because I love them the less.

Under a special providence of God, though through affliction from a seriously affected lung, I was called to spend this spring in the states of Florida and Georgia, occupying about two and a half months in traveling and preaching among the churches in south and east Florida, and in middle Georgia. It was my privilege to witness the addition of fourteen to the church, and to baptize six of them. I met with about twenty-one of our ordained ministers, and had the pleasure of hearing many of them, and there was no difference in doctrine among us all, that I know of. There was much comfort and blessing in many of the churches, and we realized the presence and power of the

Lord. While on the tour I tried to preach sixty-five times, and only once was I objected to by a very few, who deny the resurrection of the dead, while the body of the church was much edified. My affected lung improved while down among the many beautiful orange groves and charming lakes of Florida, where the soft sea-breezes make the atmosphere delightfully salubrious and balmy; but since my return I am worse again. It was cheering to find the dear brethren far down in south Florida, in a wilderness country, sound and established in the faith of God's elect, and walking in the order of the gospel of Christ. This was a confirmation of the word of Jesus, saying, "And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

Now, dear brethren, permit me to submit a few thoughts upon these two texts: "And God blessed them, and said, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it."—Gen. i. 28. "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children," &c.—Gen. iii. 16. Is it not evident that the last text is but the fulfillment of the command in the first to multiply? Can we think that, when man sinned, God changed his purpose, or added to the first creation? Surely not. The word replenish means full, to fill completely. And in the day when God created man, male and female, he said, "Multiply, and replenish the earth." Then where is there any room on the earth for a supposed extra-production or enlargement of the first command to multiply and people and fill the earth? And according to this two-seed theory, why should it be thought that God should save all the original or first creation, any more than all the extra-production, when all are equally his creatures? Can any one tell why? Or, to evade this, will it be said that the devil created the lost? Then, if God must save all this first creation in Adam, where is there any place for the exercise of the election of grace? Surely our people are not ready to admit this monstrous heresy.

In the love of the truth,

D. BARTLEY.

HARWICH, Ontario, June, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have felt for some time a desire to tell of the goodness of the Lord to me, yet feeling indeed very unworthy of his mercies; but hoping it may be encouraging to some poor wanderer, I will try to describe the way he has led me. At the age of about fifteen years I first felt myself a sinner in the sight of God. In this terrible and sad condition I lived for about fifteen years, although at times somewhat unconcerned. In the fall of the year 1875 I again felt my condition more terrible than before. Words fail to describe my feelings. I felt as though the Lord could never have mercy on one so vile as I. But it was to save

sinner that Christ died; and I can say with Paul the apostle, "To save sinners, of whom I am chief." In this state I continued until it pleased almighty God to reveal his Son in me. On the evening of December 2, 1875, at about nine o'clock, I believe, the Lord appeared and said unto me, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven." I was made to rejoice in his forgiving love, and could truly sing that December was as pleasant as May. I lived for about a week in this exceedingly happy frame of mind, and thought I should never see sorrow again. But I found this was a mistake; for when the Lord withdrew his presence from me, I felt as vile as ever, and I had again to cry, like the publican, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I feel as if I cannot be a child of grace, for I feel so prone to do evil; but, like Job, I can say, "He knoweth all my wanderings. He knoweth the way that I take." The Lord is my righteousness: I will rejoice in the work of his hands. I have never offered to join any church, as there is no organization of the Old School Baptists in this neighborhood, although there are some members near here. We have plenty of so-called preaching close by, but it does not satisfy the hungry soul. I have at present the loan of some numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I like very much.

I send you the above, and if you think it worth while to publish it, do so; if not, all will be well.

Yours in hope of everlasting life,
T. J. GEORGE.

WORTHINGTON, Nobles Co., Minn.

DEAR EDITORS:—I seem alone here in Nobles County, Minnesota. I came here January 20th, and find no Old School Baptists here. If some kind brother in Iowa or in Minnesota would please write me a line, I should like to go down and see them. Please publish this in the SIGNS, if not intruding. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES comes to us twice every month, and we look for it with delight. When I hear from you, Elders Chick, Durand and Purington, and you all express and feel your littleness, then my heart goes out to meet you, for it has pleased God to show me mine; and when you write you express my feelings better than I could myself, which reminds me of what Jesus said, in the parable of the sower. The seed that fell into the good ground was in an honest and pure heart. It matters not if in Maine, California, Georgia, or any other part of the world, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ shines brightly out of all such hearts. My heart's desire and prayer is, that God may be merciful to me, and to all that love his name. I must close, for I feel that I have been burdensome to your time.

HENRY JAMES.

BURLESO, Johnson Co., Texas, June 23, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that several brethren claiming to be Old School Baptists have written and

given the condition of the Baptists in Washington Territory, their origin, &c. I anticipate starting in a few days to see that new country, and to hunt up as many of God's dear little children as possible, as I hope through grace that I am identified with the little ones. We will, if not providentially hindered, stop off at Goldendale, Klikitat Co., W. T., and hope that as many as feel disposed to write me at Klikitat will do so, as I am hunting a new field of labor, and a country to emigrate to. I can give references in that county.

Yours in the hope of a blessed immortality,

W. J. FLEMING.

THE CHURCH HISTORY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The recent frequent unavoidable absence of the gentleman whom I have employed as my principal assistant teacher, and the necessity of my own labors for the support of my family, have so hindered me in my work on the History that I shall be obliged to take my summer vacation for its completion. My present feeling is to send you the manuscript by the first of September, whether it be complete or incomplete, as it seems impossible for me to devote any more time to the work. Besides, if my life and health are spared, I do not think that I shall need any more time for its completion.

Providence permitting, the fall session of my school is to begin the first Monday in September, at which time I shall be obliged to resume my labors in the school-room.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILSON, N. C., May 20, 1884.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ANY one knowing the whereabouts or present post-office address of the following named persons, will confer a favor by sending the same to this office:

Alex. D. McAlpine, formerly of Staplehurst, Nebraska.

J. H. Gentry, formerly of St. Charles, Iowa.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

MY correspondents will for the present address me at Johnstown, Bates Co., Missouri, instead of Raymond, Illinois, as heretofore.

WM. FITZJERRELL.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

WILL Elder William M. Smoot, of Virginia, please give his views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on a portion of the Scriptures found in the Song of Solomon vi. 13, and oblige a lover of the truth?

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER Wm. J. Purington is expected to preach in Paterson, N. J., on July 5th, at 3 p. m., on Division St., near Washington.

M. HELLINGS.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers composing the Chemung Old School Baptist Association, to the churches whom we represent, send christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In this our annual epistle of love, we will call your attention particularly to the subject of christian fellowship, and the ordinance of the Lord's supper or communion. It is most important that we entertain right views upon this subject, and we shall do well to meditate upon these things as presented in the Scriptures of truth, and as experienced by the people of God. The testimony and teaching of the Scriptures will always correspond with what the Lord has taught us by his holy Spirit in our hearts.

We are told that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."—Acts iv. 32. In their experience the Lord fashioneth the hearts of his people alike.—Psa. xxxiii. 15. So the apostle exhorts them to be of one mind, (2 Cor. xiii. 11), and of the same judgment. When the spiritual mind controls our words and acts, this will be the case, and there will be no disagreement among brethren; but when the old man or carnal mind rules us, divisions will soon arise. How important it is, then, that we examine ourselves to see if we are in the Spirit, or spiritually minded, before we speak or act in regard to the important matters of the kingdom of God.

The apostle says, "By one spirit are we all baptized into one body," and speaks of that one body with its many members as representing Christ.—1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. Also, in speaking of the order of the church, and of the relation of her members one to another in Christ, he illustrates it by referring to the members of the natural body. Here is fellowship. Members of the same body are fellows. The hand is a fellow of the foot upon the same body, but not a fellow of the hand belonging to another body. Christians have fellowship one with another because they are members of the body of Christ. Their fellowship is with the Father, and with the Lord Jesus Christ.—1 John i. 3.

It is only in the Spirit that this unity and fellowship exist. They are not found in the flesh, and are not experienced and enjoyed by the christian when he lives after the flesh. When we are enabled by reigning grace to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, then we know "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Psalm cxxxiii. 1. Then we love each other unselfishly, and truly seek each other's welfare, "looking not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." How unspeakably pleasant and sweet this is, to have such a tender regard for our brethren that we want to do them good, and would suffer ourselves, if need be, to prevent them suffering; to feel the spirit of loving-

kindness actuating us toward them, a spirit of forbearance and forgiveness, and also of confession of our faults. These things do not belong to the flesh, as we often sadly learn, but are of the Spirit.

The Lord's supper, as an ordinance in the church, exhibits this fellowship of the members of the body of Christ in his sufferings, and their communion with each other. "This do," the dear Savior said, as he gave his disciples the broken bread to eat, "in remembrance of me."—Luke xxii. 18. And the apostle said, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."—1 Cor. xi. 26. If his death has not worked in us, his life cannot be manifest through us, only as we have known the fellowship of his sufferings, and been made conformable unto his death in this ordinance. The apostle says, "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."—1 Cor. x. 16, 17. What an intimate union is here presented between those who come together to partake of these elements.

In the visible church, in all the commands and exhortations and admonitions concerning its order, this unity of the Spirit existing between the several members is kept in view, and its maintenance enjoined upon them. Sometimes we may entertain for awhile an incorrect view with regard to the observance of the Lord's supper. If there is a brother whom we know to be walking disorderly, or one who has trespassed against us, or one whom we remember has aught against us, (really and truly), can we consistently sit down with such at the Lord's supper, and continue with them in this solemn ordinance, expressive of holy and unalloyed fellowship, without taking such steps as are commanded with a view to a restoration of the erring, a putting away of the disorder, and a reconciling of the offended? This is an important question, and can only be truly answered by the Scriptures. Sometimes one may entertain the idea that he can go on in this ordinance with those whom he knows to be even in gross disorder, thinking he does not commune with the disorderly ones, but with the church. Sometimes we may say, It makes no difference who is at the communion table with me. I do not commune with them, but with Christ. These views are clearly very erroneous. The observance of the Lord's supper is the communion of the body of Christ. It is the communion of the members one with another. One cannot commune with the church without expressing communion and fellowship with all the members of that church who sit with him at the table. We cannot consistently speak of a church as distinct from her members. A church consists of all the members of that church until one or more are made distinct by being dealt with in gospel order. We might as well speak of

the body as distinct from any of its several members. Without the members it would not be a perfect body. So every member of a gospel church is to be regarded as truly a part of that body, until in accordance with the gospel rule he is shown to have forfeited his right to be so regarded. We cannot consistently disregard the voice of any member. If the little finger of the natural body feels pain, we pay attention to it at once, else the whole body might soon be affected. So the church which is in a healthy condition will attend to the voice of the least member, if any can be regarded as the least except by themselves.

If we know of one who is in disorder, it is our duty to call the attention of the body to it in a gospel manner. If he has trespassed against us, the Savior has told us what to do, and we are transgressors if we do not obey the command.—Matt. xviii. If we remember that our brother has aught against us; that is, if we know we have trespassed against him, the Savior has likewise made our duty clear.—Matt. v. 23, 24. If we know one who is called a brother to be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, the apostle has told us not to keep company (in church relation) with such an one nor eat with him.—1 Cor. v. 11. "Withdraw thyself," he says again, "from every brother that walketh disorderly." Now these injunctions make our duty plain. We cannot withdraw by going out of a gospel church. In that case we ourselves would be in disobedience. We must do as our Savior and his apostles direct us, and those who follow the rule they have given in the spirit of love will be manifested as the church, though less in numbers than those who do not. If we simply decline to take the bread and wine, and take no step in obedience to the Savior's rule, we are in a manner going out of the church ourselves.

If the trespass or the wrong is one that we can bear, that is our privilege, so far as it affects ourselves. But in that case we must remember that it is put away from between us, covered by the mantle of our love for him in the Lord. We cannot both forbear our brother and hold his faults or trespasses against him.

It is sweet when we feel a forbearing spirit; when we remember our own failings, infirmities and sins, and so bear with those of others. It is something to be thankful for, when we can go to a brother who has erred, and perhaps done us a wrong, and show him how tenderly we feel towards him, and how anxious for his own peace and prosperity, and how willing and ready to forgive. And when we are exercised by that meek and loving Spirit of Christ, the same Spirit in those who have it will be moved, and the fleshly feelings be subdued. "A soft answer turneth away wrath." It is only the Spirit that enables one to give this soft answer. The apostle makes a distinction between those in the church who are spiritual and those who are not.

When we are spiritually minded we are prepared to meet an erring or offending brother; for we shall meet him in a meek and loving and patient and forbearing spirit, which can bear all things that he may say or do, and not become offended or angry. This we know to our sorrow cannot be the case when the carnal mind prevails. So the apostle says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."—Gal. vi. 1.

There is no officer that can rule in the church of God but that peace which each of the members has experienced. "I will make thy officers peace."—Isa. lx. 17. So the apostle says, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful."—Col. iii. 15. And again, "And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4. 7.

Now may we remember and well consider the apostle's loving exhortation to the Ephesians: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you."—Eph. iv. 31, 32. And again, "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Eph. iv. 2, 3. And again, to the Colossians, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."—Col. iii. 13.

Of many things enjoined upon us we must feel that they are impossible for us to do, we are so imperfect, and they present a perfect rule. But the Spirit led the apostle to say, "Be perfect."—2 Cor. xiii. 11. And the same Spirit leads his brethren to desire that perfection which is found not in the flesh, but in the obedience of faith, and in following after and striving to obtain the perfect rule.

SILAS H. DURAND, Mod.

B. F. HAMILTON, Clerk.

From the forty-ninth annual session of the Sandusky Baptist Association, to the churches of which she is composed.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We thank and adore our heavenly Father for blessing us with health and strength, and permitting us to assemble ourselves together in an associate capacity, to speak one to another, and to praise our covenant-keeping God, who will reign until all enemies are put under his feet.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The speaker is the Savior of poor, lost and helpless sinners, who has all power in heaven and earth; and when he speaks, no one need to interpose, for he performs all things according to the counsel of his own will. Paul said to the Philip-

pian brethren, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Paul being a chosen apostle of our heavenly Father, had that faith given him by his Lord and Master, that all his promises will be fulfilled, in which rests our hope, that the Lord of heaven is too wise to err, and too good to be unjust. The poor, sinful and heavy laden sinner feels his need of a Savior. Being in great distress of mind and anguish of soul, he cries out, "Lord, save, or I perish." The Savior of all lost and perishing sinners will speak peace to the troubled mind at his own appointed time and good pleasure.

Will all come to Christ? "No man can come to me [Christ,] except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." So we infer from the foregoing declaration that every one who is not drawn by that loving-kindness will not be able to come to Jesus; consequently they will be numbered with the hypocrites and unbelievers, to whom he shall say, "I tell you, I know ye not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."—Luke xiii. 27. The children of grace, or heirs of the heavenly kingdom, are not workers of iniquity. They often do walk in forbidden paths, but their great desire is to honor and glorify their heavenly Father, who is the giver of all good and perfect gifts. No doubt iniquitous workers believe that they are the followers of Jesus Christ. The Savior says, "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

Dearly beloved brethren, have we not faith to believe, and has not our experience taught us that we obeyed that solemn call to come to Christ, when we were exercised with labor, and were heavy laden? Then we truly can say, with hearts of gladness, that we loved the Lord because he first loved us. The psalmist says, "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." O brethren, what strong faith we should have in that great and precious Lord, our righteousness, who has done all things well for us, poor, vile, sinful creatures, of his workmanship.

May the God of heaven, who is rich in mercy, give us grace that we may walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. May the blessing of heaven rest upon all the dear children of God, here and elsewhere, now and evermore. Amen.

THOMAS SWARTOUT, Mod.

J. P. CONAWAY, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Chemung Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Riker's Hollow Church, June 11th, 12th and 13th, 1884, to the associations and churches with whom she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the

great goodness and rich mercy of our heavenly Father we have been protected and brought through another year, and according to our appointment we have been permitted to hold another anniversary of our association, in which the churches have been represented by their messengers and a goodly number of brethren from different parts of the land, who have come to join in our solemn worship, and to adore the God of our salvation for his wonderful works to and in the children of men. Our business has been conducted in peace, decently and in order, we trust. Although but few ministering brethren were permitted to meet with us, yet there has been no lack. The preaching has been harmonious, powerful, clear and very comforting to the hungry soul, and we have felt that we have sat together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, feeling that it was none other than the house of God and the very gate of heaven.

Our next meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Caroline, Tompkins Co., N. Y., commencing on Wednesday after the second Sunday in June, 1885, where we hope to receive your correspondence and messengers in love and fellowship again.

SILAS H. DURAND, Mod.

B. F. HAMILTON, Clerk.

The Sandusky Baptist Association, in session with Eagle Creek Church, Hancock Co., Ohio, June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1884, to the several associations with whom she corresponds, sends greeting.

VERY DEAR BROTHERS:—We are in session under favorable circumstances, having received intelligence from nearly all the associations with whom we stand connected, each and all of them manifesting steadfastness in the truth. We appreciate the correspondence received, and desire a continuance of the same; and so far as in us lies, we will try to reciprocate by sending messengers to you. Since we last met, some of our aged brethren, who have borne the burden and heat of the day, have been called away by death; but we hope our loss is their gain. We desire to render ceaseless, undivided and eternal praise to God, who hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. He hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. The preaching of Christ and his salvation has been in power and demonstration of the Spirit, and has evidently been received with joy and gladness by many hearers. No sound of discord has been heard.

We have agreed (if the Lord will) to meet with the Rocky Fork Church, Marion Co., Ohio, near Morral Station, on the Columbus & Toledo R. R., on Friday before the second Sunday in June, 1885, when and where we hope to meet you again. Until then, farewell; and indeed you will fare well, if Christ be in you the hope of glory.

THOMAS SWARTOUT, Mod.
J. P. CONAWAY, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

I TIMOTHY II. 4.

"WHO will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

In their efforts to overthrow the doctrine of the sovereignty of God in saving his people from their sins, opposers of that truth frequently cite this expression, and interpret it as implying either universal salvation of all the race of man, or the disappointment of the will of God. Others who see the fallacy of both these deductions are sometimes bewildered by the sophistry of the enemy, and fail to understand just what is meant by this and other similar expressions in the inspired Scriptures.

If the doctrine of universal salvation is revealed in the word which God has given, then it is truth, and all who are led by the Spirit of God will accept it gladly. But if it is condemned by the same authority, it is not the less false though men reputed to be wise and good may hold and teach it. The important point to be determined, therefore, is to learn just what is taught in that record on this subject. In briefly examining this subject, it must be understood that the whole testimony of God is the one witness of truth. If it is admitted to be contradictory to itself, it cannot be true, and then we have no ground of hope for the salvation of any sinner. As the reign of death is by sin, there would be therefore no salvation for any of them who are subject to the power of death. Then, if this text really teaches that it is the design of God that every one of the human race shall be the subject of that salvation which is in Christ Jesus, it must follow that his will is defeated, since there are some who are not saved, as is expressly stated in the Scriptures. But if one is lost whom God would have to be saved, it certainly cannot be that the will of God alone secures salvation to any; and if any sinner is saved, it must then be by something else besides the will of God. It is positively declared that it is "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. Now that which is justly merited cannot be of grace, but is of debt, as Paul testifies, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."—Rom. xi. 6. That this grace is not extended to all sinners is manifested both from the positive assertions which are on record of some who are not saved, and from the description given of those who are saved as being "a remnant according to the election of grace."—Jude 4-7. That those were not saved of whom Jude speaks as then "suffering the vengeance of eternal

fire," though they were cut off from the earth two thousand years before he wrote, it is unnecessary to argue, yet if our text is correctly understood to mean that God will have all the human family to be saved, they are as much included in that will as those who are now in heaven. The absurdity of this is too manifest to require demonstration.

The true meaning of this text is clearly indicated by the connection in which it is written. The "all men" in the expression under consideration includes the same as in the first verse of the chapter, where it is defined by the apostle, not as meaning everybody, but as referring to the subjects of grace in the world, Gentiles as well as Jews, kings and rulers as well as subjects. To all the men spoken of, it is declared in verse 6, that in due time Christ Jesus is to be manifested as a ransom for them. There is no record that at any time Cain or any of the subjects of final condemnation ever received this testimony. Herein is the abundant grace of God revealed in every vessel of mercy, in that God has called them out of every nation according to his own will, and translated them into the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God. These were by nature children of wrath, even as others, (Eph. ii. 3), but as called saints by the grace of God, and cleansed from all sin by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, they are made the righteousness of God in him.—See Rom. i. 7; 1 John i. 7; 2 Cor. v. 21.

The foregoing brief remarks are submitted, in compliance with the request of our dear brother James McIntyre, of Douglas County, Illinois, with the earnest desire that they may be blessed of the Lord to yield a little comfort to him, and to any other dear child of God who may read them.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

We would call the attention of brethren throughout the country to the fact that we are prepared to print and distribute the Minutes of meetings as cheap and in as good style as any office in the United States. We frequently receive copies of Minutes printed by parties who do not belong to our order, and therefore have no idea of what is meant by the writers, and consequently frequent serious blunders are made. It costs but a trifle to forward the manuscript or return the printed Minutes by mail from any part of the country, and we therefore solicit our brethren to send us their Minutes for printing. We are but few, and our patronage should be kept within our own borders.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS,

We have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

MARRIAGES.

In North Berwick, Maine, May 25, 1884, by Elder Wm. Quint, Mr. Thather P. Wilson, of Lynn, Mass., and Miss Nettie F. Allen, of Wells, Maine.

DECEMBER 25, 1883, by Elder Marvin Vail, at the residence of J. C. Beard, Mr. Philip J. Webber and Miss Anna Repsher, both of Du-bois, Pa.

By the same, April 1, 1884, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Stephen Ackley and Miss Augusta C. Fike, both of Justus, Lackawanna Co., Pa.

By the same, May 17, 1884, in Waverly, N. Y., Mr. Abish Reniff, of Baldwin, N. Y., and Miss Martha L. Binsley, of Egypt Mills, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

OUR dear father, **Stephen Cory**, departed this life on the 22d of September, 1883, aged 82 years, 9 months and 22 days. He was born in Ross County, Ohio, November 30, 1800, and was married January 16, 1822, to Miss Milla Sperry. They lived in Ross County until 1825, and then moved to Henry County, Indiana, and bought land and settled in the wild woods, where he spent the most of his long life. He cleared up his land, and made a comfortable home for himself and family. He and his companion raised eight children, to be men and women, and have been blessed with the privilege of seeing them all respectably married and settled in life. His home was always a home for the saints, which many now living can testify to, who have so often been welcomed with kind greetings and generous hospitality. Father's home was a home of homes, and in that dear home he spent his days, until within a few weeks of his death. He and his aged companion had moved to Newcastle, Henry Co., Ind., to live with their son-in-law and daughter, Peter Coble and wife. He had been there but a short time when he pitched head foremost out of a wagon, which gave him such a jar that he only survived it three short weeks and one day, when his spirit took its flight, as we verily believe, to realms of eternal bliss; and on the 24th his body was taken to his old home settlement, where Elders J. G. Jackson and G. S. Weaver spoke very appropriately, after which he was taken to the old settlement graveyard, and his body interred, to rest until the resurrection morn. He has seven children living, forty grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren, with his aged companion, who is now almost helpless and speechless from a stroke of paralysis. He is missed in all our circles of life, and more especially in our homes and at the Baptist Church. Father and mother had spent most of their time for the last seventeen years in going to meeting and visiting. Father never joined any church, but was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, through Jesus Christ alone, and we have evidence to believe that he had passed from death unto life many years ago. When spoken to on the subject of duty, he would seem to feel fearful that he had not tasted of the sweet fruits of divine love, and manifested a disposition that he did not want to wound the cause by joining the church. He was a regular attendant at the Baptist's meetings, and is missed by them as much as if he had been a member. He often showed that he enjoyed the sweet droppings of the gospel. He was honest in all his dealings. None knew him but to honor him as a straightforward, upright citizen. He was troubled with a cough for many years, and for several months before his death he failed very fast, and said to his friends that he felt the time of his departure was at hand. During his last illness he was asked by my husband how his mind was spiritually. He answered, "Perfectly easy;" as much as to say that all was well. He suffered untold misery, but it was borne with christian courage, never murmuring or complaining. About an hour before his spirit took its flight his agony was intense; but finally he became easy, and a few moments before he expired he looked at me, and then upwards, and over all things, and at the same time motioned with his hand three times. I thought he saw the way clear, and

his appearance and motion said to me, All is well with me: Jesus is coming to take me home to eternal rest. After this he was quiet, and soon fell asleep, as we humbly hope, in Jesus, as peacefully as a child on its mother's breast. We miss him here, but are comforted in feeling that our loss is his eternal gain. We humbly ask the brethren who may read this to remember us at the throne of grace, and more especially our dear afflicted mother.

Yours in hope of eternal rest,
NANNIE MAULSBY.
NEWCASTLE, Ind., May 15, 1884.

Leah Gray, relict of the late Airay Gray, and formerly the widow of Deacon George G. Jarman, departed this life May 10, at quarter of ten o'clock in the evening, at the residence of her son-in-law, John S. Warren. Sister Gray was baptized in the fellowship of Indiantown Church of Old School Baptists, Wicomico Co., Md., in August, 1822, by Elder James Rounds or Warner Staton, and lived a consistent member until her death. She was 77 years and 8 months old. Her disease seemed to be cold on the lungs. She was one whose christian character was never doubted. She was one with reasonably few words, but expressed a great deal with her walk, for she showed a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of the Lord of great price. She seemed to want to see me before she died, and I was sent for, and when I got there she was very glad to see me, and spoke freely of her dissolution. All the dread she expressed was the struggle of death. I told her the Lord could make a dying bed feel soft as downy pillows are, and perhaps it was not so awful after all. She seemed to be quiet, but suffering. She spoke to her son, brother George W. Jarman, between eight and nine o'clock, as rational as ever. She seemed to struggle with death until a while before she expired, and then breathed weaker and weaker, and died like a lamp goes out. I thought that it was the most silent scene in the room I ever witnessed. I cannot tell whether it seemed so with all the rest or not. I then arose, closed her eyes, and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away." Thus one more of the excellent of the earth has gone where it is far better. Thus the children, three in number, (one son and two daughters), have lost a precious mother, the grandchildren an attentive grandmother, the community a good citizen and friend, and the church one of her shining lights. By request, the next day, at half-past three o'clock, the neighbors and friends came together, and I tried to preach a funeral sermon from the words of the apostle in 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work." The relatives have my sympathy and prayers. We hope God will comfort their hearts for his name's sake. She was laid in the old burying ground.

T. M. POULSON.

Sister Martha A. Boyd was born December 21, 1800, and departed this life March 2, 1884. Sister Boyd was baptized by Elder Thos. P. Dudley in the fellowship of the church at Georgetown, in 1842, and was a consistent member of the Particular Baptists until the time of her death. She was living in or near Georgetown at the time she united with the church. She afterwards married a Mr. Foree, of Henry Co., Ky., and for a number of years was a member of the Particular Baptist Church called Sulphur Fork. After the death of her second husband she went to live with her sister, Mrs. Andrew Boyd, after whose death she was left for the third time a widow. After brother Boyd's death she moved to Charleston, Mo., where she died. At her own request her remains were brought to the cemetery at this place and buried. She also requested that I should preach her funeral. On Sunday, May 25, I tried to comply with her request. Sister Boyd was an intelligent and well informed Baptist. She was ever mindful of her duties and obligations as a member of society, and was even mindful to make some provision for the little

church at Georgetown when she felt that her stay on the shores of mortality was of short duration. She bequeathed to our little, weak band three hundred dollars. She also wrote in her will and made provision for a tombstone to be erected over her grave, with the following epitaph, "Martha A. Boyd, born Dec. 21, 1800, died" [left blank.] O may the King of kings and Lord of lords crown her with immortal glory, in whose presence is joy and peace forever and ever.

ALSO,

DIED—At Great Crossings, Scott Co., Ky., May 27, 1884, **Mr. A. B. Parish**, in the 47th year of his age. He was born in Bourbon Co., Ky., August 29, 1837, but was raised principally in Scott County, as his father moved to this county when Archie (as he was familiarly called) was quite a boy. I have known him from an early period after the settlement of his father, the late E. H. Parish, so widely known among the Baptists, and in whose magnificent and spacious home the Baptists and all other guests ever met a welcome and hearty greeting. For years the subject of this obituary had been subject to a chronic trouble of his bowels. Last winter dropsy set in, and for six months or over he had not been able to walk. His wife informs me that all through the long winter his sufferings have been intense, but his endurance was wonderful; and throughout all his sufferings his faith was strong, and he was continually praying for patience to wait the Master's time to relieve him from pain and the burden of the flesh. He gave evidence, though not a member of the church, that he was a subject of grace, and believed in the almighty blood of the only Savior of sinners. I have seen him melted down, as it were, under the droppings of the sanctuary; and after meeting would be dismissed he would come forward, with his heart too full for utterance, and grasp my hand without speaking, and go out bathed in tears. At other times he would say that he would give the world to have a worthy name among the people of God. His fear of bringing reproach on the name of the blessed Master and his cause, I believe, deterred him from making a public profession of the cause that he loved. He was a noble, generous and kind-hearted man, sympathetic in his nature, loved and respected by all who knew him. He leaves a noble wife and three bright little children to mourn his departure, together with a host of friends. We remember his virtues with pleasure, and will gently spread the mantle of charity over whatever may have been his faults.

On Wednesday, May 23, I tried to preach his funeral, to a large and intelligent audience of friends and acquaintances, after which his remains were taken charge of by the Knight Templars, of which order he was a worthy member, and gently laid away in their last resting place. May the Lord comfort the afflicted.

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., June 3, 1884.

On April 12, 1884, at 337 West 15th Street, New York, **Sarah Manners Axford**, wife of John Axford, fell asleep in Jesus, aged 75 years. The subject of this notice had been suffering for some years from the effects of a severe fall, but up to August last had been tolerably well. She was then violently seized with an affection of the kidneys, and for a time all hopes of her recovery were abandoned, having had several convulsions. From that time her eyesight and reasoning faculties were much impaired. Talk to her about the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of sinners, and the love of God in saving them by his grace alone, and she always seemed to understand that. For many years she was a great lover of singing the songs of Zion. One Sunday especially, not long before her peaceful departure to glory, she much enjoyed the 1247th hymn in Beebe's Collection, beginning,

"When languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay."

I believe some of the sweetness of that season was with her to the end. She tried to unite in singing it often, but was not able. Now she

"In a nobler, sweeter song,
Sings Jesus' power to save."

For some time she had an indication that she would soon be called up higher, and would often say, "A few more days and I shall bid adieu to pain." And shortly before the Lord took her it was, "A few more sighs and I shall bid adieu." Nearly the last intelligent words she said, on the evening before she departed, were, "If the Lord will give me one more manifestation, I shall be glad to go to night." She was spared through that night, and was able by assistance to get down to the breakfast table the next morning. Observing that she was not eating, I spoke to her, and she attempted to reply, but could not. I arose and went to her, when her left hand fell to her side, and she almost immediately became unconscious, and she remained so until 10:30 o'clock the same evening, when she peacefully passed away. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Though earthly joys from me are torn,
And loved and dear ones here I mourn;
Lord, reconcile me to thy will,
And give me grace to trust thee still.

In Achor's gloomy vale,

JOHN AXFORD.

NEW YORK, June 7, 1884.

Mrs. Sally Murray Sayer departed this mortal life at her home near Unionville, Orange Co., N. Y., June 6, 1884, in the 87th year of her age, having been born August 24, 1797.

Our beloved sister was the daughter of the late Deacon Wm. Murray. She professed a hope in the Savior of sinners, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Brookfield Baptist Church, in this county, by Elder Ball, at the early age of eighteen years. She afterwards united with the Waterloo or Mt. Salem Church, and at the time of her death was a member of the Middletown & Wallkill Church. On January 9, 1817, she was united in marriage with Wm. A. Sayer, with whom she shared the joys and afflictions common to this life, until he was called to his eternal home, November 11, 1860, a period of about sixty-three years. She died as she had lived, confiding in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. She was warmly attached to her kindred in Christ, as well as to her kindred in the flesh, and her home was a delightful place to all who were favored to visit her. She had been in feeble health for some time, but without any special disease, being borne down with the weight of years and the infirmities incident thereto. The Lord gave her a gentle dismissal, and her end was truly peaceful, with little bodily pain.

She has left one brother, two sons and five daughters to mourn the departure of a precious sister and mother. Though dead, yet she speaketh, and her memory will long be cherished by us all.

Her funeral was attended at her late residence, where she had lived for more than sixty years, on Monday, June 9, when and where a discourse was preached by Elder Benton Jenkins, from 1 John iii. 2, 3, being assisted in the services by Elder A. St. John.

BENTON JENKINS.

DIED—At Mount Hope, Orange Co., N. Y., June 21, 1884, **Mrs. Malinda A. Seybolt**, wife of Mr. Thomas Hurtle Seybolt, in the 63d year of her age, having been born August 27, 1821. The deceased was born and raised in the neighborhood where she died, and was united in marriage to her now bereaved husband, Oct. 31, 1840. In early life she experienced a hope in the Redeemer, and was baptized in the fellowship of the New Vernon Church, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and was ever esteemed by her kindred in Christ as a humble follower of the Lamb. In her last sickness she suffered extremely, but bore it with christian fortitude, being conscious of her approaching dissolution. About the last words she spoke were, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Thus she passed to her inheritance above, giving evidence of the supporting grace of God, and of her acceptance in the Beloved. Notwithstanding we sorrow that we shall see her face no more, still there is a sweet consolation which robs death of its sting, and the grave of its victory.

She has left, besides her bereaved and sorrowing companion, one daughter, two sons, two sisters and two brothers, who sincerely mourn their loss.

Her funeral was attended on Monday, June 23, when a discourse was preached in the presence of a large gathering of sympathizing friends, by Elder Benton Jenkins, after which her remains were deposited in the "Plains" Cemetery, among her kindred who had preceded her to the grave.

BENTON JENKINS.

Mary Jane James, daughter of Henry and Elizabeth James, was born October 21, 1862, and died February 1, 1884. She was sick two years with consumption. She suffered a great deal, but never complained. She was a great lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and loved the Old School Baptists, and loved to be with them. I asked her, a few moments before she died, if she was afraid to die, and she said, "No." She said if it was the Lord's will that she should get well, she would; but if it was his will she was willing to go. We miss her very much, but can say, The Lord's will be done.

HENRY JAMES.

WORTHINGTON, Minn.

DIED—Of consumption, at her home near Occoquan, Va., April 24, 1884, **Miss Julia Ledmon**, in the 24th year of her age. The deceased had been in failing health for some time, and for several weeks previous to her death was confined to her bed. She gave some evidence during her sickness of a vital knowledge of divine things, expressing a knowledge of the fact that she was in the hands of a sovereign God. Her death is a sad blow to her mother, who is a member of the Occoquan Church. May she and the family be graciously sustained in the affliction. The funeral was attended by a large congregation of sympathizing brethren, relatives and friends. The text used upon the occasion is recorded in the 126th Psalm, last two verses.

The deceased leaves her mother, two sisters and three brothers, to mourn their loss. We rejoice to know that our times are in his hands, and that he will do all things well.

Yours in fellowship,

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCOQUAN, Va., June, 1884.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE White Water Association of Regular Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, Wayne Co., Ind., four miles east of Hagerstown, commencing on Wednesday before the second Saturday in August (6th, 7th and 8th), 1884, continuing three days.

Those coming from the east will stop at Washington, on Tuesday, at about 10:40 a. m., and at 4:00 p. m. on the same day. Come by the way of Richmond. Those coming from the west will stop at Hagerstown, on the same day, at 3:47 p. m. Both stations named are on the Cincinnati, Richmond & Chicago R. R. The brethren and friends will be met and cared for at both stations on Tuesday before the meeting. We give a general invitation to all who love the truth.

JAMES MARTINDALE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will hold their next session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham village, commencing on Friday, September 5, 1884, and continue three days.

By that time we hope to have our meeting house completed, and it is our desire that those who love the truth who can meet with us will come and assist us in dedicating our house to the worship of the true and living God.

H. CAMPBELL.

THE Western Association of Predestinarian Regular Baptists will hold her thirty-third annual session (the Lord willing) with Middle River Church, in Madison Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday, September 13th, and continue the two following days, being September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1884. All of our faith and order are invited.

Those coming by rail will stop at Earlham, about thirty-five miles west of Des Moines, on Friday before, where they will be met with conveyances and taken to the different places of entertainment.

ASA B. SMITH.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1884.

NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEAR HOPEVILLE, Ga., Jan. 13, 1884.

DEAR BRETHERN BEEBE:—Inclosed find the experience of sister Mattie Crawford, written for Elder S. C. Johnson, of Mississippi. I have been much comforted by reading it, and I send it to you for publication, if you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

As ever, your brother in hope,
W. J. W. DODSON.

FULTON COUNTY, Ga., Jan. 12, 1883.

DEAR BROTHER JOHNSON—If you will permit one so unworthy as I feel myself to be to claim the relationship. At your request I will try to write some of my travels from nature to grace, or my christian experience, if it be an experience of grace. I hope the Spirit of our kind, almighty Friend will direct my thoughts; if not, I know that I shall fail. My limited education makes me fear and tremble to think of writing anything to go to the public. It has been on my mind for some time to write something for publication; but then I have thought that some one would think I was doing something to be noticed, or to appear smart. I have tried to forget it, or get it off my mind. I have begun several times, laid it in the fire, and said I would never make another attempt.

I was born under the law of sin and death, as all of Adam's race are, and very sinful, too, and went on in that way until it was the will of the most high and living God to take me in hand and turn me, if I ever have been turned. Sometimes I am afraid I have not been. When I was a child I would have very serious reflections about death, and of what would become of me when I died. I would say my prayers at night and during the day, and thought I said some very good prayers, and that the Lord heard them. I thought I was about as good as anybody. I was never taught to say my prayers. My mother is a Baptist, and my father was also. I wanted to get to heaven and meet my father; so I thought if I would be a good girl, and say my prayers, it would be all right, and the Lord would save me. One night, after I had gone to bed, I said my prayers as usual. I asked the Lord not to let me have any bad dream that night. I fell asleep and dreamed that my sins were forgiven, and awoke shouting, "Glory! glory!" I was then sure that the Lord heard my prayer, and had commenced a good work in me. I have written this because it is as fresh in my mem-

ory to-day as when it first occurred, although I was but a child. Thus I went on until some time in the spring of 1877. I went to bed one night, careless and unconcerned, for I had left off praying. Now you can see where the power was. I had taken it up, and I could lay it down. I dreamed that night that I was at a union meeting, and brother Morgan and brother Woullie were there. We started for the stand, and brother Morgan told me that I had to preach. I thought I stopped and said that I could not, but he said I would have to. Then I awoke, and kept thinking about my dream. The next morning I went to my brother's, and we were talking about the association that was to be held at Rock Spring. I told my dream, and sister Mary said it would be a great preach that I would do. The thought came to me, Yes, and I think so too. And what did I tell that for? I wanted them to forget it, and I felt sure that I would never tell it again. We went to the association at Rock Spring in September, 1877. I went with sister Mary to her father's the week before, and we made that our home during the meeting. We went to meeting on Saturday and Sunday. One day was rainy, so they had to preach in the house, which was very much crowded. I got a seat on the third bench, with my aunt and sister Fannie Anderson. Elder Patman was preaching. I do not remember what the text was, but he said something about prayer. He said that when a person felt like praying, that was the time to pray. Then it seemed to me that I would pray, when these words came to me as if they had been spoken, (I did not hear them with my natural ears, but it was an inward voice, that pierced my very heart,) "Ah, you cannot pray now. The time has been when you could pray, but you cannot pray now." Then, for the first time in my life, I saw that I could not pray, and what an awful sinner I was before a just and holy God. Brother Johnson, I hope there are some who can understand how I felt, for I shall never be able to tell. I trembled from head to foot. I burst into tears, and could not dry my tears. I could neither sit nor stand still. I laid my head on my aunt's lap to hide my face, but I could not stay there. I thought, that every one in the house was looking at me, and thought they could see me just as I saw myself, a miserable, wretched and undone sinner. I thought, O that I had not left off praying! Why did I not pray when I could? But it is too late now. I am lost, forever lost! I

would have given ten thousand such worlds as this to have gotten rid of those miserable feelings, and to have been alone; but there I was in the midst of friends and relatives, and could not compose myself enough to keep them from noticing me. I thought I would try to pray, but I could not approach the living God. O that I were in some lonely grove, where no one could see me, for then I would try to pray. When the meeting closed, sister Anderson said that I must stay with her that night. I had been there a week, but had not spent much of the time with her. I disliked to refuse, yet I did not want to go. I was afraid she wanted to ask me what was the matter with me, and I did not know what I could tell her, for I did not know what was the matter. We went to her father's. I thought, What will they all think about me? They will think I was just acting the hypocrite; for I did not see any one else that seemed to be in the condition I was in. It wore off a little, but I could not forget it. I tried to be as cheerful as possible, to keep from being noticed. I went home from the association in great distress. I did not want any one to know about it. I would go to bed at night, and fall asleep, and awake suddenly in great fear. I would think, I am going to die; I will call some of the family and tell them that I am going to die. But I did not want them to see me die in that condition. I thought I would have to be banished from the presence of God forever. I could not go to sleep. I would think it was the strangest looking night I ever saw, and would get up and go out, and look around. I thought the world was coming to an end. I would try to pray, but could not. I was afraid that if I went to sleep I would awake in everlasting torment; and I was afraid to stay awake, for fear the world would come to an end. I desired to fall asleep and never awake at all. I tried my best to reform, and thought I would do better; but instead of doing better, I did worse. My troubles would leave me, only to return with double weight. I would go to meeting, and the preacher would pray for those who were mourning. Well, I would think, that prayer is not for me, for I know that such a sinner as I am is not mourning; and I would ask the Lord to make me mourn. Some would tell how they were brought to view themselves as lost and ruined sinners, without God or hope in the world. This I could witness with them; but when they came to speak of deliverance from their burden, and

a revelation of Jesus Christ, I was left in the dark. O how I longed to be worthy to be with them, for I thought they knew they were christians. I thought that to go to them it would require an experience, and I knew that I had no hope. I would make some excuse to keep from going to meeting on Saturdays. I did not want any one to know that I was paying any attention to the preaching. I would go on quite easy for some time, and then my trouble would return, worse than ever. I would think, O that I never had been born, or had died while young, for then I might with babes have been praising God in heaven. I thought that God was unjust. There were some of my playmates who had died in childhood, and I thought that God had taken them from earth's toils and cares, and they were at rest, while I was left to suffer pain, disappointment, and all the troubles of this world, and finally must die and go to torment. I could see no way for me to be saved, so I thought I would lay my troubles aside and enjoy myself in this world, for I thought there was no place of rest for me. I would go to every party that I could, and tried to enjoy my life. I would be as light-hearted as possible; but I never forgot my troubles, and they never left me but to return. For three or four months, sometimes, I would scarcely think of my condition, and then it would come to me when I was seemingly enjoying myself. I would think, What did that mean which I experienced at Rock Spring? Was that religion? Surely it was not. See how I have sinned, in spite of all my endeavors to do better. All my sins would rise like black mountains before me. I did not like my ways, but I could not turn from them. What did God spare me for? He made me simply for everlasting punishment, and I could see no justice in it.

I went on in this way until in the spring of 1880. I went to my brother's and remained a month. I could not sleep, but would turn from head to foot, and sigh, and sometimes weep. I came home in June and found all well, but my troubles did not leave me entirely. On the third Sunday in June I went to a Methodist meeting, and these words were in the sermon, "As ye live, so must ye die." I did not pay much attention to the preaching. They said they were going to protract the meeting after the third Sunday in July. Some of them did not want to wait that long; they said that some of the sinners might be dead before that time. I remarked to a friend, "I do not care whether

they have any meeting or not. It will not keep any from dying, nor save them from torment. I do not intend to attend the meetings." On my way home the words of the sermon came to my mind, "As ye live, so must ye die." How had I lived? Surely I had lived in sin, and must die in sin. I felt perfectly miserable. I had not gone far when this Scripture came to my mind, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Also, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." This added to my grief. I thought, I know that I cannot die in the Lord. I can never be blessed, for I have sinned, and the soul that sins shall die. I would try to forget it, but I could not. I would read the Bible, but I could not understand it; every word condemned me. Then I began to try to pray. I would go away off by myself, where none but God could see me, and all I could say was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." And I was afraid to utter that. I was afraid to kneel down, and every word I said seemed only to come from my lips, and fell to the ground. There seemed to be nothing real or pure about me. Besides all my other sins, I had accused God of being unjust, and now I could not see how he could remain just and save me. I had sinned away the day of grace, committed the unpardonable sin, and hell was open before me. I would try to turn away, but justice met me on every side. I felt justly condemned. I thought the end of all things was close at hand with me. I would have exchanged places with any dumb brute. I was in this condition for over a month, without any hope of getting better. The Methodist meeting came on, and some of them asked me to attend. Well, I thought, it will do me no harm, if it does me no good; but I know that it did me no good. It did not hasten the set time of the Lord. I would go sometimes and give my hand for prayers, and return to my seat. I would sometimes kneel, but I did not want to be seen or noticed. I would think, I am committing sin, and I will go there no more. But one day, the 28th of July, 1880, I thought I would go to their prayer meeting. I told no one where I was going, except my sister. She could not go that day, and I was in so much trouble that I could not work. I went on, and when the meeting closed I left the house, without speaking to any one. I thought I could never get home, for death seemed my portion, and hell my doom. Every breath that I breathed was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." I was afraid God would kill me for calling on his name; yet if I had had no tongue I would have prayed, for my very breathings were prayer. When I got home I thought I would eat some dinner, but I could not eat. I thought I would try to pray one more time. I went into a back room and knelt, and all I could say was, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." But it seemed to me that it did not go up at all, but fell to the ground. I lost all hope. I thought I surely must die,

and be banished from the presence of God forever. I got up, and went and fell upon a bed to die, as I thought. I said, "O Lord, how long wilt thou withhold?" I saw that I could do nothing. I laid there prostrate for a few minutes. I became perfectly calm, and it seemed to me that I was suddenly stopped in astonishment and wonder, when I heard the sweetest of music and the sweetest voice, right in my heart, singing,

"Happy day! happy day!
When Jesus washed my sins away."

I laid there, listening and wondering. I felt very calm, and the brightest light shone before me, brighter than the noonday sun. Then this thought came to me, that my sins were forgiven. I could not lie still any longer. I raised up, and tears were flowing profusely, even tears of perfect joy. Yes, I could walk and praise the Lord for saving grace. Everything that my eyes rested on was perfectly beautiful. I looked around, and all nature seemed to be praising God. I felt that my burden was gone, and that my Savior had bled and died for me.

"On the wings of his love
I was carried above
All sin and temptation and pain;
And I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again."

I thought I was changed, both soul and body, that my troubles were all over, and I should go praising the Lord all my days. I felt so light and free that I did not know what to do, and these words came to my mind, "I am not ashamed to own my Lord." I thought to go into the house and tell my brother and aunt all about it. I thought I could tell everybody just how it was, it looked so plain to me. I started, but something seemed to say, "You may be deceived." Then I wanted my burden back, that I might see and know just how it went. I tried to feel like I had before, but I could not. I thought I would pray for the burden to be given back. I knelt at the same place where I had before, but my prayer was changed. It was "O Lord, if I am deceived, do undeceive me." I could not get the burden back, and it had gone in such an unexpected way and time that I did not know how it went nor where it went. I had expected to hear the Lord speak plainly, and say that my sins were forgiven. I went out and looked around, and it seemed to me that the sun shone brighter than ever, and the trees, as far as my eyes could see, seemed to be praising God. I thought, My burden is gone, and I shall praise the Lord forever for his great goodness and tender mercies to me. Now my prayer was, "O Lord, lead me in the right way." I would say, If I boast, I shall boast in the Lord; for it is not for anything good that I have done. Everybody I saw looked more pleasant than they had looked before. Why, I thought I was one of the most wonderfully blessed beings in the world; for right in the midst of deserved wrath, God had remembered me in much mercy. Thus I went, rejoicing and thinking of God's goodness.

The Methodist meeting went on, and some of them wanted me to join. My brother had joined, and all my young friends. I told them I was afraid I was not fit to join. I loved the people, and at times I would think, Must I join them? Then I would think, No, that is not the right way. They would talk about what good things they had done, and I soon found that we did not see alike. I did not love their doctrine. I wanted to hear the Primitive Baptists preach. It was but a few days until I got into doubts. I thought I was deceived myself, and had deceived others. One night I laid down with this prayer, "O Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. Let me have in a dream something of a clearer, brighter hope, and lead me in the right way." I dropped off into sleep, and awoke praising God. I felt perfectly calm. I then thought I would not doubt any more. I awoke the next morning thinking of the goodness of God. I thought that surely goodness and mercy had followed me all the days of my life. The yearly meeting came on the fourth Sunday in August, at Elam, and we all went. Brother J. H. Cook preached. The text was, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." It seemed to me that I was gathering some of the crumbs that fell from my Master's table, when something said to me, "That is not for you; it is for christians." I thought, It may be that I have not mourned. Still there was a light and beauty in the preaching that I had never seen before. We returned home, and I told my sister that we had heard the truth. Sunday was their season for communion and feet-washing. When they sat down to the communion I thought they were the most lovely people I ever saw. Their faces seemed to glow with joy, and O how I loved them and longed to be with them. While sitting there I hope I had a view of the church of God, arrayed in her beautiful garments of fine linen. I was sitting with my hands clasped, looking at her in her beauty, and the Savior appeared to me as he hung on the cross, and seemed to say, "I died to save my people." Then these words came to my mind,

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed?"

I know that I did not see it with my natural eyes, for with our natural eyes we see natural things; but spiritual things are spiritually discerned. By faith we see, and live by hope. I have never had a doubt as to which was the true church since that day. I wanted to go to them, but I was afraid they would not have me. I would think I would go to the church, but something would say to me, "They will not have you. You have nothing to tell; and if you should tell anything, they would say that you told it just to suit yourself. No, I will not go; I am not fit to be there; if I were, I would not have so many doubts and fears, troubles and afflictions." It seemed to me that everything went against me. I did not want to bring a reproach upon the church. I loved christians, but I

was afraid it was not the right kind of love, and would soon wear off; and besides, I was afraid they did not love me. The things that I would, I did not; and that which I would not, that I did; so it was a warfare. I thought, Well, I am deceived in the whole matter after all. I did not feel that load of guilt and condemnation that I had carried so long; my trouble was of a different kind now. I felt a desire to go to the church and be baptized, but felt that I was not fit. I feared it was the wicked one prompting me to go to the church, just to give them trouble, and I did not want to do that. My prayer was, "O Lord, what shall I do? Lead me by thy Spirit, and lead me in the right way." Then these words would come, as if they had been spoken, "Arise, and be baptized." I wanted a big experience and a brighter hope, so that I would never doubt, and I determined never to go to the church until I knew that I was a christian; but I do not know that yet. I know there has been a change in me somehow; for the things I once loved I now hate, and the things I once hated I now love. I was all the time trying to solve the mystery, but I could not. I would read the Bible, and there seemed a new light in it. Sometimes I would open the Bible, and the first verse I would read would give me great comfort, and I could find many sweet promises; but at other times it was sealed, and I could not draw any comfort from it. My prayer was that I might understand the Scriptures. I turned every leaf in the Primitive Baptist hymn book several times, trying to find the song, "Happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away," but it was not there. I thought that was an evidence against me. My hope seemed so little sometimes that I thought I would throw it away; but at other times I would not give it for all this world contains. In October, the fourth Saturday, 1880, I went to Elam. I wanted to unite with the church that day, but I thought it would never do. I wanted to ask brother Cook to pray for me, but I could scarcely speak without weeping, so I did not. I was going to my brother's, in November, to stay two months, and I thought I would forget all in that time; but I did not. A few days before I came home I went to spend the day and night with sister Lou Dulin, who was then a member of the Missionaries, but is now a member of the Old Baptist Church at Rock Spring. After we retired that night she said that she thought I had a hope. She had noticed me at an association at Hardyman's, and had decided to ask me about it the first time she saw me. I told her a part of what I have written, and when I was through she said, "Dear Mattie, you have a good hope." She told me her experience, and I thought if I could talk like she did I would not mind going to the church. Sleep fled from my eyes that night. I felt that there was a burden gone. On Friday night before the fourth Sunday in April, 1881,

brother Morgan came to our house on his way to Elam, and stayed all night. After supper he asked me if I could not tell my experience. My first thought was, I will tell him that I have no hope nor experience; but then I thought that will not do, so I went on and told a few of the exercises of my mind. I felt some better for awhile, but by the next morning I was in doubt. We went to meeting on Saturday, and that day I was made willing for brother Morgan to baptize me. But I did not go to the church that day, and the next month was a long one to me, and full of trouble too. I thought if I could see brother Morgan I would tell him that I was deceived, and for him not to tell it to any one. I thought he would tell it to every one he talked with. Sometimes I would think, I will go to the church at the next meeting, for I cannot stand it this way. On Friday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1881, I decided to go to meeting. I related to the church a small part of what I have written, and to my surprise they received me without a question. I felt satisfied that I had found a rest which I had not known before. I thought it was the longest month I ever spent; but before the next meeting something seemed to say, Now you are not only deceived yourself, but you have deceived the church of God. The day came that I was to be baptized. I was ready long before any of the rest. I thought they were very slow that morning about getting ready. When we got there a great many had gathered, and I thought they would say, Yonder comes that hypocrite who is going to be baptized. But when I went down into the water I felt a glow of joy that I was doing my duty; and when I was raised out of the water, the most calm and pleasant feeling came over me. That was one of the most pleasant days I have ever spent. I have many doubts and fears, troubles, trials and temptations to pass through. I am often in the dark, and it seems to me that light will never return. Like David, I cry, "Are the Lord's mercies clean gone forever?" I would live free from sin if I could; I would be a consistent Baptist if I could; but my nature is prone to sin. I think sometimes that if the brethren and sisters knew how sinful I am, they would not fellowship me. I do not want to sin myself out of their fellowship, for

"Mid scenes of confusion and creature complaints,
How sweet to my soul is communion with saints."

There is one thing that I do know, that whereas I was blind, I now see.

I have written much more than I expected. My mind has run in a different direction from what I thought it would. I have written some things that I thought I would not, and have not written some things that I thought I would. We are a very peculiar people. We cannot have our way about things, and I am glad it is just so. I must close my scribble. It seems to me that all these sheets are filled with nothing. I have written

to relieve my mind, and have only hinted at a few things, for I could never tell it all. And now, brother Johnson, you can do just as you think best with this, after reading it. If it is of sufficient interest, you can have it published; if not, commit it to the flames. I hope that you and all the dear brethren and sisters will pray for me when it is well with you, for I am often cast down. My prayer and desire is for the welfare of Zion, that all the dear brethren and sisters may be of one heart, and that love may abound.

I hope I am your little sister in hope of eternal life,
MATTIE CRAWFORD.

CLARK'S FACTORY, N. Y., June 4, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Soon after my communication appeared in the SIGNS last April, I received a private letter from brother H. Cox, responding to mine, acknowledging that it gave him much comfort and consolation in heavenly and divine things. I wrote him a letter in answer, and asked him to give his views through the SIGNS on the tenth verse of the last chapter of Deuteronomy. I received his views as a private letter, and it was left at my disposal, so I will forward it to you to dispose of. I thought perhaps there might be some around the fold of Zion who could partake of the heavenly feast with me. I would like much to see it in the SIGNS.

As I am writing, I feel as if I would like to write a little more. I would like to tell you how joyful I have felt in the Rock of my salvation, ever since I read Elder W. J. Purington's communication last fall, which I responded to in the SIGNS. I felt to respond to such heavenly testimony. I was in a very low state of mind at that time, and it seemed as if it was written expressly for my comfort. I felt like one aroused and awakened from his sleep in the morning, to behold the Sun of righteousness arising with healing in his wings. It was a heavenly feast to my soul. The gates of hell cannot prevail against such truth and testimony. O how joyful I have felt for the past six months in the Rock of my salvation! It did not only last me forty days, but five times forty. I never had so much Scripture applied to my mind. It has been almost a continual flow, from Genesis to Revelation and back again. The Savior said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." We had a long, cold winter, but my heart was light in my Savior. Sometimes I forgot, in my meditation, that I was in a world of tribulation; yes, I forgot all the fiery trials, sorrows and afflictions which I have passed through. I have felt to say, Bless the Lord, O my soul. O praise the Lord for such a great Deliverer, who delivers his people out of all their afflictions and trials. His presence dispels the darkness, and night is turned into day. Exalted be his holy name for such a solace, for such a

refuge to the weary. Judgment, justice and equity are the habitation of his throne. The prophet has said, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!" O what a grand exhibition of his wisdom, grace and mercy to vile worms of the dust! Dear brethren, we do know that we are not redeemed by such corruptible things as gold and silver, but by the precious blood of Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin and iniquity. How good the word of the Lord is. It surely is a covert from the storm and tempest; the righteous run into it and are safe, because their life is hid with Christ in God. O what a safe retreat for the weary and heavy laden! It surely has been a resting place to me in time of trouble. The Savior said, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." They shall have "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert, and it shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. O how good the word of the Lord is. It is the hope of the righteous to rely on his promises, which are immutable. It has dropped like the small rain, and distilled like the dew on the tender herb, in my soul. How my raptured thought has soared away from time and earthly things to that haven of eternal rest which awaits the saints, where the wicked will cease from troubling and the weary will be at rest. There will be no sorrow there, neither death nor crying, for all the former things shall pass away forever. How much I have thought of the safety of Christ's kingdom, which shall break all other kingdoms in pieces, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. How good Elder Purington did write. O bless the Lord for such excellent gifts in Zion, to help the weak and feeble, and such as are of a trembling and fearful heart, on their heavenly journey. I can say, with sister Swartout, the ministers and all the brethren and sisters have written so good all through the past winter and spring, that it has been a heavenly place in Christ Jesus for me to read the SIGNS. I have felt to rejoice with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory for such high favors. It does appear to me that there is a remnant yet on earth who worship God in the beauty of holiness, and walk in all his commands blameless, rejoicing in Jesus Christ, and putting no confidence in the flesh. The flesh profiteth nothing to that eternal life which is the gift of God, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Since I received brother Cox's letter, and read the correspondence of the brethren and sisters, I have

thought of the parable, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Now my mind runs back to thirty years ago last fall, when I united with the Lexington Church. The next winter Elder Joseph L. Purington came and preached for us. He told me I ought to take the SIGNS, for it would afford me much comfort and consolation in heavenly and divine things; so I commenced taking it. As I began to read it, O what love and fellowship I had for those who wrote at that time. I felt as if I wanted to reply to such heavenly testimony; and finally it got to be a burden to me. I was conversing with them day and night. Then I began to make excuses, and tried to banish it from my mind. I felt to say, as sister Mary Parker said to sister Swartout, that I was ignorant, unlearned, and but a child; how could I write anything to go before the wise and learned brethren and sisters of Christ's kingdom? I finally got into such a state of mind that I could not rest. The words rang in my ears continually, Speak forth the praises of the most high God; declare his glory among my people. I finally made a promise to write and leave it with Elder Beebe to dispose of. But I asked the Lord to grant me one request: if Elder Beebe saw fit to publish it, that I might receive a private letter from two or three of the brethren and sisters for a witness and a testimony. To my surprise, my letter was published; and as soon as it reached the brethren and sisters there were two replied immediately as receiving much comfort and consolation in reading my communication. They were both strangers to me in the flesh. One was a minister of this state; the other was sister Nancy Dutton, of Texas. But O how little I felt! I can truly say that sister Dutton, that blessed saint, has been a mother to me in Israel. Time and again she fed my hungry soul with wisdom and knowledge of heavenly things. I have between twenty and thirty of her letters which I received before the late war. I wrote a few times for the SIGNS, but I always felt so little and humble. I had a great desire that the Lord would teach me wisdom, teach me knowledge, teach me the way of truth, peace and righteousness, clothe me with humility as with a garment, and clothe me with the robe of his salvation. I firmly believe that the Lord granted me my desire, but it was in such a crossing way that it almost drove me to despair at times. It brought me so low that it weaned me from all self-righteousness and vain glory; yes, it crucified the world unto me, and me unto the world. So I have not whereof to glory save in Jesus Christ and him crucified for my salvation and my Deliverer. There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who can say, Peace, be still! and there will be a calm. Even the wind and the seas obey his command, There thy proud waves shall be stayed. He can wound, and he can

heal; he can kill, and he can make alive; he can shut, and no man can open; he can open, and no man can shut. No one has a right to say, What doest thou? Whom he loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son and daughter, that they may offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto the Lord. "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." His glory he will not give to another, nor his praise to graven images. They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts. I often think of the time I have been referring to, and what an exalted sermon Elder J. F. Johnson, that good old champion of the cross, preached at Lexington at a yearly meeting. He used for his text the words which read thus: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." It seemed to me as if the presence of the Lord filled the house. It was accompanied with wisdom and knowledge, and much assurance of the Holy Ghost. It seemed to me as if he was sent to Lexington by infinite wisdom, to establish and confirm me in the faith that through much tribulation I should enter into the kingdom, and also in the world I should have tribulation. It even yet seems as if I could hear him lifting up his voice like a trumpet, proclaiming liberty to the captive, and saying unto Zion, Thy God reigneth. It appears to me as if the Lord was preparing my heart for the day of emergency which I was to meet. Truly,

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

O how I crave to live near my God; yes, nearer, my God, to thee. For he is pitiful, long-suffering, of tender compassion and great mercy. What a fullness dwells in Jesus our Head, and ever abides to answer the needs of every sinner who hears the joyful sound. I do rejoice that there is a remnant contending for that faith which was once delivered unto the saints, valiant for the truth, being established, rooted and grounded in the everlasting gospel. Now may the God of peace dwell with you all richly in the promise of the new covenant.

Dear brethren, dispose of this imperfect communication as you please, and all will be right.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

LUCY C. WHITCOMB.

GHEENT, Ky., May 20, 1884.

SISTER L. C. WHITCOMB—VERY
DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your

truly interesting letter of the 14th instant came duly to hand. The great truths presented in that letter afforded me an enjoyment that was far above the vain and transitory things of earth. I realize daily that while on earth I am living in a south land, in which there are no springs of living water; and when I thirst after righteousness my thirst is not slaked, nor my desire satisfied by seeking after the things of earth. But I crave a land of springs of water; and when your letter came to hand it afforded me a draught from that fountain which never dries, the fountain of God's immutable wisdom, made manifest to his dear people in the glorious gospel of God our Savior. You speak in that letter of the contrast between law and gospel, and no doubt it was that contrast which led your mind into the comforting assurances of the gospel when compared with the never-changing requirements of the law, and caused you to use the following language: "Will you give your views through the SIGNS on the tenth verse of the last chapter of Deuteronomy, and oblige your sister?" I realize that my ignorance of the sublime truths presented in the sacred volume ought to prevent my attempting to write anything upon what is presented in that verse, which reads as follows: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." The Lord never delivered to any other prophet the law from that cloud-capped mountain, which shook and quaked to its very granite base by reason of the presence of the great I Am. The apostle says, "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." That house was the house of Israel, and he was faithful in all his house as a servant. The word "prophet," as used in the sacred volume, means a person illuminated, inspired, or instructed by God to announce future events. Moses was not only a prophet, but a leader also. When the Lord appeared to him at the burning bush, he announced to him his purposes concerning the delivery of the house of Israel from bondage, and their being placed in possession of that land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, a land that flowed with milk and honey. To accomplish those wonderful things, Israel must be delivered from that bondage and led through the wilderness; hence Moses was made a leader, but every step that he made through that wilderness was directed by the Almighty. So, my dear sister, you and all God's spiritual Israel were once in bondage, once led captive by the devil at his will; but when your Deliverer came to you, it was for the purpose of leading you out of that bondage. But you had to travel through a wilderness, through a desert land, and every step you made was directed by your great Deliverer. Hence he says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not: I will lead them in paths that they have not known."

The bride says, "He brought me into his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." The question is asked, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" This was none other than spiritual Israel, the bride, the Lamb's wife; and she was brought from the wilderness of sin, where all was dark and dreary, yea, and from a state of bondage, and she was brought into that great banqueting house, the church, into that land which flowed with milk and honey. Surely it is a banqueting house. After having passed through long and cloudy days and dreary nights in that wilderness, pinched by hunger and famishing with thirst, and then brought into a banqueting house, into a land which flowed with milk and honey, you were made to rejoice with a joy that was unspeakable and full of glory. It was then you cried out, Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. You were then in that promised land spiritually, prefigured by the land of Canaan. Moses could not cross Jordan and enter into that land, but he was allowed to stand on Pisgah's heights and view with undimmed eyes the beauty, glory and fruitfulness of that land; for he represented the law, which declared in thunder-tones sounding in your ears, "The soul that sinneth it shall die!" Yea, the law was a ministration of death; but in that banqueting house there was no death, for the great Deliverer of spiritual Israel had abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Hence he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." O glorious thought, dear saint! you have eternal life secured to you through your glorious Lord.

But lest this train of thought may weary you, let us turn to the language of the text, "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." The great purpose for which Moses was called was the giving of the law and the establishment of that long and shadowy dispensation. While the Lord revealed to him coming events, he also gave him a law which was a shadow of good things to come; and these all pointed away to the coming of the Deliverer and the glory that should follow; yes, the glory that should follow when the Sun of righteousness should arise with healing in his wings, and shine forth in the gospel heavens. Thus Moses bore testimony in two ways as to the great truths of the gospel. Philip said to Nathanael, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Thus as a prophet and a lawgiver his testimony was two-fold. Under the law no fact could be established without two or more witnesses; but Moses filled the requirements of that law, as a prophet and teacher of Israel. He breaks forth in this language,

"Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Again, he says, "Thou shalt bring them [his people] in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign forever and ever." It may be observed that ancient Israel was a type of spiritual Israel. The saints then should take courage, remembering the promise that their glorious Lord shall bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of their inheritance. Yes, and remembering that the prophet has said, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." These glorious promises are left on record for the comfort of God's dear people while journeying through this wilderness, this land which yields no springs of living water. But their supplications are,

"O for a strong, a lasting faith,
To credit what the Almighty saith,
To embrace the message of his Son,
And call the joys of heaven our own."

"Then should the earth's old pillars shake,
And all the wheels of nature break,
Our steady souls would fear no more
These solid rocks when billows roar."

John says, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The types and shadows of that law pointed away to the great sacrifice which in the end of that dispensation should be made for sin; but it being a shadow only, did not make the comers thereunto perfect. The apostle says, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." He further says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Those things existed under the law, but were shadows pointing to the great substance, which was Christ; therefore the apostle forbids that any man should judge the saints in respect to any of these things. Those who would judge God's people in respect to any of these things are like those who have been hunting for the body of Moses. But it is written, "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came

by Jesus Christ," as above quoted. That law could not enter spiritual Canaan; hence the giver of that law could not enter the promised land, for it was a type of the rest of the saints in the gospel kingdom. In that Canaan national Israel rested from their long and weary journey through the wilderness, and in the gospel kingdom the saints rest from all the requirements of the law, for Christ is made the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; and when brought into that kingdom by their great Deliverer, they rest from all their works, as God did from his. They enter that eternal sabbath of rest prefigured by the sabbath under the law. Then surely there arose not a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. Amidst scenes of terror upon that mount, which caused the people to greatly fear and tremble, the Lord talked with Moses face to face, and said unto him, "Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." These were a peculiar people, and the Lord communicated to them through Moses his purposes concerning them. Then the Lord knew him face to face, knew him as his chosen messenger to bear to that peculiar people the commands of the Almighty, the laws and statutes for the government of Israel, and the laws of offerings and sacrifices which were to be made to the end of that dispensation, when the great antitype, the Messenger of the covenant, should suddenly come to his temple. Then surely the Lord knew him face to face, knew him as his chosen servant, set apart to the great work whereunto he had appointed him. Thus Moses was at the unfolding of the old heavens, but like him those heavens must pass away; they shall be rolled up as a vesture. John says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." The law and the prophets were until John; but the Almighty says by the prophet, "I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple." But who may abide the day of his coming? None of those who looked to the law for justification could abide the day of his coming, for he shall sit as a refiner's fire. The proud Pharisee could not abide the day of his coming; for the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up. In the new heavens, the gospel heavens, there was no place found for the offerings and sacrifices under the law; for Christ, the great antitype of those offerings and sacrifices, had come,

and had by one offering obtained eternal redemption for us, for spiritual Israel. Therefore there were no more offerings for sin, no more morning and evening sacrifices, no more smoking altars at the Jewish temple; for he by one offering had forever perfected them that are sanctified. They were sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ; and at the time fixed in the eternal purpose of God they will be called, and will be enabled by grace divine to gaze upon the beauty, grandeur and glory of the gospel heavens, and behold the Sun of righteousness shining there in resplendent glory with healing in his wings, sending his healing rays to heal the wounds that sin hath made upon his chosen, spiritual Israel. Then they shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall, and will have no more use for the offerings commanded by Moses. A new and living way he hath consecrated for his people, his chosen, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; for after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, he forever sat down on the right hand of God. His work to redeem his people was completed. He said upon the cross, "It is finished." The priests under the law were continually standing. Their work was not finished till he came to his temple and made that one offering for sin, and forever sat down at the right hand of God. And now his redeemed by faith look away to him, and rejoice to know that he reigns in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, saying, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth;" let the earth rejoice, and the isles of the sea be glad.

I send these rambling thoughts to you for your perusal; and if you think their publication would afford any pleasure to the saints, you may forward them to the brethren editors, who will dispose of them as they may deem best, and believe me yours in christian love and fellowship,

H. COX.

CALEDONIA, Miss., Feb. 22, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERN:—I received a letter from brother I. N. Moon, of Georgia, which gave me so much pleasure and satisfaction that I think it will give comfort to others. Therefore I send it to you for publication, not being willing to keep it all to myself.

I remain as ever, your brother in hope of a better life,

S. C. JOHNSON.

POWDER SPRINGS, Ga., Jan. 1, 1884.

ELDER S. C. JOHNSON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your letter and Minutes were received and appreciated. I was truly glad to hear from you again, and to hear you were well, and the churches in your bounds were in peace, and that the Lord was still blessing your labors. These imperfect lines leave myself and family in common health, and the churches in this section in peace, love and union, for all of which I wish I could feel more thankful to God, the Giver of every good and perfect blessing

that we are the recipients of in this sin-cursed world. It is an evidence that we are kept by the power of God unto salvation; and if we are kept by God's power, it is evident that he is mindful of us, and that we are his children. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." What more could we ask or desire than to be a joint heir with Jesus? Then, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

Brother Johnson, I was blessed of God with the high privilege of being at the Ocmulgee Association on the second Saturday and two following days in September, the third at Five Mile Creek, in your state, the fourth at the Yellow River, the first in October at our own, the Marietta, and the second at the Oconee. The meetings were all pleasant. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." We cannot dwell together in unity unless we are possessed of the spirit of unity. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou God."—Psalm xc. 1, 2. At these five Associations I enjoyed many renewed evidences of the Lord's goodness and mercy, met with at least one hundred preachers, and heard the most of them preach. They all preached salvation by grace, and grace alone; and I was made to believe that they had all been to the same school, and all taught of the same teacher. All christians may be in some sense going to school, and Christ is their teacher. "And they shall be all taught of God." He is able to teach his children everything that is necessary for them to know for their good and his glory; and surely no one will say that God, who is unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, will teach one of his children one thing, and another quite a different thing. He does not teach one pupil that he can by works of righteousness of his own secure the favor of God, and another that it is God that worketh in him to will and to do of his own good pleasure. God does not teach one that salvation is of works performed by the creature, and another that it is the grace of God that bringeth salvation. These are contradictory the one to the other. Both cannot be true; one must be false. One is learned in the school of Christ, the other in the school of men. One gives God the glory, the other man. Now the question is, Have both been to the same school? There is great discrepancy in the things learned. One knows nothing of the language of the other. The pronunciation is different; one says "shib," the other

"sib." Both are not agreed as to the time they entered school. One says he was born in school, and trained from his birth in the way he should go, and cannot recollect the time when he first learned his alphabet. The other says his first and best years were spent in wickedness, and that it was the mercy of God that led him to the school of Christ. He tells of the trials that he endured in giving up all the knowledge he had, how hard it was to learn that he was a fool, what a great cross to deny self and cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and how hard it was to unlearn. And O what a time he had in the language! It was so hard to speak it correctly, and yet the teacher would have every letter sounded. But now, since he has by experience proved that the language is pure, and that it reflects the praise, honor and glory of the teacher, how delightful it is to speak it, to sing it. The more we learn of it, the more exalted are our ideas of the teacher, and the more debased we feel; until finally we learn that we are nothing but vanity, and in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. What slow progress we make. We cry for our teacher, and search his word, with the blessed assurance that if we lack wisdom he is wisdom; for he is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and he will not let us err as long as we rely upon him. What a great change has been wrought in our minds since we have been under this teacher. We once thought there was nothing lovely in his appearance. He was to us as a root out of dry ground, and there was nothing desirable in his person. But we are now enraptured at his beauty. He is the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. We never shall be able to speak of all his glory; his words are sweet to our taste. We once thought that with a little fixing up we were good enough to enter into his presence; but when our eyes were opened we found that we were naked, and that we were so full of sores that we were not fit to be in company with any one. We even envied the beasts, which had no soul to be damned, and we could adopt the language of the poet when he says,

"O woe is me, that I was born,
Or after death have being!
Fain would I be some earthy worm,
Which has no future being.

"Or had I died when I was young,
O what would I have given!
Then might with babes my little tongue
Been praising God in heaven."

How could we stand the scrutiny of the Almighty? The thought was too painful for us. We could have fled from his presence; but if we had gone to the uttermost parts of the earth, he was there; if in the sea, or in hell, still he was there. What anguish of soul did we endure! But when it was his good pleasure, as we trust, to heal our wounds and clothe us in his righteousness, instead of wishing to be hid from his presence, we wanted to clasp him in our arms, and dwell forever in his presence, to behold his beauty.

Brother Johnson, I feel an impression to visit your bounds again, and will next fall, if the Georgia Pacific Railroad is completed, and the Lord wills. I have received many pressing invitations to visit the churches in lower Georgia and Alabama, and feel inclined to travel a good deal; but five churches have called me to serve them this year, and I am in a strait between two. One is my loving wife and children, and the other is the care of the churches. Brother Johnson, pray for me, for I feel the need of the answer of prayer. Give my love to all the brethren and sisters with you. My wife joins me in love to you all. Excuse the hasty manner in which this is written, and be sure to write me again on receipt of the same, for we are always glad to get a letter from you.

Yours in hope,

ISAAC N. MOON.

ALBANY, Mo., June 30, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I will pen for your inspection a few thoughts on the subject of brotherly love. The apostle Paul says, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another."—Rom. xii. 10. The saints in all conditions and positions in life are in need of being watchful and careful lest they enter into temptation, and be led astray by the reigning power of sin that dwells in their mortal bodies. To be ensnared in some of the many lustful desires of Satan, and to have the correcting, chastening rod administered in love by the Father of mercies, has been the sad experience of all that will live godly in Christ Jesus in all ages. Our weakness and inability to keep the law of love does not invalidate nor abrogate its claims upon us. The principle of a holy and divine life is love; and they who claim a hope in Jesus, and have named the name of Christ, ought to exhibit the love of God in departing from iniquity. In the house or church of God this bond of perfectness, or law of love, claims unconditionally of each member obedience to its holy demands. None are exempt. Those who teach, as well as those who are taught; the eye as well as the ear; the hand and the foot; all, all are commanded to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, means more, infinitely more than the carnal mind can conceive of. The truly taught of God can only faintly fathom its depths, by remembering that God is love, and that "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."—Rom. v. 8. This commendation of the love of God pre-eminently sets forth the reason why those who trust in Jesus should be kind and affectionate one to another. Subjects of the same grace, and called with the same heavenly calling, partakers of the same joys, and heirs of the same inheritance, with brotherly love, demonstrate the principle that underlies the gospel of our salvation.

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John iii. 1. Well might we be astonished in beholding the arms of mercy and love of God in Christ, which brought salvation to us poor, helpless and destitute, and chief of sinners. And does this not teach us that as God loved us even when we were yet sinners, to be kind, and to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit toward those who are the subjects of like grace and mercy? "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John iii. 16. That is, that the motive of every act of our lives, especially toward those of the household of faith, should be prompted by love. In deed and in truth does this loving apostle admonish his little children (living saints) to love, not so essential in word or tongue; but how important that its heaven-born power be felt and realized in its divine administrations in the heart and soul of God's dear children, in its full sense.

"In honor preferring one another." This is not to be done in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. O my soul, how searching is all the divine claim of mercy upon the saved, and how opposite and directly antagonistic to the elements of the carnal mind! The proud heart of man cannot realize the sweets and joys of that salvation which teaches its subjects to prefer one another.

"Did Jesus leave the realms of bliss
To save from sin and hell?
A love so wonderful as this
Calls for a glowing zeal."

Yes, did he not prefer our salvation to his suffering? Then surely in meekness and gentleness should we bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Dear brethren, I have been led to inquire, To what extent should this principle of love be manifested? I find that "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."—2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. He is to speak evil of no man, but be gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.—Titus iii. 2. In the above Scriptures we have the character of a humble minister and servant of God presented. How few of us, dear brethren, come up to its divine requirements! I speak for one. I fear that in all things I fall far short. Not only to the dear saints am I to exhibit the fruit of love, but to those that oppose themselves; to those also who are as we were, foolish, disobedient, deceived, living in malice, &c., is it required of us to show long-suffering, patience, &c.—Titus iii. 3. For my dear brethren in the ministry ought I to show preference, and be kindly affectioned toward them; not jealous, not striving for the mastery, not ruling in a vain glorious manner, but in all things be humble and child-like. Surely nothing but the love and grace of God can prepare us to live such a life; nothing but the great mercy in Christ, and the blood of the

everlasting covenant applied in all its saving power, can cleanse us from all imperfections and shortcomings, and give us rest in Jesus.

I will close for the present. I may pursue the subject further at another time, if you, dear brethren, judge it profitable; if not, all is well.

Yours in the feeblest hope,
ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

CLINTON, N. J., Dec. 31, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I inclose four dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to pay for my own and A. J. Demott's subscription for another year. I have been a reader of the paper for a number of years, and it comes to us with such precious and able communications that I cannot think of doing without it. One year ago last month I was received and baptized in the fellowship of the church at Locktown, N. J. The joy that I then felt, no tongue can express. I believe the Lord took me up out of the horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, a dozen or more years ago. But if ever a poor soul tried to get along without going forward to the church, I did. I thought the church would not receive me, or, if they should, that I would be a stumbling-block to them; so I tried to get along without offering myself to them. But when I would read, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," I would feel troubled. I would try to comfort myself by thinking that I might be one of the sheep of another fold that was to be brought in. Thus I traveled along. I would attend Old School Baptist meetings and associations, and I enjoyed them very much. I would stand and look at the dear people, and hear them address each other as brother and sister, and would think, O if I could only do the same! for I thought I loved them very much. This would make me feel so sad that I would think I would never go among them again. But when their time of meeting would come, there I would be again, and would think that I would offer myself to them at their next meeting; but I would fear that I was not a fit subject, and so staid away. The dear people were very kind to me, and I thought that they had a better opinion of me than I had of myself. Sometimes I would feel that I was wholly mistaken, and that I was deceived. Then I would not be so much troubled about myself, as about the dear people that I had deceived, and thought I would give a great deal if I had never been with them. But the Lord's ways are not our ways. I had been following this people for a long time, and the reason was that I believed them to be the only true church on earth. Our place of meeting is at Locktown, but I have attended the association at Southampton and Hopewell. They all seem to be one people. About one year before the last association at Hopewell, I thought I could not go among them again, for I felt that I was not worthy to be in their com-

pany. But my wife was a member with them, and I did not know what I should do. I had not told her of my troubles, nor did I desire to. I supposed she would want to go to the meeting, and I was in trouble. But I trust that the Lord put it into my heart, and showed me that I was not following his commandments, and the words came to me, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." This, I trust, was the Lord's work, and not man's; for I trust I had tried man, and found him to be nothing but a poor, helpless creature, and I must put all my trust in the Lord. The Lord is gracious unto his people. On Saturday before the third Sunday in December, 1882, I offered myself to the church, and they received me; but I told so little I do not know what they saw in it to satisfy them; but they felt satisfied, and on the next day I was baptized by Elder B. Bundy. When we went to the water it was frozen over, and I thought I never before saw the ice and water look so beautiful. Since that time I have enjoyed some precious privileges that I had never before. Not that I think myself any better, for I do not find that there is anything good in me. I often read the experiences of others, and feel at times as though I was mistaken. But my mind goes back to the time when I was quite young, and I look all the way along, up to the present time, and wonder why it has been thus with me. The Lord only knows. My feelings have always been so uniform that I fear I have not been born again. There was one night that I well remember. When I lay down to sleep, I was in great trouble; but when I arose in the morning, I felt as if everything was new. I felt very happy. The birds sang very sweetly, and I thought that everything was praising the Lord with me. "O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" We live by faith, and not by sight. By grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. May the God of peace and love, who made all things, watch over us, and teach us more fully to give thanks for all the blessings we receive from his bountiful hand. May you long be spared to proclaim from the walls of Zion the whole counsel of God.

Brethren Beebe, when I took my pen in hand, I only thought to write what you find at the head of this scribble; but as I have been acquainted so well with some of your folks, who have gone no more to return, I thought to write a few lines to you. If you see anything in it that you think is worthy to appear in your valuable paper, you may publish it.

Yours with much respect, and in the bond of love,

MAHLON HULSIZER.

ALEXANDRIA, Tenn., Nov. 11, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—While meditating upon the glorious doctrine of God our Savior, I thought

I would attempt for the first time to write a few lines and send them to you for publication, provided you deem them worthy a place in the columns of our much esteemed paper; if not, please cast them aside, and excuse me for trespassing upon your patience.

In Romans viii. 29, 30, we read, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." As all Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God (not the man of the world) may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work, doubtless the portion quoted above is profitable. Then let us examine the text in the light of the Spirit, for a perversion of its true meaning will never be profitable to any one.

"For whom he did foreknow." Now, to foreknow a thing is to have knowledge of it before it comes to pass, or before it exists. Then God had knowledge of his people before they had an actual existence. It was the work of God to bring them into existence; and I believe it is the work of God to save them from their sins. This is his work, and his works are all known to him from the beginning of the world. Then if he had knowledge of all his works from the beginning, certainly the work of creation, or the bringing of his people into existence, and of saving them from their sins, was included in that knowledge. I believe that God knew just as well from eternity who would be saved, as he will know at the consummation of all things. And all that he knew would be saved will be saved, and all the combined powers of opposition are not able to prevent one from being saved whom he knew would be saved; for the very ones he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Now, to predestinate is to predetermine; and as God has predestinated or predetermined that they shall be thus conformed, Paul tells us how this is done.

"Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Now, can we not very readily see how this doctrine extends to the final glorification of those whom he did foreknow? Let me say to you, dear reader, that if God did not foreknow you, you are not included in the above quotation. If he did foreknow you, he also predestinated you to be conformed to the image of his Son. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."

I know there is an objection urged against this doctrine, that it tends to licentiousness. I have heard persons say that if they believed that doctrine, they would not care what they did. But the object of God's choice was not that they should be unholy and blamable in his sight; for they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Peter says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should [do what? Commit sin and rebel against God? O no, that is not it, but] show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." God says by the mouth of the prophet, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." Now, dear reader, do you think it would cause you to rebel against God if he were to make it known to you that he had chosen you in Christ before the world was, and determined to save you according to that choice? Certainly not. But would it not cause you to love him, and desire to serve him, who has done so much for you?

I believe it is the christian's desire to serve God; but O! "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Omission of duties and commission of sins come in through the flesh, to such an alarming extent that we sometimes cry out, as did Paul, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

DAVID WAUFORD.

TOWSON, Md., June 28, 1884.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—For some time I have thought of the expression of our blessed Jesus recorded in Matthew xix. 14, which reads, "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." This expression is also recorded in Mark x. 14, and in Luke xviii. 16. There are recorded in many places in the Scriptures many expressions of our Savior when speaking of natural things, in order to draw a spiritual lesson from them. Upon this occasion Christ had been speaking about many natural things; and in order to show the condition in which the children of God are brought, he had some little children brought to him. This expression has been used very many times by the so-called preachers of the day as a motive to induce little children to come and give their hearts to Christ; but this, like all their interpretations of the Scriptures, is from the natural mind. Christ had a higher motive than the mere speaking to those children. All through the Scriptures the condition of his chosen ones is represented to be in a childlike form; and to show them more fully their utter helplessness, he used the term "little." We know that a little child is not capable of doing anything for itself. The mother may place her infant upon the floor, and it may be surrounded by the most deadly rep-

tiles, yet it is not capable of doing one thing of itself for its rescue; but when the mother comes she lifts it with her loving arms. So it is, my dear brethren, with God's dear children. They are not only described as being helpless, but as dead in trespasses and in sins. They are made alive by the quickening Spirit. Christ said upon one occasion, "Except ye become as a little child, ye can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven." O how different this is from what our natural minds desire it to be. We want to be high, and feel as if we can do something for ourselves. I know that I have as much Arminianism in me as any one, and all the fighting I can do will not subdue it. But as the children of God are composed of two natures, this warfare will continue to exist until we shall lay this body down to rest. I know with me there are many fightings without and fears within, and many doubts arise in my mind as to whether I am one of those little children. I feel at times as if I would give all I possess if I only could know and feel this. But we are saved by hope. As the poet has so beautifully said,

"O what a blessed hope is ours,
While here on-earth we stay."

This hope is an anchor of the soul; and in times of trials and afflictions it enables us to surmount them all, and to come off more than conquerors through him who hath loved us and given himself for us. The psalmist has so beautifully said, "Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." Never, my dear brethren, will we be satisfied until we shall have passed from this world unto a world of perfect bliss and happiness. But while his chosen are often in doubt and fear, there are seasons of rejoicing, because of his presence dwelling with them. "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." This gospel sound they know when they have ears to hear. If two of God's children meet as strangers, and begin to talk of the goodness of God, they fully realize the sound, and can understand each other. This is accounted for, for his children are all taught of the Lord; and as they have only the one Teacher, they must all be taught alike. But do not all his children feel as if they are little children? Well do I remember the time when the impression was made upon my mind to go and tell the church of my troubles. One of the first things that presented itself to my mind was, You are not fit to go; and you are such a poor, little creature, they will not receive you. But these words came to me,

"For if I perish, I will go,
And perish only there."

Since that time I have heard many old soldiers of Christ say that they felt to be little children. I try to take courage, and O how I hope the good Lord may continue to keep me little in my feelings; for when we begin to feel that we are great, and can do something within ourselves,

then we have lost that spirit of humility.

Brethren Beebe, you may do as you think best with this. May I be kept as humble as a little child, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
J. N. HENDERSON.

"We ought to obey God rather than men."
—Acts v. 29.

The above quotation was true when spoken by Peter and the other apostles, and is equally true now, and will remain an important truth to the close of time. How significant and full of meaning, and how applicable to the saints in all ages, are these words, "We ought to obey God rather than men." The circumstances that gave rise to their being spoken are recorded in Acts v., and are briefly stated as follows: After the burial of Ananias and Sapphira his wife, great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things. And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people, insomuch that sick folks, and those vexed with unclean spirits, were brought, and they were healed every one. But the high priest and others rose up, and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them forth, and said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Not natural life, but all the words of Jesus and his salvation. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 John v. 11, 12. Also, Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." When the apostles heard what the angel said, they entered into the temple early in the morning and taught. But the authorities sent officers to the prison to bring them, but they found them not in the prison, although all was secure. But the captain and officers brought them without violence, and the high priest asked them, "saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." Notwithstanding the good works which the Savior and his apostles did, yet the authorities and people were indignant. "Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?"—John x. 32. In all ages natural men are arrayed against the truth as it is in Jesus; they have no desire to hear all the words of this life. The apostle says, "We preach Christ crucified; unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks

foolishness." But why were the Sadducees filled with indignation? For the same reason that natural men are indignant when they hear the truth preached in our day, because of depravity. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." In the case under consideration we see the contrast. The authorities straitly charged the apostles not to teach in the name of Jesus; but the angel of the Lord said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of [Jesus] this life." "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye [the authorities] slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince [a king's son, a sovereign] and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we [the apostles] are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Here are two commands. Men say not to teach in the name of Jesus; but God says, Go, speak all the words of Jesus. The answer is, and should always be, "We ought to obey God rather than men." The apostles obeyed God, and the Holy Ghost is given to them; they are his witnesses of these things. A witness must have personal knowledge; second-hand testimony is not admissible. As the husbandman that laboreth must first be partaker of the fruits, so also the witness must have tasted that the Lord is gracious before he can testify of these things. "Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God."—Acts x. 41.

J. P. CONAWAY.

ARCADIA, Ohio, June 22, 1884.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Jan. 24, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been requested to write my experience, and it has been on my mind ever since. When I was quite small I was brought to see myself a sinner; but I was young, and I thought I would try and enjoy myself while I was young, and when I got older I would try and be good. I thought that people could be good if they tried right hard; but I was going to enjoy myself. I went to dances and in the gayest company, and seemed to enjoy myself. One night I went to a party, expecting to have a nice time. While I was there, such a gloom came over me that I felt like I had no business there. I tried to dance, but it made me feel worse. I thought if I should live to get home I would never go to another party. But this feeling soon wore off, and I would go again, and try to be gay, but could not. My companions would say, "What is the matter with you? You don't seem to enjoy yourself. You must be getting religion, or something of that sort." I kept getting worse and worse. I tried to read the Bible, but could not understand it. I tried to pray, but could say nothing but, "Lord, have mercy on me." I felt that I was too vile to

call on the name of the Lord, and if I should he would not listen to one like me. I took up the hymn book to see if I could see something to suit me, and opened to the hymn,

"O for a glance of heavenly day,
To take this stumbling stone away,
And thaw with beams of love divine,
This heart, this frozen heart of mine."

It seemed to suit me so well, for I felt that nothing on earth could save me. I felt that no one was so evil as I, but that every one was better than I. Young folks would come to see me, and I felt like I did not want them to come, for I was no company for anybody. And when they were gone, it made me feel miserable, for I thought I had said something or done something that had offended them. I continued in this way for some time. I often thought, "What was I ever born for? I felt miserable, and kept all around me miserable. I felt that if I should continue in this way, I could not live; and if I should die, I would go to torment. I saw no hope for me.

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
His righteous law approves it well."

While I was in great trouble, I dreamed that I was standing by a grapevine, and I struck a sprout, and the sap poured on my head, and covered me from head to foot. Something said, "It is the oil of righteousness," and all my strength was taken from me, and I sank to the ground, when a glorious light shone around me, and the Savior passed along. I stretched out my arms and cried, "O Lord!" and he said, "Follow me." Then I awoke, and I was weeping. I trembled with fullness of joy. O how sweet it was to think that Jesus died for me. I felt like I wanted to go and tell the neighbors what a dear Savior I had found. I told it to my mother the next morning, and she said that if I were to follow him, I would have to be baptized. I loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, especially the experiences, for there was something in them that suited me exactly; and the Bible, I could read it with much comfort, for it seemed to contain some promises for me. I often looked at the Old School Baptists, and thought, What a happy people they appear to be! I thought if I could be one of the least of them, I would be happy. I wanted to tell them my feelings, but could say nothing. At last one of the members asked me regarding my exercises of mind, and encouraged me to come before the church and tell them of my feelings. I felt that the church was too holy a place for one like me. But I could not rest. I could not stay away. I went to the church, and they kindly received me, and I was baptized the following day, the second Sunday in December last. It is a day long to be remembered by me. Everything seemed to be praising God. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I feel like I love them all; but if they knew me as I know myself, perhaps they would have nothing to do with me.

I will bring this scribble to a close, for I am afraid I will weary your pa-

tience. You may do with this as you think best. From your unworthy sister, if one at all,

ANNIE G. CURTIS.

HUNTER'S SPRING, W. Va., Dec. 8, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—While attempting to write a brief sketch of what I believe have been the Lord's dealings with me, I trust I am thankful that he has not left me with the Pharisees and hypocrites. He found me in a waste, howling wilderness, in a desert land, and led me about and instructed me, and showed me that I needed a righteousness above that of the scribes and Pharisees, with whom he found me. Like all of Adam's race, naturally, I was an Arminian, and fully believed that at my own time I could and would reform my ways, and the Lord would save me. I lived a moral life until I was twelve years old, when I thought I had better begin to call on the Lord, though I was not willing to leave off any of my former ways. I began to pray, and do great things, and felt that I was doing very well. But I soon began to find that the Lord would not accept my offering, I not being willing to give up all. I tried some of my Pharisee brethren, to see if they could help me; but the mourner's bench failed me. Yet I kept at work, and after a while felt pretty good; so good that I could defend the cause very willingly. I could combine with all the powers of darkness in warring against the saints. I thought I was better than the Primitive Baptists already. When I was sixteen years old, my mother joined the church. This did not go very well with me, but I did not say anything. When she was baptized I was humbled to tears, notwithstanding my stubbornness. Very soon after this my high looks were taken down, and then I went to work in earnest. I felt my need of something, I hardly knew what. When I tried to pray, I could not do so well as formerly, and my prayers were not answered. Sometimes I thought I would die if I was not soon relieved. I worked till I worked myself to death. I spent all my living, and got no better, but rather worse. My love for pleasure was banished some six or eight months before I was delivered, and yet no relief came to me. My mind was uneasy, my soul was bowed down, my prayer would not save me, my life was not my own, and I thought death was my portion. I lost confidence in all created things. Finally I became so bowed down that I had to give up work. I lost my appetite, so that I could not eat, and I thought death was near, even at the door. I prayed, when I could pray, "Lord, have mercy, or I perish." Finally, when all hopes were gone, the Sun of Righteousness arose. On Sunday, September 11, 1881, I received a little hope, being nineteen years of age. I was at home by myself, and was bidden to tell what I saw; but I said I would not. I thought I would not go to the church until spring; but being sorely chastened for such a thought, I was glad

to go, to find rest. On the first day of October I was received at Indian Creek Church, and on Sunday, the 2d, I was buried with my dear Lord in baptism, by Elder Houchins, in the water of Indian Creek. I have not regretted the step, though I feel unworthy, and often fear that the Lord is not my God; but I love his people. I find a warfare that often bends me low. I am sometimes on the mountain top, and sometimes in the valley of humiliation, and the latter place is where I have been for the past week. I have felt poor, and yet I cannot feel poor enough. But this I do feel, that it is love that caused me to write to you; yes, love to my Savior, for nothing but the groans of Jesus on Calvary could give me relief. And O! when he said, "Behold my wounded veins," and I saw him on the cross, I was filled with love. Not a doubt crossed my mind for some days, and at his bidding I love to tell what he has done for my poor soul.

Brethren, if you feel like placing these few words in the columns of your paper, you can do so. Perhaps some one would like to read it. Though I feel poor in my Father's house, and less than the least, I feel glad that God has not left himself without a witness in this part.

Your unworthy sister,

S. E. BROYLES.

BUTLER, Md., May 22, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The time of our association having passed, and I not being privileged to attend, I am therefore compelled to send the money by letter to the SIGNS. I inclose two dollars, which you will please credit my subscription with.

Elder Thomas came and preached for us on the third Sunday. Both his morning and afternoon sermons were most excellent, and the church at Black Rock greatly appreciated his visit here. We were enabled more clearly to discern between truth and error, between those who worship God, and those who do not, though professing to. His preaching was a crucified and risen Savior, who ever liveth to make intercession for those whose sins he bore; and he presented the power, love and mercy of this wondrous Daysman and Redeemer, to strengthen the faith and hope, as well as the admiring gratitude of the poor, helpless little band of lost and ruined sinners composing the church here. While our dear brother was talking of the preciousness of his terrible sufferings whose vision was marred more than any man's, to us he indeed was precious, and our mind was carried back to the time when he was "As a root out of dry ground, without form or comeliness." Now how changed he is! He has become the one altogether lovely. What has wrought this great change in us? Nothing but a new birth. A man must be born again to see the kingdom of God. We are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son, by this new birth. "Even

as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." These promises are many and varied, beginning in the garden to the first creature. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. We find this promise, in many different expressions, continued through all the writings of the books of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms. But when we look at the New Testament, we find the same glorious promise without the verb "shall," in the future tense, and the verb "hath," in the past tense, is used. Therefore the inheritance of heaven does not depend on these heirs of promise keeping or fulfilling the law, and their personal, individual obedience to the law. For the law could not disannul the promise made to Abraham and his seed, which is Christ. The inheritance is secured beyond the power of any created thing, the apostle assures us, so that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I have written this that you may know that though we were not enabled to attend our association, (only one member accompanying brother Chick), we had a feast at home on Sunday, through the coming of Elder Thomas, of Missouri. What great cause for gratefulness we have! Mercy is showered continually upon the children of his choice.

I remain your brother in faith and hope,

THOMAS H. SCOTT.

WARRIOR STATION, Ala., May 18, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have received your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, regularly since January 1st, 1884, which to me is a welcome messenger. It bears the tidings of the love, mercy, grace and purpose of the all-wise and all-powerful God, dealt out to his creatures here in time; even the blessings that he purposed for them in Christ Jesus before the world was. I feel under renewed obligations to God, and also to the brethren who contribute to the columns of the SIGNS, feeling that they surely are my people, children that will not lie. And I can say with one of old, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried."—Ruth i. 16, 17. These brethren and sisters speak as though here they have no abiding city, but look for one to come, whose builder and maker is God. They testify of the power being in their hearts, which is able to teach them. This world must pass away, with the fullness thereof. The time has been, and now is, with them, when

"Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers,
Have all lost their sweetness to them."

This world, with its pleasures of friends through natural affections, are but for a moment, and are vanity and vexation of spirit, and cannot be compared with the blessings, mercies, riches and honors conferred upon them by God, the eternal Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world was. I trust that these dear people who have been thus taught, have been translated from nature's night into the light and liberty of the children of God, and are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. Yours in hope,

JAMES M. BULLARD.

WAYNESVILLE, Ohio, Feb. 11, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am reminded by reading our family paper, the SIGNS, that I should send my subscription for volume fifty-two, as I cannot very well do without our family teacher; for each number comes laden with the riches of God's grace, as revealed to the dear brethren and sisters in Zion. Their communications, coming from all parts of the country, speak the same truth, as taught by the Holy Spirit to each member of the visible kingdom, or individual members of the household of faith, telling of their doubts and fears, and revealing to us that they are the children of the Most High by their experiences, as every heaven-born soul has experienced that the Lord is precious in the day of tribulation. And the editorials are comforting and instructive, and are calculated to inspire each lover of the dear Redeemer with fresh courage by the way, and to cheer them while they press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord. But while we are comforted by hearing of the welfare of the Lord's dear children, we are many times made to feel sad by hearing of the death of so many of God's chosen ones, especially those ministering brethren whom we know, and have heard so often proclaim the truth of God; such as your dear father, whom I had known to love, and also Elder Theobald, of Kentucky, whom I had met at various times at the Salem Association, of Kentucky. But such is the providence of our God, and to his will we must humbly bow, believing that our loss is their eternal gain.

Hoping that you may still continue to publish the SIGNS under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit, and to the satisfaction of the patrons, I remain yours in hope of eternal life,

ALLEN HAINES.

INFORMATION WANTED.

WILL some of the dear household please send me a printed copy of the London Confession of Faith, and also the Philadelphia Confession, or tell me where I can get them? Also, inform me where I can get Fairchild's Defense of Election.

H. M. CURRY.

SANDY HOOK, Elliott Co., Ky.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD!

"THEREFORE thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."—Amos iv. 12.

The words above quoted are often used by will-worshippers as if they were addressed to a world lying in sin; and thus distorted, they are made the basis of exciting appeals to the carnal passions of men, who are urged to do something to secure the favor of God. Especially on funeral occasions, or in times of severe sickness, this expression is referred to as giving the authority of inspiration to the false doctrine of the power of sinners to propitiate that God whose awful sentence of condemnation already rests upon all men, for that all have sinned. The error of such an application of this phrase is manifest not only from its inconsistency with the whole testimony of the Scriptures, but from the connection in which it is written in the text quoted, which is the only place in the Scriptures where the expression is found. In this verse the Lord God expressly addresses Israel, concerning whom all the words of this prophecy are declared to be recorded, as stated in the first verse of the book. The preceding context announces the terrible judgment of God against Israel, which is not suspended upon the future conduct of that people, as if they might avert it by any action of their own, or as if they had not already justly deserved all the woe denounced against them. The unalterable decree of divine condemnation is confirmed by the oath of the Lord God, as declared in verse two of this chapter. This is not a warning sent to excite their fears, so that they may appeal to the mercy of God for deliverance; but it is the declaration of that irrevocable decree which is justly passed against them, and is itself the beginning of that punishment announced in the preceding chapter. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." The visitation of judgments, as enumerated in the preceding context, had been unheeded by them; although they were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning, yet they had not returned unto the Lord in obeying that covenant which he gave them by Moses. This is the reason assigned for the desolation decreed against them, which is the visitation of God for which Israel is commanded to prepare. They could certainly make no preparation by which to avert that punishment which the Lord God had sworn by his holiness to visit upon them. His holy law which condemned them could accept no offering from their guilty hands. Their rebellion and idolatry doomed them to death. Justice could not be satisfied with any substitute. They must bear the curse of their

guilt. This is the import of the fearful summons, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." It was fully executed upon that rebellious people literally in the terrible calamity of their captivity in Babylon, when they lost their existence as a nation, and groaned in exile under the cruel tyranny of their heathen oppressors. This was their death nationally; yet after the accomplishment of the seventy years of desolation, as declared by the word of the Lord, (Jer. xxv. 8-14,) the Lord turned their captivity, and restored the remnant of his people to their own land, not for their sakes, but for his holy name's sake, which they had profaned among the heathen.—Ezekiel xxxvi. 21-36. In the literal experience of that people to whom Amos was sent to prophesy, the word of the Lord was fulfilled, and they did meet their God in the awful punishment due to their iniquities; but the more important truth for our reflection is contained in the antitypical application of the subject, for all that is recorded of the history of the natural Israel is but the shadow of the dealings of God with his spiritual Israel.

In the calling of Abram alone, and the account given of the power of faith in him leading him to believe God, which was reckoned to him for righteousness, he is presented as the father of all them that believe, not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 28, 29. In the peculiar calling which was so wonderfully effectual in his case, he is the pattern or example of every case in which the grace of God is displayed in calling sinners from the night of death to the light of life in Christ Jesus. In the history given of the patriarchs, that calling is manifest in its sovereign power by the will of God. No other calling is of God but that which bears the same seal of irresistible power as appears in every case recorded in the Scriptures. The subsequent account given of the patriarch, as well as the history of his natural posterity, portrays essentially the experience of every one who has obtained like precious faith through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ. It may seem incredible that all the rebellion, idolatry and iniquity found in the nation of Israel is but the accurate picture of what every subject of that salvation which is by grace finds in himself. But let any sinner who has a hope in Christ carefully examine himself, and there will be found the same result which Paul confessed in his own case, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."—Rom. vii. 18. The law of Christ in his kingdom is written in the heart of his people, making them willing to obey its every requirement; but they are

also troubled with a carnal mind, which is not subject to that holy law, neither indeed can be. There is consequently perpetual conflict in each one who has the mind of Christ, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that the saints cannot do the things that they would.—Gal. v. 17. Obedience to the law of the Spirit is to them life and peace; but if they live after the flesh they die.—Rom. viii. 13. This truth is expressed in the type. As the Israelites who died in their disobedience were still the fleshly children of Abraham, and could not forfeit that relationship by any transgression, even though they incurred the just sentence of death, so the spiritual children of the promise of God, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power. No act or will of their own could secure to them that unity with Christ by which his life is theirs; it is entirely by the will of God, who has made them accepted in the Beloved. That life they cannot lose by any disobedience; for it is hid with Christ in God, and they are kept by the power of God. No one who is born of God can ever cease to be a child of God; and every child is a joint heir with Christ, and must ever live with the Lord in his own infinite glory. Their eternal life is secure in the finished work of Jesus Christ. The death which they receive in disobedience to his law is the hiding of the light of his countenance in their present experience. None can know the bitterness of this death but those who love his appearing; and to all such the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give a crown of righteousness at that day.—2 Tim. iv. 8. Yet, in faithfulness he makes his children feel the chastening rod in every departure from his law. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Hebrews x. 31. This is the experience of every disobedient child; and if any can violate the perfect law of our King without receiving this fearful chastening, the evidence is that such are bastards and not sons. In the type of the legal dispensation the condemnation of the disobedient Israelite was expressed in the sentence of death, representing the severe suffering of the child of God in forsaking his law. This is expressly written in the new covenant. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."—Psa. lxxxix. 30-33.

It is not strange that those who know nothing of the perfect law of liberty should construe every expression like that under consideration as appealing to the selfish fears of the carnal mind; but those who love the Lord see a deeper and more important meaning in the message as ap-

plied to them in their individual experience. It is not the fear of future suffering which moves them to repentance and sorrow for sin. The guilty felon may regret that he must suffer the penalty of his crime, while he still cherishes the evil passion which prompted the criminal act; but the repentance which Jesus is exalted with the right hand of God to give to Israel, produces such hatred of sin that it is itself more intolerable than any penalty which could be inflicted as its consequence. In the first revelation of divine grace in the forgiveness of sin there is no pardon shown to the sinner until the exceeding sinfulness of his sin has been manifested to him; so in all the subsequent experience of the subject of grace, consciousness of the transgression of the law of the Lord is the bitterness of repentance, which is first given before forgiveness of sins is revealed. This was manifest in the case of David, (2 Samuel xii. 13); and it was after the Lord turned and looked upon Peter in his defection, causing him to go out and weep bitterly, (Luke xxii. 62,) that the special message was sent to assure him of the unchanging love of his risen Lord.—Mark xvi. 7. So, in the personal experience of every child of God, repentance is given before the forgiveness of sins is revealed. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."—2 Cor. vii. 10. Those who have known the anguish of this godly sorrow will not think the representation too strong which in the type expresses it by death, for it is indeed the very opposite of that rejoicing of the saints who are spiritually minded, which is by the apostle called life and peace.—Romans viii. 6.

The announcement of the coming of the God of Israel is indeed terrible to the disobedient child, for that coming searches the secret thoughts of the heart and exposes all the evil hidden there; but to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life is manifestly revealed in the light of the presence of God. It is his own people whom the Lord shall judge.—Hebrews x. 30. "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—2 Cor. v. 9, 10. This judgment is not in the distant future, but to the saints it is ever present. In obedience to his commands they have the answer of a good conscience toward God, and thereby they make their calling and election sure; that is, they give incontrovertible evidence to themselves in confirmation of their own calling and election of God. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."—1 John iii. 18, 19. With this assur-

ance, the fervent longing of the saints is to come and appear before God, for in his presence is fullness of joy; therefore the hope of his coming is their support under every trial. But when their transgressions have brought them to feel the hiding of his face, they are troubled, and cruel doubts destroy their peace. Then, while they feel the justice of his rod of chastening, they know there is no hope of deliverance for them but in his mercy and forgiving love; therefore they still long for his appearing, even though they can only expect his chastening rod.

The expression under consideration, taken in the connection in which it is recorded as addressed to Israel, is the declaration of the present visitation of the righteous judgment of God in consuming the vain confidence of his people and burning the dross of their self-righteousness, that they may see their own destitution and poverty, and thereby be led to trust alone in the everlasting arm of the Lord for temporal as well as eternal salvation. In accordance with this understanding, this passage is in strict harmony with the whole testimony of divine truth. So, the Lord, "to comfort all that mourn," proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God as one and the same time of his coming.—Isa. lxi. 2. And in the closing message of the faithful and true Witness to his servants he says, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." This is essentially the same with the announcement in our text; and the response dictated by the Spirit of God is ever the same, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—Rev. xxii. 20.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Ontario, Canada, to the Associations of the United States with whom we correspond, greeting in the Lord.

We have received your messengers at our annual meeting, held in Ekfrid on the 21st, 22d and 23d days of June, 1884, and desire to express our regard and fellowship for you in Jesus Christ, our adorable Lord and Savior. We are still contending for the faith as once delivered unto the saints, and hope you are doing the same, in all humility and love. We still desire the continuance of your correspondence.

WM. POLLARD, Mod.

D. T. MCCOLL, Clerk.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

MY correspondents will please address me at Plymouth, Hancock Co., Illinois, after July 1st, 1884.

JACOB CASTLEBURY.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

PURSUANT to a former arrangement, a presbytery and council met at Pryor Hill school house, Trimble Co., Ky., June 14, 1884, at ten o'clock a. m., to take into consideration the constitution of the following members into a church, to wit: Levi and Sarah Wilson, J. W. and Margaret Haltsclaw, Juda Jines, Sarah Bain, Wm. Wilson, Henry Wilson, R.

M. Johnson, Smith Craig, Frank and Isabella Jones, Mary Jines, Fannie Workman, and T. J. and Lucy Chilton.

After praise, and prayer by Elder B. F. Williams, and an able and comforting introductory sermon by Elder J. E. Newkirk,

1. Elder J. M. Demaree was elected Moderator and H. T. Pyles Clerk.

2. Names of churches and messengers enrolled as follows:

Mt. Pleasant Association—Mt. Pleasant Church—Elder J. M. Demaree.

Mt. Hope Church—Elder B. F. Williams.

Little Bethel Church—Elder Levi Short.

Providence Church—Deacon S. A. Quinley, H. T. Pyles, H. A. Pyles, George Chilton, D. T. Pyles and W. C. Sams.

Licking Association—Little Flock Church—Elder J. E. Newkirk.

3. Finding them desirous to be constituted, proceeded to examine their letters, which were found in order, and were received.

4. Examined their Articles of Faith and Rules of Decorum, which were satisfactory.

5. Prayer by Elder Levi Short, praise, and right hand of fellowship by the presbytery and council.

6. The Moderator declared them a regularly constituted church.

7. Charge by Elder Levi Short.

8. The Clerk was requested to send the proceedings to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication.

9. Adjourned. Benediction by the Moderator.

J. M. DEMAREE, Mod.

H. T. PYLES, Clerk.

At four o'clock p. m., the church of Pryor Hill met, and after praise, and prayer by Elder Levi Short, and a discourse by Elder B. F. Williams, organized by choosing Elder J. M. Demaree Moderator *pro tem*, and T. J. Chilton permanent Clerk.

Elder J. M. Demaree was unanimously chosen pastor, and the second Saturday of each month was appointed for meeting for business.

The church invites brethren and sisters, and especially ministers, to come and see them.

H. T. PYLES, Clerk.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I take this opportunity to send you the obituary of one of the oldest members of Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore City. Sister **Deborah Berryman** was born January 28, 1799, was married to John Berryman in 1821, was baptized in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church by Elder Edmund Reese, about the year 1822, and departed this life May 23, 1884, aged 85 years, 4 months and 25 days. Her home was with her daughter, Mrs. Wm. Lyons, in Baltimore, until within the last three years, which she spent mostly with Mrs. Charles Edmondson, in Washington, D. C. While at her daughter's in Washington, she was called to her home. There was no disease in her case, but just the gentle wearing away of old age, until the lamp went out. The funeral service was held at her daughter's in Baltimore, on Monday, May 26, when a large number of friends gathered to pay a testimony of regard to the memory of one whom none knew but to love. She has left one son and three daughters to grieve for the loss of a dear mother and friend.

Sister Berryman was a good and faithful christian woman. Her faith had been firm in Christ ever since her girlhood, and her life testified to the power of living grace in her heart. She had her share of trouble, but still she was cheerful under it all. Being blessed with a naturally happy disposition, she was always a favorite with all who knew her, and her presence and conversation was always desired. When with those who loved the gospel, it was her delight to talk of the grace and mercy of God, and his goodness was ever her theme. Myself and family for the past fifteen years have found in her a warm friend, always thoughtful and helpful, and we shall miss her much. The church has lost a good member from their number here below, but we are sure that for her to live was Christ, and to die was gain. May God prepare us all to live by faith, and to fall asleep in Jesus at the last, is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

ALSO,

PLEASE publish the obituary of **Mrs. Susanah Eleanor Brown**, who departed this life Monday, November 19, 1883, aged 83 years, 11 months and 17 days. Her disease was an affection of the heart, from which she suffered greatly, but with exemplary fortitude and patience, for several months before she died. Our deceased friend was of a peculiarly quiet and retired disposition, and her whole life as daughter, wife and mother, as I am informed, had been devoted to her friends and family. Her situation was such during all her life, until within the past fifteen years, that she could not often attend meetings. After I moved to Maryland I became acquainted with her and her daughter, sister Baseman, both of whom became attendants at our meetings. Our deceased friend, however, always felt her deep unworthiness too much to ever make a public profession of her hope in Christ. This hope she had been a partaker of, as she told me, for many years. I visited her several times during her last illness, and found her patient and resigned to the will of God. She disclaimed any degree of hope or trust in her own goodness, and said frequently that Jesus was all her trust. She loved to hear conversation upon the things of the Lord, although saying but little herself. She died peacefully and happily, trusting in the merit of Christ alone. She leaves one son and one daughter and a large circle of friends, but they mourn not as those who have no hope when their friends depart. They feel sure that she is at rest.

I remain your brother in hope of life eternal, through our Lord Jesus Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., June 27, 1884.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Being requested to give a notice in the SIGNS of the death of our beloved brother, **Elder L. L. Delano**, and being in possession of an obituary clipped from one of their county papers, I know of no better way to give the public appreciation of our beloved brother than to send it for publication. The delay of the obituary being sent in is providential, but since it was his request we deem it proper to send it even at this late date. Please publish this as an apology.

URIAH TRUMBO.

RIMER Ohio, June 22, 1884.

DIED—At his residence in Milton township, March —, 1880, **Luther L. Delano**, aged 47 years.

Death is no respecter of persons. We have no power to choose or say who shall be called away, but are left to miss them and fill their places as best we can. The deceased was born in Norwalk, Huron Co., Ohio, where he lived until he was four years old, when he moved with his parents to Norwich township, Huron County. He was always sickly, and at the age of sixteen went to the state of Vermont for the purpose of improving his health. He was gone one year, when he returned with health much improved. He then attended school until he was twenty years of age, when he commenced teaching. He taught his first term of school in Scipio township, Seneca Co., Ohio. He was married in May, 1855, and moved to Jackson township, Putnam County, in June, where he lived until November. He then returned to Huron Co., where he resided until the year 1864, when he moved to Wood County. He taught in all twenty terms of school, his last term in Lucas County. He made a profession of religion in 1869, and in the year 1871 was ordained to preach the gospel. Few, if any, ever attended the meetings of the church more regularly than he, and the entire community will feel deeply his loss. But no place will be so sadly missed as at home, where he was the joy of his family. They can turn in no direction that something will not remind them of him who is gone, but they are "only waiting till the shadows are a little longer grown," when they will meet their loved one in paradise.

E. W. S.

MILTON, Ohio, April 3, 1880.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—After a lapse of time I feel enabled to write and send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice

of the death of our dear little daughter, **Kittie A. Cowan**, who departed this life July 7, 1883, aged 12 years, 6 months and 13 days. The doctor said she had disease of the spine, but it seemed more like a general consumption, as she did not suffer from anything but weakness, and even that came on so gradually that she did not seem conscious of its power until the day before she died. She complained of a headache, and with simple applications she was relieved of that, and fell asleep. She slept several hours, and awoke in the arms of death. We had been treating her for spinal disease, and had done everything that human skill could do, and although she was very much spent, as she was going around we cherished a hope that she might get better. She was a very bright and intelligent child, greatly beloved by all who knew her, and she delighted in reading, especially the New Testament. For the last six months she was very patient and resigned, never murmuring or complaining. As our quarterly meeting was held on the first Sunday in June, we had Elder Lester here from Virginia. We all thought him a very able minister, and she expressed a regret at not hearing him preach, and as he was stopping at our place I asked if she would like to speak to him, thinking she might have something to say to him. I took her in and introduced her to him, but she did not say anything to him. A few evenings after that we were walking in the garden, and she said to me, "Ma, I have something I would like to tell you." I asked her what it was, and she said that one night after I had put her to bed she felt keenly how very weak she was, and all at once something seemed to say to her, "Fear not, God will take care of you," and she felt so much better. I said I felt sure he would take care of her. I asked her if she felt herself a sinner. "O yes," she said, "and now I feel like the seed sown on the thorny ground." We feel greatly crushed at our loss, but are thankful, knowing that our dear one was led so gently through the valley, and mercifully dealt with.

Yours in tribulation,

ELIZABETH COWAN.

In compliance with the request of the bereaved family, I now forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of **John A. Moore**, of Hopewell, N. J., who departed this life March 28, 1884, aged about 67 years. His sickness was of short duration, being only about ten days, but his suffering at times was very excruciating, caused by a rupture of long duration—some twenty years or more. He probably strained it, and then took cold, which seemed to immediately settle in the breach. All that skillful physicians could do to alleviate his distress was done, but there was not any permanent relief until death put an end to his mortal agony. He had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church for a long time, how many years I do not know. He had no fellowship whatever for any of the carnal theories of the present day. Particularly the popular or Arminian Baptists he had no regard for, as pertaining to their so-called religion; for he positively declared that they had no scriptural authority for the course they pursued. He has left a widow, a son and two daughters, as well as many other relatives and friends, and also the church; all of whom miss him very much, for he was a man extensively known in this section of country in matters of business; and it could be said of him strictly that he was not a "busybody in other men's matters," but attended to his own affairs.

His funeral was numerously attended March 31, and the following declarations of Scripture were used as a text: "If I wait, the grave is my house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it?"

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., June 26, 1884.

DIED—April 22, 1884, at the residence of Mrs. Phebe Davis, widow of our departed brother, Wm. Davis, near Winchester, Jefferson Co., Kansas, **Charles B. Harvey**. The subject of this notice was born December 21,

1821, in Barren Co., Ky., and moved to Kansas in December, 1864. His physicians pronounced his disease consumption in the head. He was afflicted for a long time with a sore leg, and when it healed the disease went to his head and caused his death. He never joined the church, yet he was a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine. The writer has been acquainted with him ever since he came to Kansas, twenty years ago, and never knew a better citizen. His house was always a home to the needy. Having lost his wife by death, and his family being married, he was staying at the house of Mrs. Davis at the time of his death. Just before he departed he said he had nothing here to live for. Having but little of this world's goods, he requested Mrs. Davis to see that he was decently buried, which she did at her own expense, perhaps, and requested the writer to speak on the occasion, which he did, to a large and attentive audience, from the words, "To die is gain." His remains were then laid beside his wife and daughter, to await the resurrection. The writer does not know of all the relatives, but he leaves at least one sister, one brother, two sons and a large number of friends, to mourn their loss, which is his eternal gain. May the Lord bless the bereaved, with Mrs. Davis, who was so kind to him in his affliction, with all the kind friends, is the prayer of the writer.

WM. F. JONES.

EASTON, Leavenworth Co., Kan.

DIED—On Monday morning, April 28, at her late residence in Newark, Del., **Mrs. Martha E. Rees**, wife of Mr. John R. Rees, aged about 62 years. Sister Rees had been suffering for some time with asthma, or something of that nature, and had become quite feeble. Just one week before her final departure she was taken with a chill, and from that time sank rapidly to the last. Sister Rees was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Bryn Zion, September 1, 1865, and consequently had been a member nearly nineteen years. Not long after her baptism she was married to brother Rees, of Welsh Tract, and her membership has since been with that church. The many brethren, sisters and friends who have been entertained at different times at this hospitable Baptist home during these many years, will learn with sorrow that this kind and devoted sister has been called away. Our aged brother will have the sincere sympathies of his many friends in this bereavement. Sister Rees has filled an important place in the church and in the community, adorning in every respect her profession. But our best efforts fail in attempting to render a proper tribute to the memory of those whom the Lord has called to honor and glorify him in his church, when they are taken away from us.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

DIED—Near Collin's Station, in Drew Co., Arkansas, March 28, 1884, **Mrs. Jane Rider**, daughter of our deceased sister Howard. She was afflicted for several years, and suffered much, but murmured little. She gave good evidence of having received the gift of eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, and was highly esteemed by her neighbors and acquaintances for her many amiable traits of character. She did not make an open profession of a hope in Christ, but delighted to hear him preached, the way and the truth and the life. She leaves one sister and one brother, and a few other relatives, together with many warm friends to mourn her loss. May God sanctify this bereavement to the good of those who grieve, and resign us all to his will.

A. TOMLIN.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE White Water Association of Regular Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, Wayne Co., Ind., four miles east of Hagerstown, commencing on Wednesday before the second Saturday in August (6th, 7th and 8th), 1884, continuing three days.

Those coming from the east will stop at Washington, on Tuesday, at about 10:40 a. m., and at 4:00 p. m. on the same day. Come

by the way of Richmond. Those coming from the west will stop at Hagerstown, on the same day, at 3:47 p. m. Both stations named are on the Cincinnati, Richmond & Chicago R. R. The brethren and friends will be met and cared for at both stations on Tuesday before the meeting. We give a general invitation to all who love the truth.

JAMES MARTINDALE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will hold their next session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham village, commencing on Friday, September 5, 1884, and continue three days.

By that time we hope to have our meeting house completed, and it is our desire that those who love the truth who can meet with us will come and assist us in dedicating our house to the worship of the true and living God.

H. CAMPBELL.

THE Western Association of Predestinarian Regular Baptists will hold her thirty-third annual session (the Lord willing) with Middle River Church, in Madison Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday, September 13th, and continue the two following days, being September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1884. All of our faith and order are invited.

Those coming by rail will stop at Earlham, about thirty-five miles west of Des Moines, on Friday before, where they will be met with conveyances and taken to the different places of entertainment.

ASA B. SMITH.

THE Sciota Regular Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Turkey Run Baptist Church, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1884, at ten o'clock.

Those coming from the north or northeast by railroad will come to Columbus, and take the Sciota Valley R. R. to Ashville, where they will be met and conveyed to the association Friday morning. Those coming from the east and south will come to Lancaster, Fairfield County, and take the Muskingum Valley R. R. to Amand, where they will be met on Friday morning at ten o'clock, and taken to the grounds.

G. N. TUSING.

THE Siloam Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Rock Creek Church, two miles east of Denver, North Co., Mo., on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1884, and continue the two following days. Albany, Gentry Co., is the nearest railroad town, and the brethren will be there on Friday before with teams to convey those that come by railroad. There is a daily hack line from Albany to Denver. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet and worship with us.

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

THE Mad River Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held at Rimer, Putnam Co., Ohio, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1884, and continue three days.

Those coming from the north or south to Columbus Grove will take the C., D. & St. L. R. R., and go west to Rimer Station. Those coming from the west will change cars at Delphos, and take the above road and run east to Rimer. We cordially invite all.

URIAH TRUMBO, Clerk.

THE Des Moines River Regular Old School Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1884, with the Des Moines Church, Wapello Co., Iowa.

Those coming by rail through Burlington will take the C., B. & Q. R. R. to Fairfield, and then the Rock Island R. R. to the county line. Those coming through Keokuk will take the K. & D. R. R. to Eldon. Those coming from the west through Ottumwa will take the K. & D. R. R. to Eldon, where they will be met with conveyances. The brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

ALPHEUS LINE.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to commence on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1884, and continue three days.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1884.

NO. 15.

POETRY.

CONSOLATION.

WHEN this cold world no more can lure,
Or soothe the wounded heart,
And joys that brightened youthful years,
Like pleasant dreams depart;

When those whose love we thought sincere,
Prove faithless and untrue;
And evening steals those charms away
Which morning round us threw;

When passion, pride and envy spread
Their snares around our feet,
And cheeks put on their sweetest smiles
To hide the heart's deceit;

When those whom we have loved so well,
Within their graves are laid,
And every hope in life's gay wreath
Is withered or decayed;

'Tis sweet, dear saints, to raise the eye
To him who seeps its tears;

Who marks the lowly sparrow's fall,
And knows our doubts and fears;

To him who loves forevermore
The objects of his love;
Chosen in Christ the world before,
Ordained to life above.

THE LIFE I'D LIVE.

THE life I'd live would be of faith
Upon the Son of God;
Would see a "Thus the Lord hath said,"
To guide me on the road.

The life I'd live would be to count
All earthly gain but loss;
Would every day deny myself,
And daily take the cross.

The life I'd live would be to mark
The footsteps Jesus trod;
To walk with care the narrow road
That leads the soul to God.

The life I'd live would be to seek
More earnestly his face;
Would grow in knowledge of my Lord,
And daily grow in grace.

The life I'd live would be to live
A humble, lowly life,
Far from the world's gay revelry,
And further from its strife.

The life I'd live would be the life
That's hidden in the Lord;
Dead to myself and dead to sin,
But living through his word.

THE DEATH I'D DIE.

THE death I'd die would be to die
With Jesus for my Friend;
To know that pains and doubts and fears
Had met their final end.

The death I'd die would be the death
The christian soldier dies;
In victory to yield my breath,
And soar above the skies.

The death I'd die would be to sink
Resignedly to rest;
Reclining in my Savior's arms,
My head upon his breast.

The death I'd die would be the death
Which all the righteous die;
Blest of the Lord, their labors done,
They rest with him on high.

The death I'd die, triumphantly,
With my last breath to sing,
Where is thy victory, O grave?
And where, O death, thy sting?

The death I'd die would be to have
My Savior near my bed;
To gently close my eyes, and sleep
With all the righteous dead.

WM. L. BENEDICT.
WARWICK, N. Y.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COTTAGE GROVE, Tenn., March 17, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I live at a remote distance from a great many of the correspondents of your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I have concluded to give you a brief history of a part of my life, as I feel that I have nearly filled up the measure of my days, and will soon be numbered with the dead.

I was born in North Carolina, December 31st, 1820. My parents went to west Tennessee in the fall of 1821, stopped in Carroll County two years, and then settled in Henry County, where I have been living from that time to the present, which is nearly sixty-one years. It then was a wilderness country. My father died when I was in my ninth year, leaving my mother with seven children, the first being a daughter, and I next, which was the only means for obtaining a living, with the little farm. I was hired out for four years, and the land rented for the same length of time. I then came home, and with the help of two brothers we made a living for the family. The times then were not like they are now. Everybody was a neighbor and friend.

I will now give you a short history of my experience in traveling from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God. In my twentieth year I felt somewhat condemned on account of sin, and knowing that I had to die some time in the future. The first time these things pressed heavily on my mind was at a Primitive Baptist meeting, where my eldest sister related her experience to the church, and the next day was baptized. It caused serious reflections in my mind, and I promised the Lord that I would do better, for I thought I could soon perform that work; but I soon became careless, only at times when I would go to meeting and christians would become animated, so as to rejoice in hope of eternal life. This would cause me to think of my promises. Sometimes I felt very much condemned. After a short time my younger brother professed a hope in Christ and joined the Baptist Church. The next day, when he was baptized, I was standing near the water, and these words fell into my mind, "You stand between the two, one older and the other younger. They are prepared for heaven, while you are left behind." I then promised the Lord that when I got home I would try to pray, which I did, but felt no better. Oftentimes I would feel that I was doomed to

destruction. After a short time one of my sisters, who was younger than I, was called from the walks of life; and while looking on her in death, this question passed through my mind, If it was your case, where would you be? In torment, was the answer; for I felt that I was not prepared to die. Then for about twenty-four hours it seemed that my sins were more than I was able to bear. The next day her funeral was attended at my grandfather's, who was a precious and faithful Baptist. About the close of the service I felt that I was sinking down, and would be lost forever. At that time some of my friends took me up and laid me on a bed that was in the room. I there remained for awhile, knowing nothing that passed. When I came to myself it seemed that everything was calm and beautiful, yet I had no feeling of rejoicing. My eyes then were turned toward the foot of the bed, where stood my mother in a weeping condition, and these words came into my mind, Why standest thou weeping? for all is well. At that moment my heart was full of praise to God, and the first I knew I was on my feet, in order to embrace my mother, and tell her of the goodness of the Lord. But this feeling lasted for a short time only, when it seemed to me that I had done wrong; that I had made a public profession, and was deceived. Then for three days and nights it seemed to me that I was in more trouble than I had ever been. When I tried to pray, my prayer was different; it was then, "If I am deceived, undeceive me." I desired that the Lord would show me just what I was. About three o'clock in the evening, the third day from the time I first felt a change, I went into the woods, where I thought no one would pass, and there tried to pray to the Lord for mercy, and if I was deceived, that I might see my condition just as it was. But it seemed that my prayer did not ascend higher than my head. All was dark and heavy. I started back to my plowing, and before I had gone many steps there was a glorious view presented itself, which was Jesus extended upon the cross, and it was for my sins. I was only to look and live. My soul was then filled with joy that I have never been able to tell as I desire. It seemed to me that if there had been a thousand persons present, I could show them how they could obtain salvation; it was only to look and live. But O how much I was mistaken! for this is the work of the Spirit. I will say that if ever I had a call to the ministry, it was at this time. This was in

April, 1842. On Saturday before the second Sunday in May I related the travel of my mind to the church at Walnut Fork, and they received me into their fellowship, and on Sunday I was baptized by Elder James Conyares, who was much esteemed as a faithful Primitive Baptist. I then for awhile seemed to enjoy the life and power of religion, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ. Then it came into my mind to talk of the goodness of God in a preaching way, and this caused me much trouble. These things were before me, more or less, for about fifteen years. When I would think of instructing the old, gray-headed fathers and mothers in the way of righteousness, it would cause me to abhor myself in dust and ashes. These impressions continued with me for about fifteen years. I never said anything to my brethren in regard to these things, for I was a poor reader, my opportunities having been limited, being left a poor orphan boy. I thought it would be a reproach on the cause of religion, and that I did not want to do. But my mind was still craving to tell of the goodness and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. On one occasion, while going to preaching, the subject came with such force that I said, "Lord, I know nothing to preach." The next impulse was to preach Jesus and him crucified, the way, the truth, and the life; and just before the meeting was dismissed it seemed that I could not stand it any longer. I commenced speaking. Then my mind was easy for awhile. I soon was invited into the stand, but it was with much fear and trembling that I accepted the invitation. I was ordained on the fourth Sunday in September, 1862, the association being convened with the church at Walnut Fork, where my membership has been for forty-two years this May. I have had the pastoral care of the same for several years. I am a poor, imperfect creature, all the time needing restraining grace to keep me humble and in my proper place.

Now, brethren, if you will bear with me, I want to give my views on some of the Scriptures of divine truth, though it may seem tedious to you; but bear with me, brethren, as this may be the last time, as it is the first, that you will ever hear from me, for my health is quite feeble. I will now give you a few thoughts on the subject of faith, which I hope will be some comfort to the brethren, sisters and friends who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Those who wish to search the Scriptures which I shall

dwell upon, may find them by reading the tenth and eleventh chapters of Hebrews. "Now the just shall live by faith." "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Here the true believer's mind can commence traveling, and inquiring to know the cause of this faith. Is it by works of righteousness which we have done, that we have the testimony upon which faith is predicated, or that gave rise to the hope we have, which is an anchor of the soul? I answer, No; but we receive it through the power of the Spirit of God. Therefore it causes our minds to ascend upward to the fountain of everlasting love, hoping ere long to land safely there, through the atoning blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The christian walks in the light for a short time, and then the light becomes dim, and soon he is enveloped in darkness. Then he laments, and is made to cry, "Lord, have mercy; save a soul condemned to die." Then he is made again to look out of himself, unto the Lord, for help. At first we know that we receive strength, and we rejoice in hope of eternal life. We commence living by faith, and our hope is strengthened in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the principle by which the ancient worthies received understanding, which caused them to have a holy reliance on the Lord, and which enabled them to prophesy of things that were not, as though they were present. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." We see the world as God has brought it into existence, with all its planets, the sun, moon and stars, with the different seasons, and all other created matter that is visible to the eye. And further, when we behold the laws by which they are governed, why should any one doubt the great overruling power? It is for lack of faith. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Abel had faith, which was the gift of God, and his offering was different from Cain's. It was a lamb; and by this offering blood had to be shed, and that typified the Lord Jesus in his crucified state, yet to take place in the future. I contend that this was not alone of Abel, but the Lord directed his mind thus to do. Therefore he had nothing to boast over Cain, but only in the Lord, for his goodness and mercy. Now here comes Cain with his offering, the fruit of his own hands, no doubt thinking it would be received. This was all carnal, he having no faith, and the Lord rejected it. This one instance seems to me sufficient to prove that a man's works will not give him a title to the kingdom of God's dear Son. We must have faith, and a holy reliance on the Lord for all we have, both natural and spiritual. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." It is not worth while for us to conjecture why Enoch was so wonderfully blessed, and his flesh did not see corruption; "for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

And there was a cause; it was that perfect faith which he possessed. I think he stood as a figure of Jesus, who was just and holy, and his flesh did not see corruption. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Now, we must have faith even when we first commence seeking the Lord for mercy and the pardon of our sins. We must believe that he has the power to forgive. But we had expected it would be granted on the obedience of works. O christian, did you find it in that way? I think I can answer for all, when we come to our experience. I say, No, for the Scriptures teach that if it is of works, it is no more of grace; and if it is of grace, then it is not of works. Let us praise God for his grace, which is love, mercy and favor. By this the soul is released from bondage, and is united with the favored of the Lord, and is no more a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God. This is all of their Lord. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house," to wit, eight souls. Remember, Noah was a preacher of righteousness; and so are we, if we are what we profess to be. We find Noah neither turning to the right nor to the left, but engaged in the work which the Lord gave him to do. "By the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." My brethren, is our faith strong in the Lord? Do we pray for light and understanding of the Lord? Is the welfare of the church often before us? Do we devote the leisure hours that we have in reading the Scriptures and meditating on the same? When reflecting upon our steps, and we are found wanting, are we made to cry, Lord, forgive, and lead me by thy Spirit, that I may serve thee better? I find, when I am weighed in the balance, that I am wanting. Do we return thanks for the preservation of our life, and for all God's mercies? This should be our employment; but alas! I am so often otherwise engaged. I find that when I would do good, evil is present with me. The things I would, I do not; but the things that I would not are the things I do. I feel that I can use the language of the apostle, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him

faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Here is one complete chain of faith, which enabled them to go forward and to do that which God commanded them. This is the reason why Abraham offered up his only son. Though he had others, yet this Isaac was by promise. He was not consumed, though he was placed on the altar, and the knife was drawn to strike the fatal blow. The Lord stayed his father's hand, and behold, there was a ram caught in a thicket by the horns. Abraham was told to take the ram and offer it in the place of Isaac. Now, reader, remember that Abraham had to travel with Isaac to the mount which the Lord would show him. So did we travel for days, weeks and months; but alas! we arrived, as it appeared to us, at the mount of destruction, woe and misery. But instead of that, Jesus presented himself in the thicket of our sins, and said, "Arise, and go in peace;" and there was a great calm. Then for awhile all seems to be easy, and love fills the soul. As we looked around, all things seemed to be engaged in praise unto God. We have a living faith, and God is the author and finisher of this living principle. It will land us far beyond the troubles of earth, where we shall ever be present with the Lord Jesus and the holy angels. "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." When they could no longer hide him, they took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink. Now they had done all they could do, and they left him in the hands of the Lord. Are his parents to receive praise for this? I answer, No; because the Lord was their director, and he put this into their minds. The Lord had a noble purpose in all this. The Lord by his Spirit directed the king's daughter likewise, and caused her to have compassion on the child. Also the nurse was procured, which was his mother, whose tender love and compassion were extended to him, where he could receive nourishment from his mother's breast. Thus is typified the spiritual food of the children of God, which they receive from Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all. Let us praise God's holy name for such heavenly blessings.

The time rolled on, according to the purpose of God, and Moses forsook Egypt, with all its pleasures, to engage in the work of the Lord in leading the children of Israel out of bondage. I have not space here to

speak of the great struggle they had with Pharaoh before they were delivered. If you will look for a moment how it was with you before you were delivered of your burden of sin, you can comprehend the whole matter. Remember, they (the children of Israel) came to the Red Sea, and could go no further, neither could they go back. The enemy was in the rear, and they seemed to be hedged in on either side, and it seemed that death was their portion. Dear brother or sister, you remember well when this was your condition, when you were trying to get from under the reign of sin and condemnation. You got where you could go no further, and to go back you could not, for it would be death. So, like the children of Israel, you had to stand still and see what would be the result with you. You expected it would be woe and destruction. Remember, the water was divided, and they crossed over dry shod; and their enemies essayed to do the same, and were drowned, and Israel saw them no more forever. This caused them to rejoice, and to praise God for his goodness and mercy. So, in like manner, the Lord blessed you in the pardon of your sins, and they are buried in the ocean of forgetfulness, not to rise in this world, nor in the world to come, to condemn you. When you realized this great fact, you praised the Lord for his goodness in the redemption of your soul. These are facts that are realized by all God's children. I might go on and bring many other things to bear contained in this chapter, in regard to the faith of the ancient worthies; but it would swell this article too much.

I now bring this to a close, praying that we may all meditate on the great goodness of the Lord, and be found standing at our post, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Your unworthy servant,

R. L. VEAZEY.

CHARLOTTE, Mich., Feb. 4, 1884.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—I have this evening thought I would write to you, as I agreed to do so, and tell you why I believe in "eternal union." But before I enter upon the subject of union, I thought I would say something about my experience. As I said in my first letter, after the soul is wedded to Jesus, and receives the Spirit of adoption, he remains at home for a season. But alas! he has to gird on the armor and fight his enemies. My worst enemy was unbelief, which sorely beset me. I had thought that all those enemies were slain. I had read that Christ took away the heart of stone out of my flesh, and had given me a heart of flesh. O how disappointed I was to find that the same old nature was in me, which threw me into doubts. I surely thought I was altogether deceived in the whole matter. I would dash to the right, but there I could not find him; and to the left, but he was not there; when I would go backward, he was not there; and to go forward, I could

not. O the cloud that rested over this tabernacle! But finally the cloud was lifted, and then I found Jesus; yes, he who had died for me, and rose again for my justification. Such were my trials for about three years; but it pleased the Lord to give me an antidote, after this manner. I was upon my bed one night, with my usual trouble. I suppose I was asleep. My wife and two other sisters of the church were sitting before my bed, conversing in regard to what the new heart was. I differed from them all. Then I thought I saw Jesus standing before me, and I pointed toward him, and said to the sisters, "There is my new heart." After that visit I could see more clearly between nature and grace. It had a tendency to alleviate my sufferings. But my Teacher did not leave me with that crumb from his table, for again he visited me, in another manner, more clearly than the one just spoken of. After this I became afflicted with the ague, which held me for about two years. It would relapse one hour every forty-eight hours. The day the chill was to come on, I got up in the morning, attended to my chores, and worked until the time I supposed the chill would come on. I returned to the house and sat down before the fire, waiting for the chill to return as usual. I took up the New Testament and read the latter part of Christ's gospel as recorded by Mark. I read some two or more chapters. My feelings were such that what I read seemed to me as a dead letter, until I read these words, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." When I read those four verses my feelings were changed. I felt that I had a tender heart, my tears flowed freely, and I began to shake with the ague. I went and got me to bed, and shook so hard that the bedstead clattered on the floor beneath me. All this time my mind was stayed on what I had read. I thought that surely I was not a child of grace; for if I were I could lay my hands on the sick and they would recover. While I thought on his name, and accusing myself of unbelief, there appeared to my mind something like a bright star, exceedingly bright. While I gazed upon it, I saw virtue in it, and the words of Christ to his disciples came to me, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you."—Luke xvii. 6; Matt.

xvii. 20. While wondering and beholding the power of that faith, my mind was turned to my own affliction. I was calm and composed as a child upon the breast of its mother. I arose and sat down by the fire, and I had no more sickness for three years. I did not look upon this as my faith. I see it as the fruit of the Spirit, or, in other words, "the word of faith which we preach," as saith one of the apostles; or, the faith that works by love and overcomes the world; or, the faith which the apostle exhorts us to contend for, which was once delivered to the saints. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report." Although the apostle Paul had admonished me often in this, yet I remained in ignorance. The admonition reads thus: "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach."—Rom. x. 6-8. But the greatest wonder to me is, Why should I live at so great a distance from him, more like a stranger than like a child at home in my Father's house?

"Why is my love so cold to thee,
And thine to me so great?"

"The creature was made subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." But the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the liberty of the sons of God. We groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of the body. When this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Until then I must say, "Woe is me! for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

My brother, I think I have dropped the thread of my discourse, but I will endeavor to resume it. Is it not all the same word, even the word of faith which we preach, and the word which Paul admonishes Timothy to preach? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made."—John i. 1-3. One of the prophets, speaking by inspiration, said, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." And Paul, writing to the church at Rome, says, "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a

son." I conclude that all the word spoken was that Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us. Sarah was barren, and ninety years old; but the word of promise came, and Sarah did have a son; but not until the word of promise came. To me it appears as impossible for those whom God foreknew, who are as barren spiritually as Sarah was naturally, to bear fruit. The Word must come and beget, or there never can be a spiritual birth. Abraham may be their father, but unless Sarah is their mother they are not heirs.

And now, dear brother, I have run through quite a length, but have not said anything that I purposed to. If you think it will be edifying, ere long I will endeavor to do as I agreed.

AMOS DILLIN.

BROTHER DURAND:—My mind is changed, and I have come to the conclusion that I would try to write something more of the Lord's dealings with me.

By nature we were the children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. Paul says, "Now this I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father."—Gal. iv. 1, 2. Not to make them heirs, nor yet to make them sons; "but because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your heart, crying, Abba, Father."

I will now pass over a space of about two years and six months. My lot was cast in the neighborhood of Arminians, who preached the possibility of falling from grace, and that those little ones, whom I have been striving to portray, might lose that grace and finally be lost. Those things did not move me, but I could not avoid ruminating over their fallacy; for I read that God's children are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. But while busily engaged in plowing my field, this Scripture came to my mind, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you."—Jer. iii. 14. And when this Scripture came to my mind, I felt like leaving my plow, to go and search for some of God's little ones, and tell them that God still loved them, although they felt so cold and indifferent; that this was only the trial of their faith; that God would not begin a good work in them, and then leave them to perish.

But this is not all that passed through my mind. My mind ran to the first happy pair in the garden. Paul says, "Adam was not deceived; but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression." But Adam did not put her away, and there must have been a cause. The cause appears thus: She was bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh. Paul must have had reference to this when he said, "No man ever yet hated his

own flesh," &c. "I speak concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. v. The apostle says that Adam is the figure of him that was to come; that is, Christ. And it appears to me that Eve is a figure of the church. And as Eve was in Adam before she was developed, so the church was in Christ, her Head, while he (Christ) dwelt in the bosom of his Father. Here is what Solomon says, "When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."—Prov. iii. 29-31. The wise man, Solomon, undoubtedly speaks here of Christ, who has said, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." "My Father is the husbandman."—John xv. Is it not evident that he who called himself the Vine, is the same that was made flesh and dwelt among us? If so, then were not the branches in the Vine previous to their putting forth? Now Solomon speaks after this manner, "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."—Cant. iv. 16. Then those branches are called Christ's body, and members one of another, all deriving their life from Christ, their living Head. Therefore Christ, their Head, has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Zechariah saw a golden bowl, and on either side golden pipes and olive branches. Now the apostle John says, "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."—1 John ii. 27. "Ye are taught of God to love one another." "Love is of God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." Solomon, speaking of the bride, says, "Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men." The neck is the connecting link that unites the head to the body. Now, the neck is love; and without love the body has no head. Christ is the Head of the body. Without love there can be no union, for love is union. Therefore the union is as eternal as the Head of the body. This is the word of faith which we preach.

"O land of rest! for thee I sigh;
When will the moment come,
When I shall lay my armor by,
And dwell with Christ at home?"

And now, brother Durand, the reason why I have written is, I live about sixty miles from any church, and for the space of forty-nine years have been deprived of the blessed privilege of conversing with those of like precious faith. Financially we are very limited, or we might visit our brethren by railroad conveyance; but I strive to be reconciled. If I

were a good penman, so that I could write the exercises of my mind, it would be some comfort to me; but as it is I become very lonesome. Please, brother, talk to me through our medium of correspondence. Do as you think best with this scribble. What I have written seems very unsavory to me, and if it looks to you as it does to me, certainly it will not be of any benefit. My wife joins me in love.

AMOS DILLIN.

"I AM come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—John x. 10.

Is not the person who spake these words the same one that made the promises to Abraham, saying, "I will come, and Sarah shall have a son?" He is the same personage that Nebuchadnezzar saw in the fiery furnace with the three Hebrew children, who shielded them so that the fire did them no harm. He is the same one that was with the church in the wilderness. He is the same personage that took on himself not the form of an angel, but the seed of Abraham according to the flesh. He is called the Word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. He was the one that went into the temple, and cast out buyers and sellers, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of those who sold doves. It is the same word of faith to you, my brother, and to you, my sister, whilst dead in sins; for "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." It is the same personage that said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. It was Christ in the second temple, who filled it with glory superlative to the first. Christ, in the second creation of man, lifts his head above his first state in happiness. As Adam was a pattern of all his seed, in his innocent state, and they all should have been such if sin had not changed the scene and turned the tables; so Christ is a pattern to all his seed, of that glory which they shall be clothed with.—1 John iii. 2. We are now the sons of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him: that is, our vile bodies shall be like his body, glorious.—Phil. iii. Now, by how much our nature in Christ is more glorious than it was in Adam, by so much the state of a reconciled sinner surpasseth Adam's first condition. First, the reconciled sinner has the advantage of Adam, in his union to God. Secondly, in his communion with God. First, as it is nearer. Secondly, as it is stronger. It is nearer because God and man make one person in Christ. This is such a mystery as was not heard of by Adam in all his glory. He indeed was in league of love and friendship with God, and that was the best flower in his crown; but he could lay no claim to such kindred and consanguinity as

now (with reverence be it spoken) the reconciled soul can with God. This comes in by the marriage of the divine with the human nature in the person of Christ, which personal union is the foundation of another, a mystical union, between Christ and the person of every believer. As by the union of the divine and human there is one person, so also by this mystical union the saints and their Head make one Christ. "For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ."—1 Cor. xii. 12. The church is nothing but Christ displayed. Who can speak what an advance this is to human nature. It leaves not only Adam, but also angels, beneath a reconciled sinner. In this respect Adam at first was made but a little lower than the angels; but by this union God hath set the reconciled soul more than a little above them both; for Christ by taking on him not the nature of angels, (though the more ancient and noble house), but the seed of Abraham, made the elder serve the younger. Even angels themselves minister unto the least of saints, as unto their masters.—Heb. i. 14. Secondly, As the union is nearer, so it is stronger: therefore stronger because nearer. The closer stones stand together, the stronger the building. The union between God and Adam in the first covenant was not so rear but that Adam might fall, and yet God's glory stand entire and unshaken; but the union is so close and strong between Christ and his saints, that Christ cannot be Christ without his members. "Because I live," says Christ, "ye shall live also."—John xiv. 19. Implying that their life was bound up in his. It is as easy for him to be turned out of heaven, as for them to be kept out.—Eph. i. 23. The church is called Christ's body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. A body is not full if it hath not every member and joint, though never so little, and in their fullness, too. The saint's grace is Christ's glory.—2 Cor. viii. 23. And though his essential glory, as God, receives no filling from the saints or their graces, yet consider him in his mediatorship as Head of his church. So Christ's glory is daily filling, as the elect are called in daily. And as those that are called in grow up to their appointed stature, Christ hath not his fullness until the saints have their perfection and compliment of grace in heaven's glory, in his communication with God. We say the nearer communion results from union. If the union be nearer and stronger between a reconciled soul and God than was Adam's, his communion must needs be sweeter. Why else is the love of husband and wife stronger than that of friend and friend, but because the union is closer? God conversed with Adam as a friend with his friend, but with a reconciled soul as a husband with his wife. "Thy Maker is thy husband."—Isa. liv. 5. There is in Christ a foundation laid for greater familiarity with God than Adam was at

first capable of. He indeed was the son of God by creation, yet he was kept at a farther distance, and treated with more state and majesty from God, than now the reconciled soul is; for though he was the son of God by creation, yet the Son of God was not then Son of man by incarnation. And at this door comes in the believer's sweetest familiarity with God. The christian cannot lift up now an eye of faith to God, but he sees his own nature standing upon the throne in the person of Christ. And if the sight of Joseph at Pharaoh's right hand in court favor and honor sent the patriarchs home with such joyful news to their aged father, what a ravishing message of joy must faith carry to the soul of a reconciled sinner, when it comes in after some vision of love in an ordinance, and saith, Cheer up, O my soul: I see Jesus Christ, thy near kinsman, at God's right hand in glory, to whom all power is given in heaven and earth. Fear not. He is so nigh in blood to thee that he cannot be unmindful of thee, except he should do what is unnatural in itself; that is, hide himself from his own flesh. The lower a prince stoops to the meanest of his subjects, the more familiar he makes himself to his subjects. It was a wonderful condescension in the great God, who can have no compeer, first to make a man, and then strike so friendly a league and covenant with him. This God doth with every reconciled soul; and that enriched with so many circumstances of condescending grace and needs, speaks the way of the believer's access to God more familiarly. God doth in his second and new alliance with his poor creatures descend from his throne, exchange his majestic robes of glory for the rags of man's frail flesh. He leaves his place, to live for a time with his creatures; descending from his throne, exchanges it for his creature's humble cottage, and there not only familiarly converses with him, but, what is stranger, ministers to him: yea, what is more than all these, he surrenders himself up to endure all manner of indignities from his sorry creatures' hand, and then this coarse entertainment is done. Back he goes to heaven, not to complain to his Father how he has been abused here below, and to raise heaven's power against those who had so illy entreated him, but to make ready heaven's palace for the reception of those who had abused him, and now accepted of his grace. And lest those left on earth should fear that his re-assumed royalty and majesty in heaven's glory would make some alteration with their affairs in his heart, he gives them therefore a constant demonstration that he will be the same in the height of his honor that he was in the depth of his abasement. He returns back in the same clothes he had borrowed of their nature, to wear them on the throne in all his glory. At some princely cost bestowed to put them into the fashion of that heavenly kingdom, and make them suit with his glorified state, he gave them a pattern by this of what their

vile bodies, which are now so dishonorable, shall be made at another day. Now, none of all those circumstances were found in God's first administration to Adam, and therefore the more familiarity. There is a sweetness in the pardoning mercy and the bleeding love of Christ, who by his death purchased it, to be tasted in the reconciled soul's communion with God. This sweetness Adam had not in his cup. He knew what the love of a giving God meant, but was a stranger to the mercy of a forgiving God. The reconciled soul experiences both. The love of the Father is more than an ordinary kind. It is a great comfort to a dutiful child, one that never displeased his father; but it carries no such wonder in it to our thoughts as the compassion and melting bowels of a father toward a rebellious child does. And certainly the prodigal child that is received again into his father's embrace has the advantage for loving his father more than his brother that never came under his father's displeasure. O! this pardoning mercy and the love of Christ that procured it are the most spacious and fruitful heads to enlarge his sweetest meditations upon here on earth; but who can conceive what ravishing music the glorified saints will make in running division on this sweet note. I am sure the song their hearts are tuned unto is the song of the Lamb.—Rev. xv. 2, 3. The saint's finished happiness in heaven's glory is a composition of all the rare ingredients possible, so tempered by the wise hand of God that as none could well be spared, so not the taste of any shall be lost in another; but the pardoning mercy and the stupendous love and wisdom of God, through Christ therein, shall give a sweet relish to all and be tasted above all the rest. And now, brethren; let us sing,

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

AMOS DILLIN.

CHARLOTTE, Mich., Feb. 29, 1884.

GHEAT, Ky., May 12, 1884.

BRETHREN G. BEEBE'S SONS:—The patriarch Jacob, when about to close his earthly pilgrimage, called around him his sons and blessed them, and said to Judah, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."—Gen. xlix. 10. Upon the great, important and interesting truths contained in the latter clause of this quotation, I desire this morning, with the permission of the brethren editors, to hold sweet converse with the dear saints who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

It will be observed that Judah was the son of Leah. All names anciently had a meaning, a significance, and great and important truths are sometimes made manifest to God's dear people by looking to the meaning of those names. The name Leah means "weary, tired." She was weary of the apparent neglect of her husband,

and tired of waiting for a greater manifestation of his love. Ancient Israel waited for the manifestation of God's love toward his people in sending his Son, who was the Deliverer, who was to take away iniquity from Jacob. Peter says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you." Searching what manner of time the Spirit of Christ that was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The sufferings of Christ were a manifestation of his love. That was testified by the Spirit within them before it was accomplished, and they desired to look unto these things. Yes, they desired to witness the full accomplishment of the great work of our dear Redeemer in the redemption of his people by the sufferings of Christ; but these better things were reserved for us, for those of God's people who should live in the gospel day. Solomon, when inspired from on high, said, "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." The bride had been shut up under the law, shut up through that very dark, shadowy dispensation. She had not beheld (except through prophecies, types and shadows of that dispensation) the Sun of righteousness shining with resplendent glory in the gospel heavens. She desired to look into these things. But now her husband, her spouse, said unto her, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Yes, come away from those shadows, come away from the darkness and gloom of that dispensation; come and hear the voice of the turtle, for it is heard in our land. Not in a land of bondage, not in a strange land, where spiritual Israel could not sing the songs of Zion. O no. The sweet voice of that messenger was heard in our land, in the gospel land; and that messenger proclaimed to the bride, "The winter is past."

But Leah was tired, was weary. She was not permitted to behold the glories of the ushering in of the gospel dispensation; but better things were reserved for us. Then, dear saints, how your hearts should swell with praise and thanksgiving for the exalted privilege of beholding these things. Judah was the son of Leah, and his name signifies, "Praise of the Lord." The sceptre, which signifies royal power, should not depart from him till Shiloh came, which name means "sent." Judah could no more have borne that royal power into the gospel kingdom, than Moses could have flown from the heights of Pisgah into the promised land; for "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." The blessing pronounced upon Judah was prophetic. It presents to God's people the same great, glorious and comforting assurance which we find

in the promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." How full, how replete with meaning, is that word "blessed," as it stands recorded in this quotation. The blessing there announced is declared in the words, "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." At his coming the sceptre must depart from Judah, for "a King shall reign in righteousness." We have said that the name Shiloh means "sent." It is written, "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Moses was sent by the I Am, the God of the whole earth; and the apostle says, "Moses was faithful in all his house." In speaking of our Lord he says, "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him." It was the Father who appointed him over his house, and sent him to accomplish the great work whereunto he was sent. That work was to gather unto him the people. It is written, "And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." John says, "In this was manifest the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." Here is declared the great purpose for which he was sent, "That we might live through him." Death was the common inheritance of all Adam's race. Looking to their father they had no hope; but looking to him who was sent, they had the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. For "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." His appearing in that body which was prepared him was when Shiloh should come, when the Messenger of the covenant should suddenly come to his temple, that temple spoken of by Isaiah when he said, "His train filled the temple." The word "train," as used by the prophet, means a retinue, a number of followers. The train that filled the temple was the same to which Jacob referred when he said, "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The prophet, when declaring the great work of our Redeemer, the Shiloh that was to come, says, "I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen." Then the people that were to be gathered to him were his people, his chosen. They are they of whom he spoke when he said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." No, he will not cast them out, for "in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." He is God, and changes not; therefore his love, which is one of his glorious attributes, never changes, and he will gather the objects of that love from the ends of the earth. None are able to pluck them out of the Father's hand. He

said, "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea, I have made him." Then unto him shall the gathering of the people be, for he hath redeemed them from all iniquity. Having redeemed them, he says by the mouth of the prophet, "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." When upon earth he said, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." He brings them, and feeds them upon the mountains of Israel, upon our land. When you, dear saint, are brought up to the top of those mountains, and are fed upon the sweet clusters prepared for you by your glorious Lord, it is then you cry out, "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want." Israel hungered in the wilderness, and he gave them manna from above; so every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. And you, dear saint, when you are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, are fed from above; not by the efforts of men, nor the learning of the schools of men, but by the glorious truths of the gospel. He said to Peter, "Feed my sheep." Although Peter was an illiterate fisherman, yet God had the power to enable him to feed the church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood. No higher place was ever filled by any that tread the broad plains of earth, than that filled by that blessed follower of our Lord, which was to feed, comfort and build up God's dear people by proclaiming to them the unsearchable riches of Christ. They know the joyful sound, for they have ears to hear and hearts to understand. The power to hear and the power to understand is freely given to them. The bride says, "He brought me into his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." That house was his church, his kingdom, in which a King shall reign in righteousness. Shiloh is that King, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. In that kingdom will his people be gathered by his power. The psalmist says, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauty of holiness." Yes, dear saint, when you by the power of God's regenerating grace were enabled to behold your lost, ruined and undone condition by reason of sin, your cry was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And in after life you desired, like Mary, to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn wisdom from his hallowed lips. But that people is called a peculiar people. The inquiry may arise, In what does their peculiarity

arise? To give a full answer to that inquiry is beyond the power of the feeble writer of these rambling thoughts.

"Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." This language is inspiration. In it is embraced one of God's eternal and immutable shalls; "shall the gathering of the people be." Surely all the people were not gathered unto him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This is a striking peculiarity. It draws definitely the line between those that were gathered unto him and the unbelieving world. Those that were gathered unto him were born of God, born not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever. O what a contrast! Ye children of the kingdom, ye heirs of immortal glory, shout aloud the glory of your exalted Lord and King for his matchless love, made manifest to you in calling you by his wondrous grace from darkness, gloom and death to the glorious light and liberty of the sons of God. O how your hearts swell with adoration, and your voices are attuned to sing the sweet songs of Zion, and to proclaim to all around what a dear Savior you have found. Then are you not a peculiar people, a people whose God is the Lord? And being his, you rejoice to know that unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Yea, and you rejoice when you hear it proclaimed, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." The bride says, "Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee." They are drawn, they are gathered to him by his loving-kindness. That love is as unchangeable as is his eternal throne, for God is love. The objects of that love were given unto him in the everlasting covenant of his grace, ordered in all things and sure. Then surely unto him shall the gathering of the people be. That people are the upright, for they are born of the Spirit, and enabled by that birth to see the kingdom, and to behold the King in his beauty, and to follow him whithersoever he goeth. But, dear saint, sometimes you feel that you are shut up in darkness and gloom, that you cannot see to follow him. It is then you say, with the bride, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" The Bridegroom then speaks for your comfort, and says, "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock." That flock is the people that shall be gathered unto him. But you inquire, How shall I know their foot-

steps? The answer is that they are guided in their way by infinite wisdom; for he is made unto them wisdom. "And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." In that book you find that flock described and their footsteps portrayed. They are homeward bound. They, like Abraham, look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. They are the same of whom John speaks when he says, "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." John says, "Fine linen is the righteousness of saints." White is an emblem of purity, and the horse of power. Then they were clothed with a robe of righteousness, and were borne onward in following their glorious Lord by a power not their own, a power given them. Ye "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." But while in the flesh they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. With John they can say, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." David said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." O what a glorious thought to the poor, way-worn saint, to be like their dear Redeemer, and surrounded with that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. Then unto him will the gathering of the people, that peculiar people, be, clad in the robe of righteousness wrought out by their exalted Lord and King, to bask in the sunlight of his countenance, and to bathe forever and ever in the river of redeeming love; for "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." Then unto him will the redeemed of every age and every clime be gathered, and their song will be, "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God."

Please dispose of these rambling thoughts as you may deem best, and believe me affectionately yours,

H. COX.

"How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."—Psalm lxxxiv. 1, 2.

Having recently returned to my family and my home in Platte County, Missouri, from a tour of eight weeks, walking about Zion, and going round about her, telling the towers thereof, marking well (I trust) her bulwarks, considering her palaces, and telling to the generation following, (that is, the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, which is truly "the regeneration,") "For this God is our God forever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death," I will, in response to many kind requests, write a few things pertaining to the same.

I left my family and home in Platte County, Missouri, the last day of April, attended some meetings and filled some appointments in Saline County, Missouri, then passed on to Boone County, Kentucky, and there had a pleasant interview with several precious brethren and sisters. Then I went to Georgetown, and thence to Lexington, Kentucky, to see the venerable Elder T. P. Dudley. I found the dear aged brother in fair bodily health and reasonably good spirits. Though about ninety-two years old, and literally blind, yet is he strong in the faith of the gospel he has so long preached, and clear in spiritual vision, calmly waiting in hope all the days of his appointed time, until his change comes. After this I attended a three days' meeting of the Elk Lick Church, in Scott County, Kentucky, where were gathered a goodly number of the children of the kingdom, and I trust that all were comforted together with one another by the mutual faith of each other. Thence I journeyed on to the Baltimore Association, held in Juniata Co., Pa., with Tuscarora Church. Owing to the fact that this church is isolated from her sister churches, the attendance at this association was not large, which was a source of some concern to the membership, who had hoped that more would come, that they might entertain them as welcome guests. But the enjoyment of the meeting was so great in spiritual comforts, that a brother soothed and encouraged them by the remark, in substance, that those who were not there to enjoy those sweet delights were more to be pitied than those who were made to enjoy such heavenly blessings. The journey hence was to be at a meeting with the church called Black Rock, in Maryland, at a place famous, because that a noted battle once took place there between the armies of the followers of the Lamb on the one hand, and the minions of antichrist on the other, in which they (the latter) "prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven." But the deceiver "was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Not many that were in that battle now live to tell the story; but the Lord has continued to raise up a people for his name in that place, and has never yet left himself without a witness there. Thence the journey was to the Delaware Association, held with Rock Springs Church, Lancaster Co., Pa., where a large and attentive congregation was gathered each day to attend upon the administration of the "word of the Lord," and to witness the peace and harmony that prevailed among the saints, and made their company so beautiful and glorious. After this was a most pleasant and interesting meeting with the London Tract Church, and also with the church in the city of Wilmington, Delaware. Thence we went on to the Delaware River Association, held with the Kingwood Church, Hunterdon Co., N. J., at which also there was quite a goodly gathering of the people, which we trust was a

gathering unto Shiloh, whose coming they have known, and heard the sound thereof. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." This was abundantly verified in the harmony and unanimity both of the preaching and business transactions of the meeting. The journey was hence into Bucks Co., Pa., where a meeting of much interest and enjoyment was had with the Southampton Church. From there we took our course to the Warwick Association, which was held in Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., and was a meeting full of satisfaction and comfort. The children of the kingdom here assembled were blessed to enjoy the testimony, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." Immediately after this some most refreshing and enjoyable meetings were held at New Vernon, Middletown and Warwick. We then journeyed on to attend the Chemung Association at Riker's Hollow, Steuben Co., N. Y. The saints assembled here, exhorting and encouraging one another, surely realized the fullness of spiritual blessings wherewith their heavenly Father blessed them, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," and were made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Quite a number were present to acknowledge the goodness of God, to speak of the glory of his kingdom, and to talk of his power. Thence the journey was into Canada, to meet with the Lord's chosen ones in that country in the worship of God in spirit and in truth, first in goodly congregations in Duart, and afterward in greater numbers at Ekfrid, at the quarterly meeting of the Covenanted Particular Baptist Church of Canada. Here the evidence of the rich and distinguishing grace of our God in the salvation of sinners, and the making manifest of his chosen people, was shown clearly and gloriously; how he "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," and has gathered us from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, even out of every nation, kindred and tongue, and has made us to sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; so that "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

In such glorious unity did the brotherhood in Canada fully appear to have the desire to dwell; for with them was the "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and there were the manifest effects of those gifts of him who "ascended up on high," which were "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Herein did they give evidence that they, with us, are heirs of the grace of life, and subjects of the peaceful kingdom of our God. May the peace of God rule in all our hearts, "to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." At the close of this meeting I took my leave of the last of those precious ones with whom I had met and mingled and traveled during my journeying, and sped toward my earthly home, solitary and alone; and yet I hope not alone, for the Lord by his protecting arm, and I do humbly believe also by his sustaining grace, was with me, and brought me in safety to my home and family and friends, whom I found in fair health and reasonable comfort.

Were I to undertake to give a concise history of all the particular incidents of my journey, it would be too voluminous for insertion in our family paper; and it is impossible for me to give expression of my feelings toward the brethren and sisters everywhere on my journey, for the encouragement and cheer they gave me, their tenderness and forbearance toward me, their kindness and liberality to me, and their care and consideration of me. O how I have felt melted and humbled at these demonstrations; and O how I desire to be filled with love and gratitude to God for his kindness and mercy to me, a poor servant and unworthy creature. The acts of kindness and brotherly love were so many and so universal among the brethren and sisters, that I cannot write of them all, and I cannot write of a portion without feeling that it would be invidious; so I have refrained from using names or mentioning special incidents. But they may all know that I love them, and cannot forget their care toward me. But how shall I express a thought of thankfulness and praise to God, my Redeemer, for his mercy and kindness to me? He blessed me with safety, with bodily health and strength, all the journey through; he gave his poor, unprofitable servant a door of utterance to his people; he gave him room in their hearts and favor in their eyes. "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of

the Lord." "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem." "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

Yours, I trust, in love and fellowship,

R. M. THOMAS.

NEW MARKET, Mo., July 18, 1884.

SELVIN, Ind., Jan. 27, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Having to write on business, I thought I would fulfill a promise partially made some time ago. You will find published in the SIGNS, volume li., page 198, September 1st, 1883, a portion of my christian experience, if I have any. At the close of that letter I said that probably I would write again and tell more of my trials and troubles concerning my impressions to "Go and tell it to others." Being alone this morning, and after reading brother S. H. Durand's piece, published in the last number of the SIGNS, it came into my mind to write again.

He spoke of his mind going out into city and country, and weighing, as it were, everything, and all was dark and gloomy, and there seemed to be nothing to live for. O my soul, have I not been there? This natural life has seemed to be almost unbearable. I could not think of anything that I wanted to live for, except one. I would look this way and that way, but found no rest or peace. I would think of the grave, and it seemed to have no terrors; but at this time it did not appear that I had dared to hope in the blood of Jesus as my Savior. To try to pray seemed to be a task, yes, almost mockery. Yet still I desired to get out of this state of mind. I cannot describe my feelings. You who have traveled this road, if any have, can better understand it than I can tell it. I often think, Surely there is none like me. Surely I have caught the shadow and missed the substance. I have had to grope in the dark so much that I often fear I have been deceived in the whole matter.

"Surely others do not feel what is so often felt by me; Such trials and temptations perhaps they never see; For I am the chief of sinners, I freely own with Paul; Or, if I am a christian, I am surely least of all."

O how many times I have been made to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" If I am delivered at all, it will be for what Jesus has done for me; for I have learned long since "that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." I believe the Regular or Old School Baptists are the church, the kingdom that was set up "in the days of these kings." At any rate, they hold the doctrine of the Bible, and I want them to judge my case. I feel that they are my people, and their God is my God. Where they live I want to live, where they die I

want to die, and where they are buried I want to be buried. I say I want them to judge my case; but I have not told them all I want to. It will be twenty years next June since I told them some of the exercises of my mind, and they received me into their fellowship. It may be that I deceived that good people at that time; if I did, I was deceived, and have been ever since. I do not want to act the hypocrite, if I know myself. I want to (or have to) say this, that within the past year it has very often come into my mind to go to the church and tell them to take my name from the church-book; that surely I am deceived in the whole matter, and am not fit to be among God's people. I can truly join with the poet, and say, "Can one who is a christian have such a heart as mine? Surely I never witnessed the effects of love divine."

The time has been when I did love the Lord and his people, I thought, above everything else; but now I hardly know whether I love anything or not, I seem so indifferent to everything around me. I feel like a blank, or a tinkling brass, or an empty sound. Sometimes I think I care for nobody in heaven or earth, and as little for myself. O what a miserable condition to be in! but it is as near the truth as I can tell at present. How long I shall remain in this condition I cannot tell; the Lord only knows. Or how to get out of this condition, is a question I cannot solve. An Arminian would say, Go to work, and overbalance your evil deeds by doing good works. "But how to perform that which is good I find not." "But the evil that I would not, that I do." The inquiry may arise in some minds, What brought you into this condition? Ah, dear friend, I cannot tell, unless it was by disobedience and neglect of duty. But what is really my duty, is as hard for me to settle in my own mind, as it is to know whether I have been born of the Spirit or not. The impression to "Go and tell it to others," has given me much study, and prayer to God to make known to me whether I am the man or not. Should I deny the one, I would almost be compelled to deny the work of grace in my heart, for they seem to be inseparably connected. But I am a man of unclean lips, of a stammering tongue, and slow of speech. I have tried to speak in public a few times, and have made such blunders that I was ashamed of myself, and I think all the brethren have felt ashamed for me. Of all the voices I ever have heard in public, my own has seemed to sound the worst. Although such attempts seemed to be perfect folly, yet I must confess that they gave me some ease of mind that I never realized when I would refuse to take a part in religious worship. These lines seem to be appropriate in my case,

"In all my performance how short I do fall! I am pining, I languish, and barren withal. I seem like a tree that encumbers the ground; The leaves make appearance, but no fruit is found."

To think of speaking words of com-

fort to others, and exhorting them to discharge their duty, while I cannot tell what is my own duty, and am almost ready to deny at times the reality of religion, or the evidence of Christ being formed in any the hope of glory, thinking it to be nothing but a whim of the brain, or that probably some disease of the body has affected the mind in such a way that we have become delirious, and think that it is some supernatural power that has worked us up to this point; for if there is any reality in it, surely I would not be the subject of so many doubts and fears, and surely the Lord would not leave me so long without some token of his love.

"If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?
Hardly, sure, can they be worse
Who have never heard his name."

I say, to think of teaching or comforting those who are saints in deed and in truth, while I dare not at times even call them brethren, seems almost, on my part, to be presumption. While this is sometimes the condition of my mind, yet I cannot get rid of the burden that appears to be on my mind. "Go and tell it to others," rings in my ears at times, and I cannot rest contented. I have thought many times that if I could "tell it" like this or that brother, then I would do nothing else but spend my time in telling of the goodness and mercy of the Lord, how he sent his only begotten Son into these low grounds of sorrow, to suffer, bleed and die, all for the redemption of his people, that they might live. They who had contracted a debt which they were not able to pay, being ten thousand talents in debt, and had not a farthing to pay, when justice demanded payment, or "When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." What a pleasant employment the proclamation of this would be. But while I feel to be incompetent for the work, I am sure that "God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." He can send by whom he will, and his work will prosper. If it is his will for me to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, he can unloose my tongue, and fill my mouth with such things as he would have me to say. Brethren, when it is well with you, remember poor, unworthy me at the throne of grace, that I may know my duty and discharge the same. I have written this hastily, praying the Lord to direct my mind. I do not know that I could better it if I should try.

Brethren Beebe, should you think this worthy a place in our valuable paper, please excuse bad writing and correct mistakes; and may the God of peace be with you and all his dear children, is the prayer of one of the least of all saints, if a saint at all.

Your brother in tribulation,
C. C. HEATH.

HUNTER'S SPRINGS, W. Va., Nov. 10, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—For several years I have been impressed with the thought that I should write some of the leadings of my mind, and

of what I claim to be the dealings of the Lord with me. I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for twenty years, owing to your kindness in sending it gratuitously to my afflicted brother, Ward Mann, and we tender our hearty thanks to you for your kindness.

When a boy sixteen years old, I had many thoughts concerning religion, and thought I would go about the work systematically. Each night, after laying down, I would pray; for I felt that I was not prepared to die, and that it was necessary for me to begin some good work, that I might thereby work myself into God's favor, and finally become a perfect christian. I did not suppose that I should have any doubts or fears, but thought I should know just what I was. I traveled on in that condition for a year and a half, perhaps, during which period my father united with the Primitive Baptists. While looking upon the ordinance of baptism, tears began to run down my cheeks. I had many times seen the ordinance administered, but my father going down into the watery grave caused a melancholy thought to come into my mind, which did not leave my mind very soon. I thought that my resolution to pray was not meriting anything, that I was the same sinner I had been, only that I felt it more sensibly. One night while upon my bed I had a dream. Whether I was asleep or not, I cannot tell. I thought I was in eternity and endless despair, and that God's displeasure was resting upon me. I thought there was some great work before me that had to be done, and that I had to perform, but was not able to do it. I got out of my bed, went into the room where my parents and afflicted brother slept, and with a trembling voice told my parents that I believed I should live but a short time. My whole frame did quake and tremble, and my feelings were inexpressible. We read that John wept much because no man was found worthy to open the book, neither to look thereon. I was not physically sick, for I was well the next morning. These feelings did not leave me for a long time. I told my sister that I was wrought upon very strangely. She said it was remorse of conscience, which I was not very willing to confess. I had been about as worldly minded and frolicsome as youths can be; that is, in my way. I loved to divert both old and young, and to get up excitements, mirth and fun at gatherings in the neighborhood. Swearing was seemingly my besetting sin. I felt, too, that every oath would come up against me in the day of judgment. At times I felt that I ought to try to pray, for I felt that I was going the downward road. In this way time passed along without any marked alteration, until the late war came on. I was married in the fall of 1859, and went into the army in the fall of 1861. Now right here is the singularity of my case. I lay down in my tent as usual to sleep, and in the still hours of the night I thought that some kind and gentle messenger bade me

arise from my bunk. I obeyed the call, and in a moment my mind was carried to the members of the old church that now stands, which is the Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, and especially to the ministers, that I might embrace them, and relate to them the joy that had just entered my dark and benighted soul. There was a calm. I felt light, free, and full of praise. The fire did not seem to burn as it had, but seemed to burn in praise to God. I did not retire during the remainder of the night, and the following morning the sun seemed to shine quite differently from what it had, and all nature seemed to be praising God in one grand combined strain. Being under military law, I could not have the privilege or opportunity of acting out the inclinations of my mind. The following year was one of light. My desire was to be in the company of believers in Christ, and this Scripture would present itself to my mind, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." At length I began to have doubts. I feared that I was deceived. I would repeat the words, "O Lord, have mercy on me." When the war closed I returned home to my family and friends, and Satan got the advantage of me for a short time. I was going back to my old habit of swearing, and was beaten with many stripes. On several occasions I dreamed that I was sinking down to perdition. My sins now seemed doubled, and heaped as high as the mountains' tops. For twelve years I prayed to know whether I was deceived or not. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." O if I could but know that my sins had gone before to judgment, or that I have a part in the first resurrection; for on such the second death hath no power. The Lord is mighty to condemn, and is equally mighty to save. His judgments are just. He is perfection, but I am imperfection. It was about twenty years from the time I received a hope, or claimed to have experienced a change, until I united with the church, and then I united with the Indian Creek Church of Primitive Baptists. I now desire the prayers of all God's children. We should always be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in us. Having had the misfortune to lose my voice, or nearly so, six years ago, on going before the church I could tell but little of what had been my feelings. I have tried to pen a few of the exercises of my mind, and I feel my unworthiness in doing so. I think that if I am a child of grace at all, I surely am the least; and if it is God's will that I can be the least, it will be enough.

I would say, in conclusion, to the correspondents and readers of the SIGNS, that with a few exceptions we are strangers in the flesh, but I hope and believe that we are not strangers in the Spirit. There is a familiarity

and a similarity of experience which characterizes the true worshipers of God, believing in salvation by grace, and turning away from self; for in our flesh there dwells no good thing. I often feel that my sins are greater than those of my brethren, and that they share a greater portion of God's blessings than I do. They do not seem to have so many drawbacks as I have. Whether it is because of a neglect of duty on my part or not, I cannot tell. I know we are all subject to trials, temptations and afflictions. We read of those who come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. If in this life only we have hope in God, we are of all men most miserable.

Dear brethren, you may dispose of this as you think proper. From your sincere friend, and, I hope, a brother in the Lord,

JOHN MANN.

HINDSBURG, N. Y., May 29, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR SIRS:—I have started two or three times to write some of my experience through life, but did not write it as I wanted to; for when I felt the most deeply impressed to write, I neglected to do so. I shall not be able to get things in order, as I would like.

When a little child I often would think of God, the one who made all things, and also of death. Death was a terror to me. I wanted to live always, and often thought, If I should die, what would become of me? I tried to banish the thought from my mind as much as possible; but now and then the thought came, I must some time die. This troubled me a great deal for a few years. At last, when eleven years of age, I was made to see my lost condition, and felt that I was the worst of all. This was in the summer of 1865. I often cried myself to sleep, and tried to pray in my mind, and to ask God to forgive me, for I did not dare to utter a word aloud, for fear some one might hear. I thought I was so wicked that the Lord would not hear my prayers. I felt that my sins were very great. I felt that I would willingly go through fire, and be burned, if I could only be with Jesus at last. The thought that I must forever be banished from his sight, was more than I could endure; yet I felt it would be just. In the fall I felt that the Lord had taught me a better way; and when twelve years of age I felt that my sins were all forgiven, and that I could truly say at heart, The Lord is mine, and I am his. Though at first so deeply under conviction, and all was so dark and dreary, now it was all bright sunshine. What sweet peace and comfort I then enjoyed! What love I then felt for all christian people! How I hungered and thirsted after righteousness, and to hear the gospel preached! I often felt that I did not want to hear of anything but God's goodness. Nothing but Christ and him crucified would satisfy me. Truly, was I not born again, even of the Holy Spirit? Often when reading in the Bible I could not keep from shedding tears, while reading of Christ's

crucifixion, and often wondered why it was thus. A few years after, I felt that I saw the need of this. When but thirteen years of age I often had doubts and fears. Sometimes the world looked dark before me, and I longed for the time to come when I could die and be with Christ. The fear of death had all been taken away, and I was then glad I was born to die. I would not have lived always. When fourteen years of age I thought I would never tell of the past; it should be kept to myself. But the thought came to me, You may some time be made willing to make your feelings known. I said, No. Sometimes, while doubting, I would open the Testament and read where I first cast my eyes. At one time it opened at the words, "The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak." At another time it opened at the words, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." These words seemed to relieve me for a short time; then doubts and fears began to arise in my mind, and so it has been with me ever since. Sometimes I have thought that if I were a true christian I would not have these doubts and fears, so much so as to doubt whether I ever had a hope. Then my thoughts run back to the time when I felt my sins were all forgiven, and all was peace and love. The thought came, What more do you want? The subject of religion has been on my mind almost constantly for the past eighteen years or more. I see the cross before me daily, but feel too unworthy to join the church. I feel that if I cannot live a christian life out of the church, I certainly could not live it in the church; and to see people make a profession, and not live it, seems worse than if they made none at all. I have felt that if I could go down into the water and come up out of the water with the Spirit of Christ, nothing would hinder me. I would want all to feel that they could fellowship me, and I them, in spiritual things. I fear that if I wait for this, it will be forever. Sometimes there are pieces in the SIGNS that I agree with. I believe there are children of God among other denominations, as well as among the Old School Baptists. Those who live the best lives, and true to God, seem the nearest to me, although they be strangers. Sometimes when I have felt that others have done me an injury, I have felt that I could truly say at heart, as Christ said while on the cross, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." I would say to all, when they feel that they have met with a change, and the Lord has revealed his Spirit, to obey, and not neglect their duty, as I have done. Often while looking out upon the fields, and everything appeared to be praising God, I would think, Why cannot I praise him too? It has been the prayer of my heart from a child, that the Lord would direct me in the right way. I have often been made to say, "Thy will be done." I have often felt that I would like to attend the associations.

SELECTA RHODES.

BYBERRY, PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Jan. 4, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having received and read the last number of the SIGNS for 1883, I am reminded that it is now time to renew my subscription for the coming year. I would, if it were in my power, have others subscribe for it, but I and my mother are alone in this neighborhood. There is no one here that seems to understand our language. True, they nearly all belong to some church, as they call it, and have a great zeal for outward forms. They all speak the same language, namely, salvation by works, and they give glory and honor to the works of their own hands. But what have God's children to boast over the rest of mankind? If they had been left to themselves, they never would have worshiped the true God. Flesh and blood did not reveal these things unto them, but our Father in heaven. God's dear children have many trials and afflictions while here on earth; but they have a dear Elder Brother, who loves them with an everlasting love, and no weapon formed against them shall prosper. The enemy with all his boasted power can never pluck them out of the Father's hand. The children of our God can only know each other as they are manifested to each other, by being born of the Spirit. We are taught by the Spirit of God that when these lispings tongues of ours shall be silent in the grave, then in a nobler, sweeter song we will sing his power to save. What a comfort it is to his poor, despised people, that he has all power in his hands. What should I do if I had to work myself into the favor of God? I can do nothing, for I am perfect weakness. Sometimes my hope seems so small that I am ready to give up. When grieved and tormented with the burden of our sins, with no power to deliver ourselves, how often do we desire, as Israel did, to go back into Egypt, where we received none of these plagues. How often would we go back to our condition of carnal security. But strive as we may, we never can get back. Whither shall we fly from his presence? There is no possible way of escape from the call of our God. If we take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, he is there. This I know by experience; for if ever I was made to love God and his dear people, it was against the will of the flesh. If I could have driven the Spirit from me, I would have done so. But thanks be to his name, what he does is perfect, and must stand forever.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

As you can see from the date, the above has been written some weeks; but after writing it I was taken sick, and so failed to send it. Inclosed you will find two dollars to pay for the SIGNS for the coming year. Do with this as you think best.

From your unworthy sister,
RACHEL M. OPDYKE.

TURNER'S STATION, Ky., June 18, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—In much sor-

row I take up my pen this evening to address a few lines to my kindred in Christ Jesus. I have a hope that I am one of the number for whom the Lord Jesus bled and died on the cross, but a poor, unworthy one, whom the Lord in his wisdom has afflicted in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. I am now in my sixty-seventh year, and have buried the last member of my family. But the Lord has said in his divine word, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace;" and I have found it so for forty years. But notwithstanding this, I still hope in his mercies, that he will not leave nor forsake me now, when I am old and gray-headed, but will still guide and protect me through all the trials that await me on the shores of time, and finally receive me in glory, where I may dwell in his peaceful and saving presence forever. Dear brethren Beebe, when I take a retrospective view of the last forty years of my life, and then turn to my Bible, I find myself in company with David, Jeremiah, and all the Bible saints; for I find their plaintive groans are the language of my own heart. David so often tells us for our comfort that the Lord's mercy endureth forever. After having passed through dark and trying scenes, his hope seemed to revive, and he says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." And again, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul: for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

I will trespass upon your time no further; but in conclusion, I beg an interest in the prayers of all the saints of God, that his grace may be sufficient for me. Much love to all the faithful in Christ Jesus.

CORDELIA FOREE.

GOLDENDALE, W. T., May 12, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I take my pen in hand this evening to write you a few lines on business. The Pleasant Grove Church held her meeting as usual on Saturday before the second Sunday of this month, and were all very much gratified with the meeting throughout. The preaching by Elder James A. Bullock and brother William Hess, a licentiate, was very interesting; and most of all we were pleased while attending to the business of the church. A young man by the name of Amos Horner, who with his wife and two children had traveled about seventy miles to attend this meeting, came forward when the door was opened for the reception of members, and gave a relation of the dealings of God with him, in bringing him to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. He gave a very clear and intelligent relation, so much so that the church acted at once in his reception. The ordinance of baptism was administered by Elder J. A. Bullock on Sunday morning, a goodly number of brethren, sisters and friends witnessing the solemn ceremony. We then repaired to the school-house, and listened to a very able discourse by Elder Bullock, after which the church attended to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, a very large congregation being present. It was truly an interesting meeting throughout.

JOHN T. CROOKS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

IT IS CHRIST THAT DIED.

(Romans viii. 34.)

THE great mystery of godliness can never be comprehended by finite intelligence, much less can it be reduced to a theory which may be taught by man to his fellows, like any natural science. This truth alone baffles the wisdom of this world, and exposes the foolishness of the carnal mind. The pride of man is humbled by the wonderful work of our God in the display of his grace to lost and hopeless sinners; for while this glorious mystery is hidden from the wise and prudent, it is revealed to babes. Proud reason is not able to discern that way which no fowl knoweth and the vulture's eye hath not seen, yet it is cast up, established by the power of God, as the only way of holiness for those the wayfaring men. This way is Christ Jesus, the Lord our righteousness. In the language under consideration the sinner's only hope of justification before God is expressed; for sin has brought condemnation and death upon all men. It is not a question for future judgment to determine whether any man is under this just sentence. Not only is this the testimony of the inspired record; the continual reign of death over the children of men settles beyond controversy the fact that all have sinned.—Rom. v. 12. However men may cavil against the truth of salvation from sin by the sovereign grace of God revealed alone in Jesus Christ, there is no possibility of doubting the condemnation which is already come upon all men as sinners subject to death. To those who realize this state of ruin and helplessness, the gospel of the grace of God is indeed "good tidings of great joy," for therein is revealed the only salvation which can be given to them that were lost; and all this gospel is embodied in the very name of the anointed Savior, Jesus Christ. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12.

With those who know not God, but trust their own wisdom, we have no argument, for it is manifest folly to endeavor to show them that which God has hid from them, and which they cannot receive or know.—See Matt. xi. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 14. But to those who tremblingly hope in the salvation of God, we would speak of this dear name of our dying Lord as the refuge of all who have seen their just condemnation, and felt their own works of self-righteousness to be but filthy rags. Under the painful experience of the power of sin reigning unto death in their members, they can see no prospect of deliverance from its dreadful dominion. Their prayers and groans appear but to

aggravate the terrible wretchedness of their lost condition. It is adding rebellion to their mountains of sin when their cry goes out for mercy to that holy God whose justice condemns them. He has declared that he will not justify the wicked, (Ex. xxiii. 7); how, then can the conscious sinner be made holy in his sight? Under the sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, it is not the apprehension of future punishment which distresses the quickened sinner. The bitterness of torment is that present conviction of vileness which forbids the hope of divine favor. Of this the psalmist speaks when he says, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul."—Psalm cxvi. 3, 4. Every one who has seen himself justly condemned has known this awful agony. The fear of punishment is the terror by which devils are made to tremble; but the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, is to hate evil itself. This is the difference between the fear which moves hypocrites to seek escape from the just consequence of their sins, and that love of holiness which is the fruit of the Spirit in those who are born of God; whose great trouble is that they see themselves polluted and sinful, while they hunger and thirst after that righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. The revelation of that justifying righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, brings the light of life and hope to those who dwell in the shadow of death. From the depth of despair they are raised to the joyful assurance of hope and newness of life by the manifestation to the faith of God which is given them, that "It is Christ that died." In all their sorrows, temptations and distresses, this truth brings deliverance and strength when it is taken by the Holy Spirit and shown to them as personally applying to them. It is not explained to their reason how this fact answers the demand of justice on their part; their faith receives the simple truth, and the witness of the Spirit silences all doubt and unbelief, so that with Thomas they can say, "My Lord and my God!"

Carnal reason may cavil and vainly speculate upon this glorious revelation, on which rests the only hope of every subject of salvation; but it can never be explained more clearly than in the inspired record, which sums it all up in the words of our subject. Presumptuous pride seeks to remove the mystery from this wonderful display of all the perfection of God; and to that end various theories have been devised and accepted by the wise teachers of worldly religion, some representing the death of the Redeemer to be merely a voluntary substitute for sinners, who must accept his service to make it effective. This is not that perfect Savior whose name is JESUS by divine appointment, "for [that is, because] he shall

save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21. As only a perfect and sinless man, his death could not have helped the case of a single sinner, even if such a man could have died and was willing voluntarily to stand in the place of the sinner, for justice can accept no substitute. The life of the innocent cannot satisfy the sentence which requires that "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Therefore, there is no salvation for the guilty in the death of an innocent substitute. If this had been possible, a sinless angel might have been that substitute, and the sufferings of the Son of God were needless. But it was not possible that any other being should drink that bitter cup and be buried in that awful baptism. The Man who is the fellow of the Lord of hosts, whom he made strong for himself, is he who alone could satisfy the utmost requirement of the holy law, because he is anointed with the Spirit of the Lord God for that very work.—Zech. xiii. 7; Psalm lxxx. 17; Isa. lxi. 1-3. He is the life of his body, the church elect in him; therefore he came to fulfill the law in laying down that life for them. Thus he magnified the law, and delivered his people from its demands and its curse. Without that vital unity with them by which they were baptized with him into death, they could not have been redeemed by his sacrifice of himself. It is as the Head over all to his body that he is the Anointed, that is, Christ. Hence, in this truth their complete justification is secured, "It is Christ that died."

Failing to see this vital unity by which the death of Christ is the death of all whose life he is, some have ventured upon a wild ocean of imagination, discussing such questions as, What life was it that died to satisfy the law? or, What death did our Redeemer suffer for us? The first question being a contradiction of terms in itself, is well calculated to confuse those who attempt to comprehend it. Abstractly considered, life does not and cannot die, for death is the absence of life. The life which Jesus laid down for his sheep was his own life, and his life was their life. When he laid it down, all his members were dead with him; and when Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, the prophecy was fulfilled as recorded by the word of the Lord, "Thy dead shall live; my dead body shall they arise."—See Isaiah xxvi. 19. (The supplied words in the common version are purposely omitted, as obscuring the meaning of the inspired word.) It is only in unity with his members that he could die for their iniquities and bear their sins. And as he was one with them in their death by sin, so they are one with him in his life eternal and that glory which he had with the Father before the world was, for he gives that life to them. Their only trust and hope for acceptance with God is in the truth that "It is Christ that died." Nothing short of this assurance can afford comfort and rest to the troubled saints in all their tribulation. Therefore, in love and in

mercy he has given them the abiding witness of his Spirit, which dwells in them, and helps their infirmities, making intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered; and that intercession is always effectual, for it is according to the will of God. This assurance is repeatedly felt by the disconsolate saints, when they find a groaning within, and a desire for the deliverance which can only come from God, yet they cannot utter the prayer which burdens their heart. Indeed they know their heartfelt prayer is beyond the power of language to express; but since "It is Christ that died," the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, is come, that he may abide with them forever. It is by this abiding witness that the saints are sealed unto the day of redemption. None can know this unutterable groaning within but those in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells. Every one of them, therefore, is included in his death, and in him they have satisfied every demand of justice. Of these Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. Their safe and complete defense from every charge which can be brought against them is that the law is fulfilled, in that "It is Christ that died."

Saints and angels in adoring wonder may well ask, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."—Isa. lxiii. 1. The great mystery of his name is revealed in measure in the revelation given to his people. They know it is in righteousness that he speaks even in their salvation from their sins; yet must his name be Wonderful even to the favored ones who know his love and mercy. They can testify that he saves his people from their sins, for each of them knows that he brought them up out of a horrible pit of just condemnation. Yet it must ever remain a hidden wonder how the high and lofty One, whose name is Holy, could set his great love upon sinners in whom there was nothing to merit his favor. No reason for this wonderful grace can ever be known but that which Jesus has assigned, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Thus the absolute sovereignty of the will of God is the unfathomable fountain of his love and grace, whence flows the living stream of the sure salvation of his people from their sins. This truth is included in the name as written in our subject. Without the particular election of sovereign grace there can be no Christ Jesus, which name means Anointed Savior. That "It is Christ that died," means the finished work of salvation for which he was anointed. He must die bearing the sins of his people, that justice should be satisfied. Therefore this fact is the ground of justification to every one

whose sins were laid on him. This assurance forbids the possibility of their coming into condemnation; for as he died for our offenses, he was raised again for our justification. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Heb. vii. 25. His living is the ground of their justification, since he could not have risen from the dead while justice was not fully satisfied on the part of every one whose sins were laid on him. So, he assures his followers, "Because I live, ye shall live also."—John xiv. 19. The life which he now lives is above the power of death, and this is that eternal life which he gives unto his sheep, who hear his voice and follow him.—John x. 27, 28. He reveals himself to them in this glorious and exclusive character which no other being can claim, saying unto them, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."—Rev. i. 18. This is true only of Christ that died.

This Wonderful Christ can never be seen by the natural man, therefore the reason even of the saints cannot grasp his name. Yet by faith he is manifested to every babe born of the Spirit of God. Reason may see the infinite power of God in the works of his hand in nature; even devils may feel his sovereign power in the everlasting chains of darkness by which they are controlled; the wicked may be confounded together when he makes their very enmity declare the praise of his wisdom and power; but only to his redeemed people is he revealed as the Christ who liveth and was dead. In his triumph over death they see the light of everlasting life, in which they are made to rejoice and glorify God for the unspeakable gift of his grace. To them the truth that Christ died is the end of the law for righteousness. It is by his death that they are made free from sin; and in his precious blood they are made righteous with that righteousness which is of God. This amazing display of divine love and faithfulness can never be seen but as the Comforter takes of the things of Jesus and shows unto them. But however their eyes may be holden, so that they cannot know him, he is yet their present help in every trouble. When they walk in darkness, or cry out of the depths, his hand guides their footsteps, and he hears their cry and takes them up. All their afflictions serve but to show them more clearly that "It is Christ that died." While the first manifestation of grace brought this strong assurance to comfort them, yet they must again and again learn the same great lesson; and every new discovery fills the soul with rapturous amazement that such great grace should have been bestowed upon sinful enemies of truth and holiness.

In the brief expression, "It is Christ that died," the Holy Spirit shows the whole gospel of our God;

for Christ crucified is the only way of salvation. When by faith they can receive this truth, the saints not only rejoice in the holy confidence that their final salvation is secured by that one perfect offering of our Lord, but they find in the same truth a sure refuge in present trials, enabling them to triumph over all opposition; and in the midst of the fires of tribulation they can then rejoice and give thanks to the Lord. All this is secured to them in the glorious truth, "It is Christ that died." As the elect One of God, he has borne the sins of all who are chosen in him, being in himself without sin, yet was he made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He is Christ (anointed) for this express purpose, that he should save his people from their sins; and he died for the accomplishment of that work for which he was anointed with the holy oil of the divine appointment, and sustained by the power of the holy Spirit of God. Thus the complete salvation of all the redeemed people of God for time and to eternal blessedness is expressed in the words, "It is Christ that died."

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It is with deep sorrow that I sit down to write the obituary of our beloved niece, **Mary E. Laws**, daughter of James and Sallie M. Laws. The subject of this notice died May 19, 1884, aged 21 years and 3 days. The doctor pronounced her disease typhoid fever. She was sick for several weeks with a disorder of the stomach, but was not considered dangerously ill by her physician until Sunday, the 18th, and died at eleven o'clock on Monday. She passed away very quietly and calmly, almost before we knew or thought of it. Thus it has pleased the Lord to lay his hand heavily upon us, in removing her from us, leaving an aching void that the world can never heal. But let us look to the Father of all mercies, who alone can heal the wound that her death has made. We believe that she has had "an ear to hear." She knew what gospel preaching was, from the popular preaching of the day; and if she was not taught of God, how did she learn it, or see any difference? She would contend with any of her young friends that the doctrine of election was the true doctrine of God, as revealed to his saints. I believe, from the conversation I had with her, and from her deportment while in the flesh, that she had a good hope that reached beyond this vale of tears. She did not make it public, to talk of her hope; but when we would watch her in meeting, and see the marked attention she would pay to the word as it fell like crumbs to the hungry, we believed she was fed thereby. Her mother said that it seemed to her that "Mamie" is not dead, but sleepeth. I said to one of her dear friends who was not of her faith, "I believe 'Mamie' is better off than to be with us." Her reply was, "None knew her better than I did, and I feel sure that she is at rest." But the parting was so hard, we did not feel that we could give her up at the time. When Ida was told that her sister must die, she said, "O mother, I can't live without a sister. I have gone to her for everything." So did we all look up to her, young as she was. She, with her sister, was the life and joy of her father's household. Her brothers looked to her for counsel. The whole community expressed much sympathy for the bereaved ones. Her coffin and grave were covered with floral decorations, made by loving hands. We are told to set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth. She was only loaned to us for a while, and God has taken her to himself. Elder Staton came to the funeral. It was too late for preaching, so he made some remarks at the grave, which were very comforting and consoling. He said that this affliction

was sent in mercy. I trust we may all see it so, and not murmur at what God does; for all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. She leaves many relatives and friends to mourn for her, but most of all do I pity her parents and sister, who miss her so much. May God in his infinite mercy look in tender compassion upon them. He alone can heal the wounds. The grace of God is sufficient for all his people in all their afflictions.

"Dearest Mary, thou hast left us,
Here our loss we deeply feel;
But 'tis God who hath bereft us,
He can all our sorrows heal."

CORNELIA LAWS.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I believe, with sister Laws, that the deceased had an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. I have seen her in the congregation of the saints when she seemed to feel the power of the word, which was an evidence to me that she was receiving the kingdom; for with me there must be a feeling sense of God's love and power in my soul's experience, in order to enjoy the word. Especially is it so in trying to preach that word myself. Oftentimes it only comes to me in word. I know or am satisfied of the truth of it, and can speak with some assurance for others, and sometimes, very likely, to their comfort and encouragement; but to enter into the enjoyment of it myself, I must feel the power of the word. I can heartily join in the saying of the poet, "Something must be known and felt." When I can feel the power and assurance that is so desirable, the Bible seems to be full of good texts, all full of beauty and meaning, so applicable and suitable. At other times the feeling sense is gone, and I can see nothing in any of them that I can speak about; and if some one unfolds them to me, I cannot see the beauty as before; the richness and power seems to be gone. With me, in preaching, 'tis seldom else but night; so much so that when the Sun of Righteousness shines in his word and in my heart, it always seems and looks very wonderful to me; as much so, perhaps, when others are preaching, as when I am preaching. I wonder why I had not seen some of that beauty before.

The friends of the deceased have the heartfelt sympathy of all who know them. She was an amiable, lovely girl; but she is gone, and, as we believe, to rest.

JOSEPH. L. STATON.

NEWARK, Delaware.

DIED—At Otego, N. Y., March 19, 1883, **Martin E. Bundy**, aged about 50 years. The subject of this notice was a cousin of mine. Our school days were spent together, and growing to manhood together, we were familiarly acquainted. It was about fourteen years ago that he was enabled to hope in and profess the Savior as his righteousness and salvation, and was the first one baptized here by Elder S. H. Durand, on his first visit to Otego. His mind was led very clearly into the doctrine of the Bible. Having a gracious experience of its sacred truths, he was ever ready to testify of the preciousness of his hope, which was an anchor to his soul. He was a close reader of the SIGNS up to the time of his departure, and took great delight in the spiritual lessons found therein. His only weapon of defense against the false doctrines and inventions of men was the word of the Lord, which he was enabled to use in a very effectual manner. But his warfare is ended, his conflicts are over, and with him, we firmly and solemnly believe, mortality is swallowed up of life.

He has left behind him his wife, who is a member with us, and three sons, and a large circle of relatives and friends, to feel their loss.

ALSO,

DIED—At his residence in Westmoreland, Oneida Co., N. Y., May 20, 1884, **Deacon David Bessee**, aged 71 years. Brother Bessee was afflicted in early life with chronic diarrhea, which made frequent attacks upon him, so that his health was feeble at best, and, as I learn of the friends, he followed the practice of medicine mostly through life. His last attack, which proved fatal, was men-

ingitis. He was baptized upon profession of his faith, September 11, 1867, by Elder James Bicknell, and was chosen to the office of deacon in the church of Westmoreland, February 7, 1874, which sacred place he filled to the credit of himself as a man of God and servant of the church, and to the greatest satisfaction of his brethren, by whom he was greatly beloved. It will be remembered by the readers of the SIGNS, that in a recent number was recorded the obituary of Elder Bicknell, which was written by our dear brother Bessee; but it did not get out until after his death. He leaves his dear and afflicted companion, sister Bessee, who cannot but sadly and keenly feel her great loss of departed worth, but desired to kiss the rod and bow submissively to the divine will, being a personal partaker of that rich almighty grace which cheered and sustained her beloved husband in the house of his pilgrimage. May she find in her Redeemer more than any earthly friend or helper; and while she feels that her earthly props are uncertain and insecure, may she blessedly realize that in her deep sorrow and tribulation, underneath are the everlasting arms of love. We were called by telegram to attend the funeral of brother Bessee, and also that of Elder Bicknell, but personal illness prevented our responding to either, which was deeply regretted. But I have made them one short visit since, being the first time of visiting them. Being but slightly acquainted with the circumstances in this connection, and having to depend upon given information, this is the best we can do. May God sanctify this bereavement to the good of the family and church, and though now dark to us, reflect his glory.

B. BUNDY.

OTEGO, N. Y., July 3, 1884.

BROTHER J. P. TRUEAX, fourth son of Benjamin and Ezediah Trueax, was born in Bedford County, Pa., April 27, 1800. In the year 1810 it pleased the Lord to show him his lost condition, and he was kept in the wilderness of sin until 1818, at which time he received a hope upon which he relied as an evidence that he had passed from death unto life, and which comforted him during his long and useful career, until death released him from this world of sin and woe, on the morning of the fourth Sunday in June, 1884. He received his hope at a yearly meeting, under the preaching of the late Elders Thomas Barton and Wm. Choate, at Tonoloway Church. He was called to the stand to lead in singing, and reluctantly went, fearing it was a sin, and feeling that he was the most wicked person on earth. He tried to pray the Lord to teach him the right way, and on trying to lead in the singing he became blind, and thought that God had answered his prayer. When the first two lines were sung, he never knew whether right or wrong, light seemed to burst into him, and he felt like he was in a new world. He felt that all his sins were forgiven, and thought he should never sin any more. He had a plain view of his Savior, and seemed to be caught up to the third heaven, and was filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. He started for home to tell his parents, when the question came, "What are you going to tell?" The answer was, "Sure enough, deceived again." In 1826 he moved to Kentucky, never having revealed the exercises of his mind to any one. In 1827 he joined the church at Drift Run, and was baptized by Elder Jarret Reyly. He was married to Louisa Jite in 1833, who was also a Baptist, and was ordained a deacon shortly afterwards. He was elected constable, but resigned, because he could not execute the property of the poor and needy. He was then elected justice of the peace, without his knowledge, not having been at the voting place, and was re-elected as often as he would consent to serve the people. He was chosen clerk of the church, of which he remained an honored member and a pillar until his death. Brother Trueax was one whose life is worthy to be imitated. He leaves nine children and grandchildren to mourn his departure. Truly one of the excellent ones has been called home. By his request I tried to preach at his funeral, to a large audience, from the words, "The last enemy to be destroyed is death," &c. I feel that I have lost a true friend and a safe

counsellor; but I know that God is able to supply all our needs. May he sanctify this dispensation to the good of us all.

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

CHESTER, Mason Co., Ky.

DIED—In North Berwick, Me., May 2, 1884, sister Betsey Ford, widow of brother Peter G. Ford, who died some years ago, aged 73 years, 10 months and 13 days. She had a shock, and soon passed away. I baptized her twenty-six years ago, and she has been a worthy member of our church ever since, until God took her to himself. Naturally she was one of the most pleasant women that ever lived. Her hope of salvation was by grace alone, yet she felt it a duty and a privilege to always attend her meetings whenever she could. A large number of people attended her funeral. Seventy-five horse teams were there, loaded with people, and what came on foot swelled the number to four or five hundred people. I preached on the occasion, and it was a solemn meeting. She has left five children, who feel the loss of a kind mother very much, and many relatives to mourn.

WM. QUINT.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE White Water Association of Regular Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Salem Church, Wayne Co., Ind., four miles east of Hagerstown, commencing on Wednesday before the second Saturday in August (6th, 7th and 8th), 1884, continuing three days.

Those coming from the east will stop at Washington, on Tuesday, at about 10:40 a. m., and at 4:00 p. m. on the same day. Come by the way of Richmond. Those coming from the west will stop at Hagerstown, on the same day, at 3:47 p. m. Both stations named are on the Cincinnati, Richmond & Chicago R. R. The brethren and friends will be met and cared for at both stations on Tuesday before the meeting. We give a general invitation to all who love the truth.

JAMES MARTINDALE.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will hold their next session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham village, commencing on Friday, September 5, 1884, and continue three days.

By that time we hope to have our meeting house completed, and it is our desire that those who love the truth who can meet with us will come and assist us in dedicating our house to the worship of the true and living God.

H. CAMPBELL.

THE Western Association of Predestinarian Regular Baptists will hold her thirty-third annual session (the Lord willing) with Middle River Church, in Madison Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday, September 13th, and continue the two following days, being September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1884. All of our faith and order are invited.

Those coming by rail will stop at Earlham, about thirty-five miles west of Des Moines, on Friday before, where they will be met with conveyances and taken to the different places of entertainment.

ASA B. SMITH.

THE Sciota Regular Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Turkey Run Baptist Church, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1884, at ten o'clock.

Those coming from the north or northeast by railroad will come to Columbus, and take the Sciota Valley R. R. to Ashville, where they will be met and conveyed to the association Friday morning. Those coming from the east and south will come to Lancaster, Fairfield County, and take the Muskingum Valley R. R. to Amand, where they will be met on Friday morning at ten o'clock, and taken to the grounds.

G. N. TUSING.

THE Siloam Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Rock Creek Church, two miles east of Denver, North Co., Mo., on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1884, and continue the two following days. Albany, Gentry Co., is the nearest railroad town, and the brethren will be there on Friday before with teams to convey those

that come by railroad. There is a daily hack line from Albany to Denver. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet and worship with us.

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

THE Mad River Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held at Rimer, Putnam Co., Ohio, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1884, and continue three days.

Those coming from the north or south to Columbus Grove will take the C., D. & St. L. R. R., and go west to Rimer Station. Those coming from the west will change cars at Delphos, and take the above road and run east to Rimer. We cordially invite all.

URIAH TRUMBO, Clerk.

THE Des Moines River Regular Old School Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August, 1884, with the Des Moines Church, Wapello Co., Iowa.

Those coming by rail through Burlington will take the C., B. & Q. R. R. to Fairfield, and then the Rock Island R. R. to the county line. Those coming through Keokuk will take the K. & D. R. R. to Eldon. Those coming from the west through Ottumwa will take the K. & D. R. R. to Eldon, where they will be met with conveyances. The brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

ALPHEUS LINE.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to commence on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1884, and continue three days.

Those coming to the meeting from a distance by railroad will be met at Washington or Alexandria in time to take the train on Tuesday, on the Washington & Ohio R. R., leaving Alexandria about 9:00 a. m., for Leesburg. A train from Washington connects with the above named train. Conveyances will be at the depot to take the friends to places of entertainment. An invitation to brethren and lovers of the truth is heartily extended to meet with us.

J. N. BADGER.

THE Greenville Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will convene on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1884, with the Refuge Church, in Allen Co., Ohio.

Those coming on the Chicago & Atlantic R. R., or on the Toledo, Delphos & St. Louis R. R., will stop at Spencerville, where they will be met by the brethren. A general invitation is extended to all who love the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. B. BRES.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Conference will commence on Friday, August 29th, 1884, at 10:30 a. m., in North Berwick, Maine, and continue three days. All are invited to meet with us who have a willing mind to do so. There will be teams at North Berwick depot, the day before the meeting, to take those who come to the place of the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Mercer's Run Church, Greene Co., Ohio, on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1884, at 10:00 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

Those coming on the cars will come to Xenia, Ohio, where they will be met on Thursday evening and Friday morning, and conveyed to places of entertainment and to the meeting.

Those coming by private conveyance from the north and west will call on brethren Edward Ferguson and Edward Davis. Those coming from the south and east will call on brethren Daniel Oglesbee and Wm. Miller.

We extend a general invitation to all lovers of the truth, and especially to brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

ALLEN HAINES.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association will meet, if the Lord will, with the Cane Run Church, near Turner's Station, Ky., on Friday before the first Saturday in September, (5th), 1884.

Those coming from Louisville or Cincinnati by rail, will be met at Turner's Station, and cared for.

N. A. HUMSTON.

THE Salem Association of Regular Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Little Hope Church, Owen Co., Ky., 1 1/2 miles south of Glencoe, commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Saturday in August, 1884, continuing three days.

Brethren and sisters desiring to be with us are cordially invited to come to Glencoe, where they will be met with conveyances and taken to the grounds.

Those coming by public conveyance will leave Cincinnati on the Louisville & Nashville R. R., on Tuesday evening at 3:50, or Wednesday morning at 8:22 for Glencoe. Those coming from Louisville will take the Cincinnati train for the same station.

J. H. WALLINGFORD, Pastor.

THE Tallahassee Association will be held with the church at Chewala meeting house, in Marshall Co., Miss., ten miles southeast from Holly Springs, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1884, and continue the two following days.

Brethren are invited to meet with us, and especially brethren in the ministry.

S. A. WELLS, Mod.

J. S. SINGLETON, Clerk.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet with Harmony Church, in Peoria County, Ill., twenty-five miles west of Peoria, on Wednesday before the second Sunday in September, 1884.

Those coming by railroad will stop at Elmwood, on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy R. R., running from Peoria to Galesburg. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Big Spring Association will be held with the Pleasant Grove Church, in Coles Co., Ill., about six miles southwest of Mattoon, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1884, at 10:30 a. m.

All coming by rail from the east, north or south will stop at Mattoon. Those coming from the west will stop at Gase, six miles west of Mattoon, where there will be teams to convey them to places of entertainment.

ISAAC TAYLOR.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas will be held with the Little Hope Church, two miles north of Tonganoxie, Leavenworth Co., Kansas, beginning on Friday before the last Saturday in September, 1884.

Those coming by rail will stop at Tonganoxie, where they will be met by friends and cared for. We give a general invitation to all who love the truth.

T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.

THE Lieking Association of Particular Baptists will hold her next annual session with the Mt. Gilead Church, the Baptist Church at May's Lick, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1884, and continue three days.

Those coming by public conveyance will take the train for Maysville, at Lexington, at about 5:00 o'clock on Thursday evening, or Friday morning at 6:00 o'clock, for Helena Station. Those coming via Cincinnati will cross the river to Covington, and take the Kentucky Central, via Paris, at about 2:30 o'clock, for Helena, where conveyances will be in waiting. Those coming by private conveyance will come to May's Lick, and inquire for Frank Laythan, Mrs. Arzubia Laythan, or Anthony Laythan. May's Lick is on the Maysville and Lexington turnpike road, twelve miles from the former place.

We have the promise of several ministering brethren from both east and west, among whom are Elders Beebe, Durand, Smoot, Purington, White and Weaver. Brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited.

J. H. WALLINGFORD, Pastor.

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1884.

NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CLAYTON, Texas, July, 1884.

MR. WM. J. PURINGTON—DEAR BROTHER AND FATHER IN ISRAEL:—Seeing from your writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that God has blessed you with light and understanding to explain the written word of truth, I will ask you to give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on the subject matter contained in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, in answer to the questions propounded to the Master in the third verse of said chapter. What bothers me is the time referred to as the end of the world, and of "thy coming." It appears to me that the final end of time and the Master's second coming, when time shall be no longer, are meant or referred to; but the thirty-fourth verse of said chapter contradicts that idea, if I understand it. Now I desire that you explain what part of the chapter refers to the temporal destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, and what part refers to the end of time; and what day and hour are alluded to in the thirty-sixth verse of the same chapter.

J. R. GARRET.

REPLY.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—It is with peculiar sensations that I comply with your request concerning the awfully momentous subjects presented in the chapter to which you have called my attention, because some of our most talented brethren have differed concerning the true meaning of Christ's reply to the disciples at that time and upon that occasion. What I am about to write concerning those questions and answers will be simply as I understand the same, with no desire to force an interpretation to please or displease any who may read the remarks, if they are printed. In the written Scriptures there is no tautology, no verbosity, but a wonderful depth of meaning in the fewest possible number of words that can be used to set forth the wisdom, power and majesty of Jehovah; and in many places in the written Scriptures there seems to be abruptness in the change from one subject to another, but we may rest assured that such an arrangement in the record is right, and that there is no contradiction in Scripture testimony, but we finite mortals sometimes may think so. Now an attempt will be made to set forth something concerning your request.

The term "end" probably has more different significations than any other one word in the Bible, and it is translated into English from about fifty different original words, and each one has its specific or definite meaning and use, such as the end of the day, the end of a stream or river, the end of a dispensation, the end of mortal life, &c.; but in the chapter now under consideration it is a finality. In a communication like this it would not be beneficial to quote much from the original words to show its differ-

ent meanings, as it would make the article too lengthy by so doing, therefore the quotations will only be made here to show its true meaning. In these places it is from *sunteleia*, full end. When it speaks of them who endure unto the end, it is *telos*, ending a struggle, &c. So much as to terms; but now to the testimony of Scripture. The terrible denunciations of our God against those leading Jews had been set forth in the preceding chapter, in which those so-called ecclesiastics had been called hypocrites seven times and once vipers, which was exposing their character with withering plainness, and the judgments of God were pronounced against them for their unfaithfulness, and their certain destruction as a nation drew near; and it would seem that the dear Redeemer had closed his last public discourse, so to speak, by a passionate lamentation over Jerusalem and a solemn farewell to that temple, and he said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Awful indeed! but neither heeded nor believed by that ungodly people. The third verse in the chapter that our brother particularly refers to reads, "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what (shall be) the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" In Mark and in Luke the record concerning the same terrible destruction is clearly pointed out, but some different words are used, and perhaps more pointed and decisive; but all three of the writers harmonize. It is evident that the disciples, when they questioned the dear Redeemer concerning the momentous affair, combined two things, viz., the destruction of the temple and the end of the world; but they received just the answer that our God in his wisdom saw fit to give. It should distinctly be borne in mind that then those disciples were under the legal dispensation, and as yet did not understand that the kingdom of our Redeemer under the gospel dispensation and in the gospel day was not to be continued "only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed (on them) until the time of reformation." Neither was that kingdom to come "with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Jesus said unto the woman of Samaria, (Hebrew *Shomeron*, his prison, his watch, &c., showing that the woman, as such, was still shut up in prison under the legal dispensation,) "The true worshipers shall worship

the Father in spirit and in truth." The circumstance is of great importance, for it is said in the same chapter, preceding the talk with the woman, "And he [Jesus] must needs go through Samaria," that city on a hill of eminence in Ephraim, and the then capital of the ten tribes of Israel, who had separated themselves, and did not return to their true allegiance to the God of Israel; and the city was about forty-two miles north of Jerusalem, yet Jesus must go through there to fulfill the purpose of his Father.

Now we will return to the inquiring disciples, and we shall distinctly see that Jesus answered them in perfect harmony with his Father's will; and upon another occasion he said, while tabernacling on earth in the flesh, "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." What an important lesson do these words of Christ teach all lovers of the truth. Nothing can be known by any child of God through the glorious Days-man any faster nor any more full than it is God's will to make it known. Mark names four of the disciples; for in the thirteenth chapter it reads, "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" If we read that entire chapter, the awful warnings and the terrible scenes connected with that destruction are expressed in declarations of grave importance to those dear disciples; and one verse, the twentieth, says, "Except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days." If the historian tells the truth, the siege was shortened very much, and ended sooner than Titus and other Romans expected. Our dear Lord takes his own way to answer their questions; and, as already stated, they doubtless combined both the literal destruction, pertaining to the Jews, and the end of the world. The disciples were told to "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew contains declarations in perfect harmony with what is recorded by Mark and Luke concerning that destruction; and in Matthew the Savior said to them, "Verily I say unto you, This generation [of the Jews] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall

pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

Now, my dear brother, we may rest assured that there is no contradiction in any of the statements, but divine harmony, whether we finite mortals can see it or not. But as it regards the end of the present state, or existence of things as they now are, very little is recorded concerning it, except the ominous signs and portentous events now transpiring, such as setting aside the New Testament by carnal religious teachers, as the Jews did the ritual given them of God prior to their destruction; and the abominations now to be seen in our world are certainly strong indications that the final end of this state of things, and the end of the Mediator's reign, is drawing near. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." In the same chapter from which this quotation is made, immediately preceding it are some wonderful declarations made. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then (cometh) the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." The end spoken of here is from *telos*, and it shows a finality; and it is not simply the end of the legal dispensation and the rituals pertaining thereto, but the end of his intercession, and therefore the end of this state of things. But of the day and hour the angels in heaven know not, any more than they did of the destruction of the Jews as a nation; but it will be exactly according to God's appointed time. The wisdom of the learned of this world has investigated certain things, and has set the time upon certain fixed principles when time should be no more; but it has been just as wide of the truth as those false christs were of being the true Messiah. For vain mortals to attempt to explain what God has not revealed to the angels, is the height of daring presumption. Of our Lord's incarnation it is recorded, "But now once in the end [*sunteleia*, full end of that dispensation] of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The apostle says, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are

come." Here we have recorded the fact that the ends of the world came upon the apostles, that is, all things pertaining to that legal dispensation, and from the same word, *telos*, full end; therefore the apostle was prepared to say by inspiration of God, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath (days): which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." These declarations of the inspired apostle show why the ends of the (not a world) world are come, that the first or legal covenant had been removed, therefore ended; and he positively commands his brethren, saying, "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using." These quotations and remarks have been made in order to show according to Scripture some of the meanings of the term "end."

Now, my brother, we will revert again directly to your questions. It is evident that whatever the disciples had in view in the questions, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and the end of the world?" the answers of Jesus, recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke, "centred" in the terrible calamities connected with the destruction of that "beautiful" temple and their overthrow as a nation; for at the time our Savior was held a prisoner by the infuriated Jews and angry Romans, Pilate could avail nothing toward releasing Christ, for "Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children." That terrible imprecation surely came upon them, for during the siege more than one million of them perished; not all by the Roman sword, but by their own hands, and also within their own city, Jerusalem, thousands were slain; for the vials of God's wrath were poured out upon them, and truly the sun of their national glory set in a "sea of blood." Of the day and hour they were not told, but the ominous signs should be given, some of which we will now notice. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." Here we can readily see that as they were to flee into the mountains, it did not mean the end of the material creation, but the end of time with them as a nation; and the historian Josephus, though a Pharisee, admits that some took warning and did flee, and were not involved in that terrible scene. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;" but he does not tell them

of the day nor the hour. "For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Why were they compared to a carcass? Because God's protection was withdrawn from them, and their house was left desolate; and truly it was fulfilled, for on the Roman banners was the picture of the eagle, the bird of prey. My soul, be still and wonder! the purpose of your God will be carried out even to the time and place, when and where the sorrow shall fall. But, child, it is enough for you to know it when it takes place; for "The secret things belong unto" me, the Lord your God, "but those things which are revealed belong unto" my children, to all my sons and daughters, that they may do all my commandments. "For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave within thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Much more Scripture proof might be given concerning the signs and wonders connected with that time of calamity, when the vengeance of God Almighty would be visited upon that ungodly nation.

Now, my brother, concerning the other question in your letter, that is, the final end of time, the day and hour has not been revealed to any mortal, for that secret is with Jehovah; but are there not portentous events and wonderful signs among the nations, to clearly indicate that the final coming of our Lord draws near? Now the New Testament record is treated by the carnal religious teachers with as much or more indifference than the Jews did the laws given them by our God before their destruction, and, with a few exceptions, the Scriptures are not virtually, but openly ignored. The God-honoring, soul-cheering, heart-warming doctrine of eternal, personal, unconditional election of the church before time began is denounced as abominable, and should not be proclaimed; and carnal teachers despise and denounce the glorious truth of the Scriptures, which declare that redemption is absolutely efficacious, and carries salvation to all for whom it was made; and that the Bible knows nothing about an atonement where persons are not concerned. The result of such teaching seems to be that nearly all restraint is taken off from a large portion of professed religionists. All sorts of crime are fearfully on the increase; and it is advocated that all the punishment men will finally receive will be the death of their bodies. The love of money has taken such a hold upon men, that the widow and orphan do receive no compassion at their hands, when the advantage can be taken so as to obtain their hard-earned substance. Another fearful omen is the sickly condition of many of our organized churches; for there is such an indifference to their gospel privi-

leges, such a lukewarmness, that in some cases words about like the following are used: If I spend my time to go and hear him preach, he is shown enough respect in my doing that. Now these painful things are seen and known by some, for they clearly discover a want of love to God, his truth, his children, the ordinances of the church and the well-being of Zion. Can it now justly be said concerning true worship, "The burden of Dumah, [Hebrew, silence]. He calleth to me out of Seir, [Hebrew, wooded, or rough,] Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" In the New Testament the declarations pointing out this time are positive. So far as it regards our own dissolution, our God has not told us the day and hour, but the apostle Peter said, "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." May the following words be remembered by the writer of this communication, and all who love the truth of the gospel: "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

Affectionately your brother in hope,
WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 31, 1884.

LUDLOW, Ky., July 21, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Here with I send you the experience of our beloved sister, Ruth A. Pocock, which I have read with interest and comfort. It shows plainly the way in which our God leads about and instructs his beloved ones, and keeps them as the apple of his eye. I think it is worthy a place in your valuable paper, but submit it to your better judgment. Sister Pocock is one who takes very much interest in the cause of truth, and is much beloved by the brethren and sisters generally.

Dear brethren, we would be much pleased to meet you, and many more of the brethren in the ministry, at our association (the Indian Creek), which meets on Friday before the third Sunday in September. I believe I express the mind of the brethren when I say that it would afford us pleasure to meet and entertain you as the sent servants of our God, sent to declare his truth. We hope to see you and brethren Wilson Housel, A. B. Francis, and all others who can come.

Yours as ever, in fellowship,

L. BAVIS.

BETHANY, Butler Co., Ohio.

DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time it has been on my mind to write a short account of the dealings of the Lord with me. I often fear that I am destitute of the knowledge of the dear Savior, and my hope seems so small that at times I almost sink down in despair, and wonder how the God of heaven can bear with such a vile sinner as I am. But the God of heaven will speak peace to his children in every time of need. Without the grace of our heavenly Father we

are nothing. It is through the grace of God that we are what we are, and not by anything that we have done for ourselves. O how thankful we ought to be for such great blessings as are bestowed upon us, poor worms of the dust.

In my youth I often thought I would get religion and become a christian, and settle my mind sure and steadfast. I thought I must be faithful and seek after righteousness, not knowing that the Lord had anything to do with me. At times I was almost frightened to death at the thought of dying. It was a dreadful thought to me that I must die. But then I would think I would have religion when I was old, and would be happy, and would serve God. But I thought no one should know anything about this matter but myself, for I had power to take up religion, and power to lay it by; that it was with me to do or not to do, just as I pleased. One day I heard my dear parents talking on the subject of religion, and I thought that then was my time to ask some questions. My parents often conversed with each other on the Scriptures. I said, "O well, father, I cannot see why we cannot get religion at any time." I shall never forget my father's looks and his kind reply. He said, "O daughter, you are of little faith, and you know nothing of what you are talking." Then my dear mother replied, "Yes, child, time will bring forth everything, and sinners to repentance." My parents were great readers of the Bible, and took great delight in it. O! that word "repentance" was dreadful to me. "Time will bring forth everything, and sinners to repentance." Well, I came to the conclusion that if the dear Lord would keep me, I would still seek after righteousness, for I felt that I must have religion to make me happy. Finally I began to halt between two opinions. I thought I was young, and had plenty of pastime with my young comrades, attending parties, &c., and religion was all a notion, I thought. In September, 1838, there was preaching at Fairfield Church by Elder Flint. I was then in the twenty-fifth year of my age. My parents told me that I must remain at home and keep the house; but as soon as they had left, I asked my brother if he would keep the house, and he said he would. I felt anxious to hear the preaching as well as my dear parents. But, my dear friends, I did not hear any preaching that day. O that dreadful disobedience of mine! I reached the place of meeting as soon as my parents did, but did not look around me, as I felt so condemned at seeing my parents. My sister told me that I must go home, but I did not. I thought I had conquered my father, mother and sister, for the first time in my life. I remained away until night. When I returned home I expected to hear from my parents, but not one word was uttered by them. O! I was beaten with many stripes for that day's disobedience to my parents. Then I thought I would

still glide along until I should become settled in life, which was in February, 1839. I thought that then I would have more time to seek the Lord. I was honest in all this, still thinking that I had all power to become a good christian. I would go around singing all the day long, but pray I could not. I was so ashamed that I could not utter a single word, not even, "Lord, have mercy on my poor soul." O what a poor, sinful creature I was! too unworthy to live in the world among God's dear people. At last I found myself in despair. I thought, O for the knowledge of the truth, to give me comfort! In February, 1843, or about that time, one Sunday evening, while I was singing, these words came into my mind,

"He dies, the Friend of sinners dies!
Lo, Salem's daughters weep around;
A sudden trembling shakes the ground,
A solemn darkness veils the skies."

While I was singing, at the close of this verse the dear Savior appeared to me. His garments appeared white as snow. O the precious Savior! he seemed to come down by my side, in all the brightness of his glory. This was the first time that I had really seen myself as a sinner, and then for the first time I tried to pray. Everything that I had ever done, from the earliest part of my life, was before me. I saw that I had sinned against the great God of heaven and earth. Every crime that I had ever committed, and all the ill will that I had ever held against old or young, was before me in the blackest form. Then I tried to pray, but cannot tell what I said except, "Dear Lord, have mercy on my poor soul." My dear friends, then was the first time that I ever loved the Old Baptist brethren and sisters. Before that time I had felt rather indifferent, for I thought I had all power in my own hands to will and to do. I did not even read the Bible for instruction, but ran headlong in my own conceit. Satan and pride had run away with my wicked heart, until I was completely conquered by the dear Savior. Then came the change. I was melted to tears, to think that I had been so wicked and vile all my life. I wept with a loud voice, and said, "O Lord, have mercy on me, for I have sinned against thy great and holy name." I tried to plead at the mercy seat of heaven, in my weak way, for my burden was very great. I was completely weighed down with grief and sorrow. Nothing appeared bright, but all was dark and gloomy. My burden was so great that it almost sunk me down to the ground. I was ashamed of my evil conduct, ashamed in the presence of the dear Lord, and ashamed to have my dear husband see me. I thought I would keep quiet when my dear companion came in from feeding his stock, but my sad looks terrified him very much, and he made a great many inquiries as to what had happened to me, and asked me if he had hurt my feelings. These dreadful feelings lasted several days and nights, and I could neither eat nor sleep during that time. I felt as if the merciful God had forsaken me,

and that I was lost forever and ever. Then the awful burden of sin seemed to leave me for about four weeks, and I could sing a new song.

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed."

Then I thought my sins were all gone, and I could say, Halleluia to thy holy name. Then I felt that I could give thanks to the great and merciful God above all things in the world. But O! when doubts and fears began to return, it was a dreadful shock to poor me. Then I cried, "Dear Lord, be merciful to me, a poor, unworthy sinner." I thought a true christian would be happy, and have nothing to mar his peace. But alas! I soon found myself mistaken. Then I thought I was deceived. Sometimes I would be exalted, and "on eagles wings would fly," and then, in a moment, I would sink in despair, thinking I was deceived. I was then made to wonder why it was thus with me. Often I would long for my burden of sin to come back again. Sometimes I would feel sorry that I had gone to meeting, and would wish myself at home. Sometimes I would hear a word of comfort, and then I would feel glad that I had gone to meeting. Time ran on in this way with me for thirty-one years. Then my husband was taken sick, and for five years was not able at times either to dress or undress himself. I prayed for his health to be restored, but all in vain; my prayers could not be answered. "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Reuben Pocock was born June 7, 1807, and died September 20, 1876. O what sad and lonesome hours I have passed since the death of my dear husband! I had thought I could give him up cheerfully, until death called him away. His conversation during all his sickness was about his dear Savior, and of his desire to be with him. When the neighbors and friends would be called away by death, he would say, "O why not poor me?" At last I told my dear companion that perhaps it was wrong to complain of the dear Lord's will, and he never after complained of his sickness or troubles. I believe he is happy and at rest with his dear Savior.

Well, my dear brethren, June 1, 1878, was a day that will long be remembered by me, for by the help of the good Lord I was enabled to unite with the Old School Baptist Church, under the pastoral care of Elder Levi Bavis. I feel that I am unworthy to be among the dear brethren and sisters, whom I esteem highly, above all others. When the beautiful Sunday morning came, after I had offered myself to the church, I felt so little and imperfect that I almost wished myself away from the church. I told the dear brother, when we were coming up out of the water, that for thirty-six long years I had longed to

see the water move for this cause. I always felt that baptism was one of the great commandments, and for us to disobey it is not right. Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

And now, dear brethren, I submit this to you. I read the letters of many dear brethren and sisters in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which are a great comfort to me. I have taken your valuable paper about nine years, and esteem it highly, above all other papers.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,
RUTH ANN POCOCK.

JULY 10, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I am not a regular contributor to the SIGNS, but since reading the article on the first page of number thirteen, volume fifty-two, I thought I would like to submit a few thoughts for you to dispose of as you think best. I desire briefly to show wherein I differ in understanding the subject.

The application is certainly clear, since we have the words of Jesus, "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." I desire to refer to the two parables in connection, as they are recorded in Luke xi., as I understand them both to represent the same thing. If the "strong man" is the principle of sin which reigns in and over us, what is the armor wherein he trusted? And the spoils are said to be his spoils. Now, how does the Lord Jesus divide the spoils of sin by taking possession of part himself, and leaving part? Here seems to be some confusion. Are we to infer that he, as is sometimes represented, stands and knocks at the door of this house, (for the writer of the article referred to tells us that the house is the man, the sinner,) until his locks are wet with the dew of the night? At length, by the entreaty of the preacher, or the help of the anxious-bench, he gains an entrance, to make what compromise he can; the Lord to take part, the sinner part, the devil part, and the preacher part. And can we suppose that Jesus destroys the works of the devil by taking possession of the desires, affections and love of the sinner, or that he takes possession of these hands and feet and eyes and tongue and heart through the renewing of the mind, or by mutual concession, or by any process whatever? "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6, 7. Again, I read, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The works of the devil, which the Son of God destroyed, was death; and not only his works, but Jesus was manifested in the flesh, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.—Heb. ii. 14. But to return to the parables.

I understand that the strong man represents the Jewish nation, or more particularly the representatives of that nation, the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees, teachers, and rulers of the people; and his goods, or spoils, which mean the same, are the people of that nation. He is called a strong man, because the Jews regarded themselves as the favored people of God; and they had been a very powerful nation, when God was with them. When he keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but a stronger comes upon him, and overcomes him, which is the Lord Jesus Christ. For "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."—Mark iii. 27. He is represented as bound, because they had no power to restrain the people from following Jesus; for the multitude said, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."—Matt. xxi. 11. "And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." A man bound would have little authority. And they questioned among themselves, saying, What new doctrine is this? And his fame spread abroad. "The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him." Jesus was taking away their goods; and they could no more prevent it than a man bound could protect his goods. This was how the stronger man overcame him, and took possession of his goods. Also, the stronger man "taketh away his armor wherein he trusted," which was their national religion, the legal covenant, wherein they felt secure, and could boastingly say, "We have Abraham to our father," &c. But Jesus had now come, in the end of the world, and John the Baptist had cried, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." For in the fullness of time, "When he cometh into the world," and the burnt offerings and offerings for sin were no longer to be offered by the law, then said he, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."—Heb. x. 9. This also explains why the unclean spirit was seeking rest. The unclean spirit is the same character as the strong man, and was uneasy for the same reason. The fame of Jesus was spread abroad, and they feared the people; and they said, "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry." The unclean spirit went out to hear him; also, he went out to John the Baptist's preaching, seeking rest, but finding none. He found it a dry place; for John assured them that Jesus would burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. He was seeking rest; that is, seeking to insure the security of their house, which this stronger man had invaded, had disturbed his repose and endangered his safety. But finding no rest, he saith, "I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and

garnished." It was empty, because the multitude had gone after Jesus, whose wonderful teachings had swept away all refuge in this old house, and all the appearance of religion which now remained was a mere adorning of this empty house. They still attended to the form, but there was no life there. The spiritual Jew, blessed with understanding and faith in Jesus Christ, received him as the long-promised Messiah, and rejoiced in the glory of God. So this house was left unto them desolate, and they garnished it as best they could, to make it appear as formerly. "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there." As seven is the number of perfectness, it would seem as if this class culminated their iniquity, completed or perfected their wickedness, when they crucified the Lord of life and glory. They returned from listening to his teachings, and when the chief priests and Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. I have no doubt they understood their part in the lesson of the first parable, for they had just accused him of casting out devils by Beelzebub, the chief of devils, and they were filled with madness; not because Jesus rebuked them for their sins, but because of the mighty works of healing which he did. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet. "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." "Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death." Thus they took seven other more wicked spirits, and returned to their house and dwelt there; and how much worse the last state of that man or nation was than the first, history informs us, when they were miserably destroyed and scattered.

But I will hasten to notice how the spoils were divided. The multitudes who followed Jesus came from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon; and he healed their diseases, and they that were vexed with unclean spirits were healed, and the whole multitude sought to touch him, for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. These were the characters who, when they heard that Jesus was coming from Bethany to Jerusalem to the feast, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet him, and cried, "Hosanna: blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." And as he went they spread their clothes in the way; and when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven, and

glory in the highest." And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, "Master, rebuke thy disciples." Here we see how the spoils, or people, were divided. These rejoiced and praised God, and were by no means the very people who cried, "Crucify him! crucify him!" Let us examine the record. As soon as it was day the elders of the people, and the chief priests and scribes, took Jesus and led him into their council, and before Pilate. The chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, told them that he found nothing worthy of death in him, and offered to release him; but they cried, saying, "Crucify him! crucify him!" Pilate therefore went forth again, but the chief priests and officers cried out, "Crucify him!" Thus the Most High, who divides to the nations their inheritance, separates the sons of Adam; and by the grace of God the same division is manifested in this day. Dear brethren, may the Lord enable the watchmen to see eye to eye the glorious truth of the gospel of the kingdom of God.

Yours in love,

M.

"Who art thou, Lord?"—Acts xxii. 8.

The above inquiry was made by Saul (as he was then called) while on his way to Damascus to persecute the church. This, no doubt, appeared like a strange inquiry for one to make who was so full of worldly wisdom as was Saul; for he had been trained up at the feet of Gamaliel, a Jewish doctor of the law, and taught in all the science of the Jewish religion. He says, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." "I thought," says he, "I ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth; which thing I also did." The above plainly shows that he was a very religious man. He had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof. I have no idea that Saul had a doubt or fear while in that condition. No doubt he felt like he was sanctified, and had not committed a sin for a number of years; for he was only serving one master, and was controlled by the spirit of antichrist. He held the garments of those who stoned Stephen to death. He made havoc of the church, entering into every house, hailing men and women, and committed them to prison; and when they were put to death, he gave voice against them. He compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, he persecuted them unto strange cities. Saul possessed the same spirit that the religious world possesses to-day. They would tear down the Primitive Baptists to-day if they had it in their power. That same principle is instilled into the youths to-day in Sun-

day schools and theological seminaries, for there they are only taught to hate the truth. They become very wise in their own imaginations, but they learn nothing of the grace of God; for all the natural man can teach is natural things. With all the wisdom that Saul possessed, he did not know God. While Saul was on his way to Damascus to bind all that called upon the name of the Lord, suddenly there shined a light from heaven round about him, which was above the brightness of the sun at noonday. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" Now, you see that in all his wisdom which he had obtained, and in all his religion, he had not known the Lord. All he knew were the works and teachings of man. He knew not God as the Savior; he knew him not as the Father; he knew him not as the Sovereign who works all things after the counsel of his own will; he knew him not in any of his saving benefits; he knew him not as God manifest in the flesh, to be put to death for our transgressions, and raised again for our justification. Hence we conclude that he knew him not in any sense whatever, because he was nothing but a natural man, and the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Now, what had Saul done, or what was he doing, in order to bring God under obligations to cause him to know him? The Arminian says we have to pray a great deal, and make the start. Now, Saul was not going to any protracted meeting or anxious-seat, but was persecuting the church. He was not praying for that light to shine about him, neither did he say to the light, "I will not surrender. He had no power to resist the Spirit, for the Spirit did not consult him in the matter. Saul had no power to keep from hearing that sound, which was louder to him than a seven fold thunder, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Then we hear the cry of the poor, penitent soul, saying, "Who art thou?" Why, he thought that he was well acquainted with the Lord before; but now he begins to see that he knew nothing about him. The Lord leads him in a way that he knew not. No doubt he felt like every poor child of God when first awakened. They all begin to inquire, to find out who the Lord is. O is it possible that he who had been so full of religion, and had not even had a doubt about it, but thought he was doing God's service, was ignorant of the Lord? But now he hears a voice saying, "Why persecutest thou me? O was it not enough to have caused Saul to be alarmed? And the Lord said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." O, dear child of grace, do you not remember a time with you when you saw yourself a poor, condemned, lost and ruined sinner? And you began to inquire, and tried to find out what was causing this great trouble. You would often ask the question, How can God

be just, and save such a poor sinner as I? But at a time unexpected by you, when you were lying prostrate upon the earth, looking for banishment from the Lord, and all your breathings were, "Who art thou, Lord?" or, "Is there grace and mercy in store for one so wretched as I?" you heard the sweet, still voice saying, "I am Jesus, who suffered and groaned and died for you; and I have done, over eighteen hundred years ago, what you are trying to do." Then you could say, "I am glad I was born to die." Then you had a desire to follow Jesus, and asked the question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Then Jesus says to the child of grace, "Arise, and go into the city [the church], and there it shall be told thee." Then he feels impressed to go and tell what great things the Lord has done for him. But he has so many doubts and fears that he is afraid he has caught the shadow and missed the substance, for he feels blind and lame. But when he goes to the city (church) Ananias (the preacher) preaches to him, and tells him of the goodness and mercy of God, and how the Lord leads his people, and tells him to not tarry, but to arise and be baptized. Then the preacher comforts the poor child by telling him not to doubt and fear any longer. Now, you see, he was brought to love the people he had once persecuted. But how did Saul receive the knowledge of God? It was not by works, not by his theological training, not by Sunday schools, nor any men-made institutions; for he emphatically declares that he never received it of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Then he could say, in deed and in truth, "By the grace of God I am what I am." "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works." Then Paul could adopt the language of Job, and say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." He also knows that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing. Those men who were co-partners with Paul before his conversion, turned against him when he joined the Primitive Baptists and commenced preaching election and predestination. But Paul endured all the persecutions of antichrist. He never sought to please the world, nor sought popularity of the world, as some are doing to-day. I do not read where he ever called one "brother" in order to get him to love him; neither do I read where he ever invited one of the scribes or Pharisees into the stand with him to preach; neither do I read where he ever invited anybody to come up to be prayed for. While some may think there is no harm in it, it is my opinion that it is a good way to get the church filled with Ishmaelites. Then let us wait the Lord's time, and not pull them in, but encourage those who have a hope to come to the church. Since Paul has found out who the Lord is, he is altogether a different man. Hence he marks out the way and leaves on record how

we, who have Christ in us the hope of glory, should walk. Then, after a journey of turmoils and conflicts here, he says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Dear christian, do you love his appearing? If so, there is a crown laid up for you.

LEE HANCKS.

NORCROSS, Ga., July 14, 1884.

COOPSTOWN, Md., March 24, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—For some time it has been bearing upon my mind to make the attempt to write a few lines to my dear brethren and sisters in Christ, whose communications I read in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which often bring the tears from my eyes. Some of them are so precious to me that I read them over and over again. I am made to rejoice in witnessing the Lord's work in the hearts of my fellow-beings. I feel myself a poor, wayfaring stranger, traveling in a desert land, far away from my home. This world affords no real happiness to me, and it is not in its power to satisfy me. My longings are for the sweets of the glorious kingdom of my God and Savior. I feel that I am one of the weak ones, yet I would not part with my little hope for all this world. I should sink and die without it. I go groaning and sighing; yet there is even comfort in that, for Jesus was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. O how I love those whom I believe love my Master. I love them for his sake. O what a strong tie it is, and how near we feel to each other. Though many miles apart, yet we are nearing our home, and we shall all meet at last in our Father's house, and join the blood-bought throng in ascribing never-ending praises to God and the Lamb. I have passed through many trials and tribulations, the waves rolling over me, the weeds twined about my head, and my sky covered with darkness. Dear brethren and sisters, is it thus with you? Let us remember that the blessed Lord is near us in darkness as well as in light, and we are safe if he is nigh. He gives us a little food by the way, enough to keep us alive, and we are all the time hungering for more. And they that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.

When I was quite a young girl, my mind became concerned about religion, and I thought I must attend religious meetings, so I chose to attend a Methodist meeting, which was held at a private house, intending to become one with them. When their speaker came, he chose for his text, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." He spoke of their praying seven times a day, and also fasting twice a week. Poor, ignorant creature that I was, I

went to work with all my might, trying to exceed them. I would slip off, out of sight of my parents, to pray eight times a day, so as to exceed the scribes and Pharisees, which was quite a task for me. But I could not thus attend to it long, as I had not the time. As for fasting, I let that go undone, as I was generally ready for my meals, and did not like to do without them. I also thought that the Lord would take no notice of that. I could not keep up in this way very long, and finally had to give it up. The next time I attended their meeting, one of their speakers came, and in his discourse he said that one could be a child of God to-day, and a child of the devil to-morrow, which I could not believe, for a child being bad does not make it any less the child of its father. God knows his own, and there is no change with him. I never went again to hear that man. The time came when another of their speakers was to discourse at the same place, and as I had never heard him I went to the meeting. While speaking he said, "There are thousands of the purchase of Christ's blood who are bewailing their situation in hell to-day." I left the house, and never went there again. Such talk did not suit me. Then I went to an Old School Baptist meeting, where I was fed; and after four years of conviction, I hope Jesus revealed himself unto me as the only way of life and salvation. I offered myself to the church, was received, and baptized by dear Elder Samuel Trott, nearly forty-two years ago, where I yet remain in my Father's house with his dear children. But I am a poor sinner still, and all my hope and trust for everlasting life is in Jesus. I love to talk about him, for his name is precious to me. I hope he will keep us all, dear brethren, from bringing reproach on his cause, and enable us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. Our own righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and can never make a covering for us. Nothing but the robe of Christ's righteousness will do to be clothed with. When my mind was exercised so deeply, I thought the Lord would give no attention to me, and that he did not regard my prayers and tears. I thought he did not want anything to do with me, for I was such a sinner. I asked him to forgive me for pleading, as I was a poor beggar, and knew nowhere else to go where my wants could be supplied, for he alone had the words of eternal life. As he was a just God I could not see how he could justify the ungodly. I suffered and worried until the blessed Lord saw fit to reveal to me the way in which he could be just and justify sinners. O what a sweet revelation! God views all his people in Christ, and not in themselves. I felt that he looked upon poor, unworthy me in his dear Son. Then I was satisfied and happy. I thought I should see no more trouble. I think that for one year I felt happy, and felt as willing to die as to live at any moment. I thought I could see Jesus smiling upon me. But now I

have many trials while traveling along this thorny road, beset with snares on every hand. I experience more comfort from looking back than from looking at the present. I have many dark and cloudy days, yet at times the blessed Sun of Righteousness shines forth, drives away the clouds, and thaws the frozen ground of the heart. Then the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. Dear ones, I believe you know all about these things. When I read your communications in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I believe I can see that the Lord teaches his children alike all over the wide world. He will bring his sons from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth. We have great reason to be always thanking him for his tender mercy toward us. He plucked us as brands from the burning, and placed our feet upon the Rock of Ages.

The letters of sisters Loretta Loofbourrow and Mary Lyons were very interesting to me. Although my talent is small in comparison with a great many, yet I do not wish to bury it in the earth. A city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid. We have been buffeted by Satan many times, which has brought us to our knees; but the great Captain of our salvation brings us off more than conquerors, who has loved us and given himself for us. His loving-kindness O how great! This world has no charms for me; it seems to be altogether vanity and vexation of spirit. Yet our bodies cling to the earth. May the Lord keep us from turning aside to the right hand or to the left, but keep our faces Zionward, and brighten our pathway before us. May he grant us faith and grace sufficient for us, and as our days, so may our strength be. What changeable creatures we are! But our God changes not; therefore we are not consumed. As the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul for the living God. The words of the apostle are strengthening to me, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." We know that we love those whom we believe to be christians. O how great is the mystery of godliness! How wonderful are the works of God! How great is his power! He doeth whatsoever he will, and none can stay his hand.

Dear brethren and sisters, continue to write for the SIGNS, as the Spirit may direct, for we love to hear from the family scattered abroad. Pray for me.

JANE P. MIDDLEDITCH.

NEAR PANOLA, Ga., Oct. 8, 1883.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As it is about time for me to send my remittance for another year, I thought I would write a few lines for our highly appreciated paper. When I look back upon my past life I see my imperfections so plainly, and feel my unworthiness so sensibly, that the thought of writing makes me tremble. I do not feel worthy of a place among the people of God, yet

I am one among them, and I hope I was led there by the Spirit of God. The Lord has been very gracious to me, leading me in ways I knew not; at times hiding his face from me, and at other times revealing himself in the fullness of his tender love and mercy. I never would have found the church had I not been led and instructed. Truly the Lord has led me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me is love. I am glad that I was enabled to find Jesus' dove, the church. Jesus calls the church by that endearing name, "My dove."—Song vi. 9. The world may misjudge my daily walk, but the Lord knoweth it all. When hungering, he feeds me beside the still waters, and makes me lie down in green pastures.

"My Shepherd will supply my need,
Jehovah is his name;
In pastures fresh he makes me feed,
Beside the living stream."

Brother F. A. Chick's letter in the SIGNS of July 15th, gave me a good deal of comfort. In reading and hearing the relations of experiences from the dear brethren and sisters, I find that some of them have more to tell of their wonderful feelings in their experience than I can tell, and it makes me fear that mine is not an experience of grace. Some of them tell of a view they had of Jesus on the cross, dying for their sins, or of some word spoken in peace. One dear sister of our church, (Rock Springs,) in relating her experience, says that a brilliant light shone around her, and a form as it stood before her placed one hand upon the back of her head, and wiped her face with a towel in the other hand. I sometimes wish such had been given me. I feel afraid that I have not been born again. I am often shrouded in doubts and fears, and have trials to undergo. When the storm gathers, and the raging billows roar, I am made to fear and tremble; but by and by I hear a still, sweet voice saying, "Fear not, trembling one; it is I." Then I feel that I am safe within the veil, and can go on my way rejoicing for awhile. O what a comfort to poor, afflicted and tempest-tossed ones, to have the sweet promise of a home beyond the grave. When the storm of life is past we will be free from all trials and temptations; our warfare will then be finished. In this world we have troubles and bodily afflictions, but they are ever good for us. We need afflictions to wean us from the world, and to make us more submissive to the divine will. Then why should we murmur at them? When I have a view of Jesus dying on the cross to redeem his loved ones, then I feel like I ought to bear my afflictions, be patient and submissive. Our sufferings are nothing compared with the Savior's sufferings. It is written that he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief; and it is needful for us to have sorrow and grief. It is my lot to live in the furnace of affliction. I know that I have not been humble enough, and have been too unthankful for the many blessings God has bestowed upon me. It is sometimes

after my most severe sufferings that I realize the sweetest blessings, and my hope is brightened, and by faith I see my home afar. Then I can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." If I could only know that I am one of the redeemed, I would be willing to give up all of nature's sweet ties, fold my hands, and be forever at rest; but O these doubts and fears! Sometimes the thought of death and the terrors of the grave make me afraid to die; but why should we fear death's alarms, when

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are?"

The following verses are especially sweet to me:

"Sweet rivers of redeeming love
Lie just before mine eye;
Had I the pinions of a dove
I'd to those rivers fly.

"I'd rise superior to my pain,
With joy outstrip the wind;
I'd cross o'er Jordan's stormy wave,
And leave this world behind."

Dear brethren and sisters, write on for our dear family paper. Do not forget how many poor, afflicted and cast down souls are comforted and cheered by reading your epistles of love. Sometimes I am made to weep over them, and at times I am made to rejoice. It is indeed a sweet tie that binds us together as dear brethren and sisters.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in christian love."

O may the tie never be broken. Nothing but the love and power of God could have drawn us so near together, many of us being entire strangers in the flesh. All the communications I have read since I have been taking the SIGNS, which has been about a year, the writers are strangers in the flesh to me; but my heart goes out in love as I read their letters. They tell my feelings better than I can tell them. We are many miles apart, and probably will never meet in this world; but that sweet hope of meeting beyond the changes of time, in the image of Christ, is indeed a sweet and consoling thought to us, weary travelers. There will be no parting there, but a sweet rest, while eternal ages roll. Our pastor, brother W. D. Almand, meets with us at our church once a month, proclaiming the truth in its simplicity and purity, as it is in Jesus. Long may he live to feed the flock with that precious truth.

Brethren Beebe, if you think this worthy a place in the SIGNS, you can use it. I have failed to express what I desired. May the God of grace be with you in all your conflicts through life, sustain you in every trial, and carry you to his mansion above. Pray for me while at the throne of grace.

Yours in tribulation,
ARMINDA L. DULIN.

BYRNSIDE, Putnam Co., W. Va.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—If one so unworthy as I feel myself to be may thus address you. I will, by request, try to write what I hope have been some of the Lord's dealings with me. I cannot recollect when I did not have some fear of dying, and of

having to appear before a just God. I think it was about the year 1870 when I was first made to see myself a sinner before God. I went to hear preaching, and while there a feeling came over me that neither pen nor tongue can describe. In spite of all my efforts to hide my grief, I could not. The tears were fast falling from my eyes, and an old sister came to me, and took me by the hand, and said, "I am glad to see you in this condition." I thought she knew I was going to hell, and was glad of it. After the preaching was closed, I was first to leave the house. I started for home, and thought I would pray all the way; but all I could say was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." I went on in this way for some time, not knowing what to do to get relief, and would try to be alone in some secret place. About this time I started for school, where there were a great many young people, and my troubles were to some extent banished for awhile; but when by myself, they would return with more force than ever. I thought my fate was sealed, and that I would enjoy myself the best I could while here, for I thought I must soon die. I continued in this way until 1880, when my troubles again returned, with more force than ever. One day, while meditating upon my condition, and the long time I had been thus troubled, and thinking that I would go and tell some one of my condition, it seemed as if some one said, "Wait and see the salvation of the Lord." This gave me one comfort, for I then believed it was the work of the Lord; and if he had begun the good work, I thought he would at the appointed time accomplish it. I only thought the time long, and could say with the poet,

"Some long repent, and late believe;
But when their sin's forgiven,
A clearer passport they receive,
And walk with joy to heaven."

I continued in this state of mind for some time, not knowing what to do to get relief; often trying to pray, but finding no comfort, until one morning, while engaged in my work about the house, my eyes being wet with tears, and trying to pray the best I could, an unknown voice seemed to say, "Peace, be still." I stood with clasped hands for some time. I do not know how long I was talking, nor what I was saying. The first thing I knew I was singing,
"O how happy are they who their Savior obey,
And have laid up their treasures above;
Tongue cannot express the sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

I thought I would never have any more trouble; but I soon began to doubt, and thought I was not fit to belong to the church, although I thought it was my duty to be baptized. About this time there was a little difficulty in the church to which I wished to belong, and I thought I would wait until it was settled before I would unite with them. On the fourth Sunday in May, 1881, while preparing to go to meeting, and trying to banish from my mind the thought of uniting with the church, it seemed as though some one said to

me, "Enter ye into my Father's house, ye chosen of my Father." And thinking the voice was audible, I looked around to see if any one had spoken to me, when at my right hand I saw the Savior, his face shining as bright as the noonday sun. I then thought he had spoken to me, and I was doing wrong not to obey his command. I went on to the preaching with a light heart, but not with the intention of uniting with the church, for I thought I was not as good as the others. But while there, a feeling came over me which made me think I was doing wrong not to obey the command of the Savior. So, after preaching, an invitation was given, and I went forward, and told a part of what I have written; after which, to my astonishment, I was received, and on the fourth Sunday in June I was baptized by Elder Wm. A. Melton. I thought it the most beautiful day I had ever seen, and thought I should never doubt again; but I have since had serious doubts, and sometimes fear that I am deceived, and have deceived others. I fear I am not worthy of a place among the much loved saints of God. I know that if a saint, I am the very least of all.

Brethren Beebe, do with this as you think best. If it will not crowd out better matter, you will please publish it, and oblige a little sister in hope of eternal life.

The following verses were composed by our much esteemed brother, Elder Wm. Martin, a short time before his death, which you will please publish.

"Just seventy years have rolled around
Since I first visited this town;
Thousands have died and gone away,
But I'm alive and here to day.

"No mortal can a reason give
Why millions die and I still live;
But that God would have it so,
And death itself can't answer, No.

"God is a wise, almighty King,
And he can manage everything;
And what he does is always right,
Though oft too high for human sight.

"Although a helpless, feeble worm,
In life I've met a heavy storm;
But now the storm will soon be o'er,
And I'll be on the other shore.

"And when I land and all is right,
My troubles will be out of sight,
And I shall see the Savior's face,
And join to sing the song, Free grace.

"Free grace! it is a glorious song,
All parts are right, there's nothing wrong;
It gives no praise for what we've done;
It gives the praise to God alone."

"I learned this song when but a youth;
I loved it then, because 'twas truth;
I now am old, my locks are white;
I love it still—I'm sure it's right.

"Free grace! it is the only prop
On which I do or can depend;
It often cheers my feeble hope
That Jesus is the sinner's friend.

"Free grace is first, free grace is last,
The ground on which my anchor's cast;
And when I count up all the cost,
Without free grace I know I'm lost."

MATILDA A. CASDORPH.

BASTROP, La., June 22, 1884.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Having been greatly edified and comforted in reading the many communications and experiences through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I feel inclined to cast in my little mite, in my simple way,

knowing that you will dispose of it as you think best. I had early impressions about myself as a sinner, but will begin at the age of fifteen, when awakened to see myself as a very great sinner. I was in meditation, thinking what would become of me, and what would christians think of me, when I was grown. My sins appeared before me as never before. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief," came to my mind, but I thought I was out of sight. Mine was an outside case, worse than the chief, if possible. I became so weary in mind that I concealed myself to read the Bible, taking what was said to the saints as though spoken to everybody. I was encouraged to reform and try to be accepted of God. I tried to sing good songs, dress plainly, discard gay society, and everything that I thought was wrong, but all my efforts and promises to God were of no avail. I would begin anew day after day, and chide myself for being so forgetful. I grew worse in mind, and saw my depravity more and more as weeks passed by. All my efforts proved in vain until I was reduced to despair. I lost all taste for worldly society, and felt to be alone; for I was not fit for christian society. I would often try to pray, but it seemed as only a mockery. I quit trying to kneel down to pray, but would ask the Lord to have mercy on me, as I stood, or as I was sitting. Sometimes I would fall down on some place, saying, "Lord, thou knowest all things, save, or I perish." I heard different denominations preach. All were alike, for they preached salvation by works, which was discouraging to me. I knew that I could do nothing to merit salvation. My parents being Old School Baptists, I sometimes had opportunities of hearing the Baptists preach, although there was no church near us. I believed their doctrine was the only hope; for I had experienced my utter helplessness and inability to save myself, or to perform a part to merit salvation. It was shocking to me to be talked to about my troubles by christian people. I only desired to listen, and would not allow them to see me read the Bible or the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The experiences in the SIGNS were encouraging to me, but I thought I had to go through some great change, as some have spoken of. Again, I thought that I was mistaken, and God had never begun a good work in my heart, as I had hoped. At the age of eighteen I attended an Old School Baptist meeting at Concord, about fifteen miles from home. I loved the preaching, and on leaving I could not refrain from crying, as I had to part with such good people, whom I loved, without a hope of ever being one among them. I remember of one old brother shedding tears as we parted in the churchyard. I wondered what affected him, as I had seen him but little; but since then I found that he knew of my troubles. Soon after that I was standing in the yard at home, thinking over my lost

condition. I hated what I once loved, and loved what I once hated, and thought how I loved those good people; but there was no hope for me. All at once these words came to me, as a precious promise to my poor soul, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Joy sprung up, and the sun seemed to shine brighter. Then I received a hope in an unexpected way. O, dear brethren and sisters, how sweet to feel that God for Christ's sake has forgiven our sins. I soon began to doubt, and thought I would not tell any one unless I had a brighter and surer evidence; but in about a month I was drawn by a cord of love to Concord Church. I said but little, for I could not talk as I desired. Some questions were asked, and I was received, and baptized by our beloved pastor, Elder A. Tomlin. Although I have had many doubts since, and have feared that I was not worthy a name among them, I would say to those who have received the pardon, as they hope, "Why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized." Surely I experience daily that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Often I am in the valley, quite near the slough of despond, but the Lord has ever been gracious to me at such times.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

Again,

"My times of sorrow and of joy,
Great God, are in thy hand;
My choicest comforts come from thee,
And go at thy command."

In times past I have been so crushed in spirits that I wondered why any one could laugh. These were awful moments to me, but God is a present help in time of trouble. I desire all the household of faith to remember me at the throne of grace.

Your unworthy sister in hope,
LIZZIE HAYDEN.

BYRNSIDE, Putnam Co., W. Va., April, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—By your permission I will comply with the request of many precious brethren and sisters, that I should give a short sketch of my visit to Ohio, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

I took leave of my family on the morning of April 22, my son and one of my daughters accompanying me to St. Albans, where I remained over night, and early in the morning engaged passage on the steamer "Telephone," for Gallipolis, Ohio. At Scarry my old friend Hugh Judd and wife came aboard, whose conversation entertained me to Winfield, when they left me, he being Clerk of the Circuit Court of that place. Here attorney Nash came aboard, who introduced me to his many friends, and the time passed very pleasantly until we reached Buffalo, at which place he left me. I arrived at Gallipolis at two o'clock in the afternoon, where I met with J. W. Pauley, son of Dr. J. W. Pauley, who was a member of the Old School Baptists at the time I joined the

church, and it was at his house that I first attempted to preach. He was a father to me, and gave me good advice; but he has long since been called to his reward. It did me good to meet with his son, and he and his amiable wife entertained me very kindly until train time, when I took the train for Columbus, Ohio, arriving there about midnight, and on the morning of the 24th took the train for Galloway, ten miles west of Columbus. Here, for the first time, I met Elder A. B. Brees, who was awaiting my arrival and who conducted me to my old friend and brother, John R. Smith, where, for the first time, I met Elder J. G. Ford, who was preparing a Confession of Faith, to be presented to some brethren and sisters who had obtained letters to be constituted into a church, which was appointed to take place the next day. To my surprise and sorrow of heart I learned that there existed a bar of fellowship between some of the associations. It makes me feel sad when I hear of brethren falling out by the way, and calling hard names. Brethren and sisters, let us try to keep our tongues bridled, if we cannot tame it. Let us be careful lest we offend one of the little ones, and be careful how we conduct ourselves toward erring brethren. Yet we are not to compromise truth with error.

We proceeded to the meeting house in Galloway, where we listened to a discourse by brother Line. On the morning of the 25th we returned to the meeting house, and in weakness I tried to preach to a very attentive congregation, after which the church was constituted. We had the pleasure of listening to a discourse by brother U. Trumbo, and I was much pleased with the doctrine he advanced. I believe him to be sound. He is to me a loving brother, and I love the doctrine he preaches, which is salvation by grace alone, without any of man's means in it. On the 26th we returned to the place of meeting, and in much fear and trembling I again tried to preach the unsearchable riches to a very attentive congregation, who seemed to be interested, and their many tears were an index of their feelings. Here I parted with precious brethren and sisters, many of whom I shall never again see in the flesh; yet I hope to meet them where we shall no more be compelled to take the parting hand, but where we shall ever be with the Lord. May the Lord watch over them and us, and keep us from the pollutions of this evil world while here we remain. I was then conveyed by a friend, David Peters, to Columbus, where I stopped over night with the son of the late Eld. G. M. Peters. On the evening of the 26th I was taken very ill with a bilious attack, and the following morning took the train to Gallipolis, and there stopped with my old friend, J. W. Pauley. After partaking of a good supper, and feeling much improved, I took the boat for St. Albans, and arrived at my home at six o'clock on the morning of the 28th, and found my family all well, for which I desire to be thankful to so merciful a God.

Perhaps I have got the times of preaching in the above not exactly correct, but there is no intentional error. Yours to serve, in the tribulation and patience of the kingdom,
JEHU BYRNSIDE.

UNION, Ky., July 25, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I found, a few days ago, sticking in my gate, two tracts, headed, "What is it to believe on Christ?" and "What is required for salvation?" I think the Scriptures are clear on that subject. We will see if we cannot find what answers the Scriptures give to these questions. First, what did Paul do to be saved? We answer, Nothing good. Next, what did the Samaritan woman do to be saved? Nothing. She is a fitting type in the answering of this question. How did she receive salvation? Had she sent for the Savior to meet her at the well, that she might ask him to show her the way of salvation? or, did she meet him by appointment, that she might converse with him, and inquire of him what she must do to be saved? I think not. Let us read the fourth chapter of John, and let the Scriptures say how they came to meet at the well. Jesus "must needs go through Samaria." Then I take it for granted that she was not seeking him; for she did not know him, and did not speak first. He spoke, and said, "Give me to drink." She understood not that he was the Christ, nor did she understand that his yearning heart was seeking refreshment, by pouring forth living water. So again he speaks, saying, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." We ask, when was she saved? The answer is, while in sin. She came to the well a poor, blind sinner; she went away a believer in the Son of God, and in possession of eternal life. She came there a weary drinker and constant seeker for earthly water, that never satisfies: she went away with her thirst quenched by the gift of the fountain of living water. Now mark, after she asked for that living water, after the revelation of Christ to her, the woman left her waterpot and went her way. The mistake that many make is trying to leave their waterpot first; and this they don't succeed in doing; for nature clings to it. But let them first drink of that water that Jesus gives, and then, having in them that fountain of life, the unsatisfying streams of earthly pleasure will lose their fascination. What did this woman do to be saved? I know of but one answer, Nothing, absolutely nothing. Did this woman forsake her sins before she received salvation? No. Did this woman seek Christ, or did Christ seek her? What! must I not forsake my sins? Did this woman forsake her sins before she received everlasting life, or afterwards? She first drank of the living fountain, and then the waterpot was as a small matter. Then on what condition will God save the sin-

ner? If we have learned anything from this illustration, we must answer, Nothing is required. On no condition will God save the sinner. How then? Unconditionally God gives eternal life! But one will say, Is it not a condition to believe? We reply, believing is not a condition. God will not save you for your belief. We do not wish to carp over words, but what you need to know is that life and salvation are purely of God. The Scriptures say, "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life." Not, may have it, but hath already got it. Then you see that life precedes believing, and everlasting life secures it.

This, brethren Beebe, is at your disposal. Do as you think best with it, and all will be right with me. May Israel's God uphold you long to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," is the prayer of your brother, I hope, in Christ,

MOSES LANE.

"I AM the resurrection and the life."

So spake the holy Son of God. He then stood before death, and beheld its gloom and sorrow, at which his soul was moved, and "Jesus wept." This was "in the days of his flesh," when he was "found in fashion as a man," and was, as he meekly confessed, "the Son of man." "Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren," who "are partakers of flesh and blood." Therefore they as men are sinners, and must die in the flesh; and Jesus, the man Christ, must be put to death in the flesh, and die for all his brethren, for he cannot otherwise abolish death and raise them up out of the graves. If death may hold them, and the grave boast the victory over them, so shall it hold him also. For he has betrothed them unto himself forever, and they are joint heirs with him, whether in death or in life. Now therefore, because he died for us, and rose again, God will raise up us also by Christ, and we shall be complete in him. Hence he says to his followers, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Certainly then, the being or creature who must die, and shall be raised up and die no more, is man himself; and it was concerning mortal and dying man that Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life." The man Lazarus was dead and buried; but to comfort the sorrowing sister Jesus said, "Thy brother shall rise again." She believed that he should rise again at the last day. He then said, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 23-26. This shows that all who live and believe in Christ have passed from death unto

life in the Spirit; and that "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

The blessed truth is that Christ, in oneness with and for his people, died for and put away their sins; then, rising again for their justification, he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And now gospel ministers preach through Jesus the resurrection from the dead; and this is the ultimate hope of the gospel, and its crowning glory. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." The earnest is the assurance that our mortality shall be swallowed up of life, for which purpose God hath wrought us. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory [over the grave] through our Lord Jesus Christ." How precious is this assurance of hope to us afflicted mortals, who now have sorrow, sickness and pain. "Them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

In this hope, your brother,
D. BARTLEY.

JUNE 21, 1884.

HIRAMSBURG, Ohio, July 25, 1884.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—My heart throbs with holy rapture as I think of it—in Christ. Who of us can tell half the joy that springs up in our hearts when we think of the precious brotherhood? "Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," by reason of which we become heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. And what is the heirship? Eternal life. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his own Son, to redeem them that were under the law; and they have been redeemed, washed white in the blood of Jesus, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious. How cheering to think that there was none that did the mighty work save God alone. When the time came for our Prince of Peace to pour out his precious blood, "of the people there were none with him." But "the year of my redeemed is come." The debt must be paid, and since there was none to help, "therefore mine own arm brought salvation, and my fury it upheld me." John saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals, and he wept because none was found worthy to open the book, nor look thereon.

No, my dear kindred, among the sinful sons of men none was worthy to unfold the mysterious works of Jehovah. His ways and thoughts are superior to our ways and thoughts. None but the Lion of the tribe of Judah could unveil the designs of Omnipotence. All power in heaven and in earth was given unto him. He came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. "And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." What a comfort to know the word of Jesus. Surrounded as we are by all that is vain and false, and by those who would deceive the very elect, were it possible, what joy we derive from the teachings of our blessed Lord. He beareth rule in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; yea, even devils believe and tremble at his power. His very voice shook the earth, and will shake both earth and heaven. His designs are hidden from mortal vision, but Jesus hath prevailed to open the book. God's eternal purpose is to be made manifest among the sons of men. His eternal love, his predestination, foreknowledge, election, calling, sanctification and justification are to be shown to the objects of his love. No, dear brother, he was not ashamed to call them brethren. He has fitted us for another world, and has cleansed us from all iniquity. Then we should walk as children of the light, casting away the unfruitful works of darkness, and be of the same mind. We must remember that "we all had our conversation, in times past, in the lusts of our flesh." "But ye are washed, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." In view of what Jesus has done for us, should we not let our light shine before men? O that we may ever walk in the footsteps of Jesus! So long as we do this, we "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." And may we exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

GEORGE A. BRETZ.

CLAYTON, Ohio, Dec. 28, 1883.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I like your noble family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, so well that I would not do without it. I receive much comfort in reading your editorials, and also the communications of the dear brethren and sisters. Their experience is much like my own, in traveling from nature's darkness. The dear brethren and sisters are mostly strangers to me in the flesh, but, I trust, not in the Spirit; for we are told that if the Spirit of Christ be in us, we are his. I would say to the dear brethren and sisters, Write on for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for I take great comfort in reading the paper, which comes to me regularly, laden with the precious fruits of the gospel, as good news from a far country. We have no regular preaching here. Brethren visit us occasionally, and preach for us, for which I feel very thankful to the Lord, in directing his dear ministers to speak to us of the precious truth

of the gospel of Christ. Dear brethren, I had the precious privilege of attending the Indian Creek Association, held with the Dry Fork of Twin Church, in the town of West Manchester, Preble County, Ohio. It commenced on Friday before the third Sunday in September, and continued three days. Each day the congregations were large and attentive. Nearly twenty ministers were present, and some were very able ministers of the New Testament. The theme was Christ, each declaring a full, free and finished salvation in Jesus Christ. It was a time that will not soon be forgotten by me, and I suppose it is so with a great many others. I heard a great many say, "I never was at a better meeting in my life." Yes, I surely thought the Lord was with us, and truly we were made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. There was so much sweet love and fellowship existing among the brethren and sisters, that truly I felt it was good to be there, and that the Lord was with us. The business of the association was all conducted in peace and harmony, as far as I know. O what a blessed thing it is for brethren to dwell together and keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Dear brethren, the doctrine you set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES I believe to be the true doctrine of the Bible, being clearly taught in the Scriptures, as far as my weak understanding goes. I hope the Lord will still be with you, to strengthen you, and build you up in the most holy faith of God's elect, so that you may still be able to perform the great work that is before you, to the comfort and edification of the dear saints. You can do as you think best with this, and it will be all right with me.

I remain your unworthy sister in Christ, I hope,

AMELIA HECKATHORN.

SENECA FALLS, N. Y., Jan. 5, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is time for us to renew our subscription, and I will send you a postal order for four dollars. I could not well do without the SIGNS, for it contains all the preaching I get. O how precious it is to me! It is like cold water to a thirsty soul. There is plenty of the "do and live" system preached here, but there is not another of our faith and order here. I have no one that I can converse with, and it seems to me that I am like a sparrow alone on the housetop. When I read your able communications, I say, O what would I give if I could sit and hear the word preached in its purity, salvation by grace? I often think, when reading of the associations of the brethren, How I would love to be with them. But they are all so far off that I cannot meet with them. I do thank the dear Lord that he has taught me to trust in his dear name. He is my precious hiding-place, my hope, my salvation, my all. "The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Will brother F. A. Chick please

give his views on 2 Cor. ix. 6? "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

The reason why I trouble you is this: They tell me here that it means that they wanted money to carry on the Lord's work. O how dreadful is the thought that the Lord wants the help of man or money! Dear brother, your letter in the SIGNS of December 1, 1883, on "Immanuel," was excellent. O how much good it did me! It was Jesus from first to last, and I could say, Amen and amen, to it all. Write on, dear brother. If you knew the good it does the little ones like myself, you would not withhold your gift from them. May God bless you, dear brother, and lead your mind into the truth as it is in Jesus; and may he cause us all to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. Your sister,

E. CANDLER.

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga., July 9, 1884.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed money order for two dollars, to pay for the SIGNS for one year to my own address. I have been taking it about forty years; my father took it from the first. I now see no reason why I should discontinue it while I live.

We have had, up to this time, a remarkable year. We had an unusually cold winter, killing nearly all the oats, and much of the wheat. We have had one cyclone and tornado after another, then a late, cold spring, then very dry indeed. During the time of cutting wheat we had a long wet spell; had a few days of fair weather, then a wet spell lasting for about two weeks, in which the wheat was injured more, sprouting in the fields, and much of it nearly ruined. I never saw the crops in so bad a condition, nearly all the bottom corn being completely ruined by the heavy, incessant rains and overflows. I am not complaining, but stating facts. God knows what is best for us. There have been some additions to the churches occasionally, with no strife or confusion. Elder Eubanks has had paralysis of the optic nerve, and could not see well at one time, but is some better now. Elder U. M. Almand has been a great sufferer from rheumatism, but is better now. He has not preached this year.

Your brother,

WM. S. MONTGOMERY.

DELAFLANE, Va., Dec. 17, 1883.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS:—I have been wishing for some time to send you my remittance for the SIGNS, which subscription expired in August last; but not having seen any of your agents for some time I conclude to send it myself, for I do not wish to be deprived of so valuable and interesting a paper, which has been a source of so much comfort and pleasure to me. Especially since the death of my lamented husband, James R. Kercheval, who was a devoted advocate of it, has it been specially dear to me, and cheered me

in many a sad and lonely hour, with the sacred experiences of its gifted writers. When I was married, I was a member of the New School Baptist Church, and for a long time was very happy in their love and confidence, but finally became dissatisfied, finding their belief and practice did not altogether accord with my belief and views. I withdrew from their fellowship, but I have many estimable friends among them, and, I believe, children of God. Since that time I have been wandering by the cold waters of Babylon, almost immersed in trouble and sorrow, trials and persecution; but I hope I may be kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, and may enter in through the gate into the celestial city.

SUE R. KERCHEVAL.

HINESTON, Rapides Parish, La.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—I wish you to publish a special request for Elders John Stipp and F. A. Chick to visit us at our next association, (the Southeast,) to be held with Pilgrims' Rest Church, Rapides Parish, Louisiana, thirty miles east of Alexandria, to begin on Friday before the third Sunday in October, 1884. They can come by rail to Catile Landing, on Red River, about sixteen miles from the place of meeting. If they can come, they will be met with conveyance and taken to the place of the meeting.

Dear brethren, may you be long spared, if it be the will of our heavenly Father, to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, is my prayer.
DAVID RICHEY.

CORRECTIONS.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERS:—In the publication of the proceedings of the constitution of the church of Pryor Hill, in the current volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, July 15th, there is an omission of three names, which ought to have appeared in print, viz., Daniel McAlister and wife, and George McAlister. The constituent members of said church number nineteen, instead of sixteen, as published.

Please correct, and oblige yours truly,

J. M. DEMAREE.

NORTH PLEASUREVILLE, Ky., July 25, 1884.

MINUTES

OF

ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS.

We would call the attention of brethren throughout the country to the fact that we are prepared to print and distribute the Minutes of meetings as cheap and in as good style as any office in the United States. We frequently receive copies of Minutes printed by parties who do not belong to our order, and therefore have no idea of what is meant by the writers, and consequently frequent serious blunders are made. It costs but a trifle to forward the manuscript or return the printed Minutes by mail from any part of the country, and we therefore solicit our brethren to send us their Minutes for printing. We are but few, and our patronage should be kept within our own borders.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

ELECTION.

"PLEASE give your views on Romans x. 2 and xi. 26-28. I do not understand election; but it does seem to me that in verse 28 Paul refers to the Jews as being the elect. Your compliance will oblige

A WELL-WISHER OF THE SIGNS.

REPLY.

In the verse first cited Paul bears witness to the zeal of the Jews who had not the knowledge of God, but sought to be justified by their own works of obedience to the law of Moses, under which that nation had been favored with the special protection and care of God. After stating his heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel that they might be saved, in the text he assigns the reason for that desire and prayer. "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Instead of being inconsistent with the doctrine of election, this text fully implies the truth that there is no other ground of hope for salvation but in that election which depends entirely upon the sovereign will of God. Because Paul knew that there was salvation nowhere else but in the election of God, his prayer for the salvation of his natural kindred was addressed to that God. If he had been like the idolatrous will-worshippers of antichrist, who deny the election of grace, like them he would have prayed to those whose salvation he sought, that they would accept the overtures of mercy and thus secure their own salvation, telling them that it depended upon their own will, and that God had done all that he could do for them, and it rested with them to make his work effective by their own choice or election in complying with the offers of divine mercy. This would be in accordance with the doctrine on which conditional salvation is based; but it is not found in the record which God has given, and the experience of the apostle clearly exhibits its falsehood. It was not when Paul had concluded to accept offered mercy that he was manifested as one of the redeemed of the Lord; for that same ignorant zeal of God which he testifies that the Jews still had, was moving him to persecute the Lord, when it pleased God to call him by his grace and reveal his Son in him.—See Galatians i. 13-17. This was a very manifest exhibition of the irresistible sovereignty of the election of God. It was not when it pleased the zealous Pharisee Saul, but when it pleased God; and this is the experience of every sinner whom God calls by his grace. From his own account it is evident that if Saul had been left to his own election he would have spent his time on earth in persecuting them who called upon the name of Jesus. But the gracious election of God overruled Saul's choice, just as it subdues

the will of every sinner in whom it is revealed.

It may relieve the subject of some difficulty to observe that Paul's prayer to God was not that presumptuous dictation which prompts men in their carnal pride to suggest to the Almighty that he should change his purpose and do their bidding. Paul prayed as moved by the Spirit of Christ only as the Lord taught his followers to pray, for the will of God to be done; and this prayer is always heard and answered. All else that is called prayer is rebellion against God. In this expression, then, there is no conflict with the revelation of sovereign election in salvation. It is in perfect harmony with the direction given to Timothy. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."—1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

The record borne the carnal Israelites in the text, of their zeal of God which was not according to knowledge, is equally applicable to many even now who compass sea and land in making proselytes, and verily think they are gaining the divine favor by their works, while their conduct attests their ignorance of the righteousness of God. Among these there are doubtless some of the true Israel, elect subjects of the salvation of God in Christ Jesus, who are entangled with the delusion of the world. Their sincerity only makes their bondage more oppressive, until they are saved from it by the light of truth manifested in them. Such was the case of Saul of Tarsus, who was sincere in his persecuting zeal when he had not the knowledge of the righteousness of God, in whose salvation from that false zeal "The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." The election or choice of God was clearly the only power by which he was saved from the strong delusion which made him so bold in opposing the truth; and he could therefore consistently pray to God for the salvation of his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh. That wonderful grace which had been displayed in his own salvation was alone able to save them who were yet under the same ignorance and unbelief from which he had been delivered. So, even in this day the Spirit of Christ in his people leads them to bless those who curse them, do good to those who hate them, and pray for those who despitefully use and persecute them.—Matt. v. 44. It is not the Spirit of Christ which would render evil for evil, and assume the power to visit vengeance on those who injure us. All such feelings originate in the carnal mind, and are the works of the flesh.—See Gal. v. 19-25. By the election of God his saints are saved from the power of these fleshly lusts, and led by the Spirit of Christ to walk in newness of life; not trusting in their own strength, but relying upon the work-

ing of the mighty power of God, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand.—Eph. i. 19-23. The effect of the revelation of the exceeding riches of grace in the electing love of God is always the same in every saint, as in Paul's case, to produce the desire that the salvation which has come to them might be manifested to all, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. So the announcement by the angels to the shepherds was attended with the benediction, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."—Luke ii. 14. This blessing could not come upon a guilty and condemned world upon any other principle but the sovereign election of God. This truth is revealed in the experience of every sinner who is brought to hope in the salvation of God; therefore they pray to God that he would call dead sinners to the knowledge of his great grace by his own electing love. This prayer originates not in their carnal mind, which cannot be subject to the law of God, but it is indited in them by the Spirit, which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and is therefore perfectly conformed to his will in election, as well as in every manifestation of his holy and righteous purpose.

"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." It is not easy to understand how this text can be construed as conflicting with the doctrine of election. The first clause positively attests the sure salvation of all Israel. This is the definite and particular election of all who are included in that name, and no sophistry can distort the language so as to make their salvation depend upon any condition, or so as to make it include one who is not specified in that name. The "all Israel" who shall be saved signifies not the natural descendants of Abraham, for it was to those who claimed the favor of God on that principle that Jesus said, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." This word of the Lord settles the fact that the natural Jews were not subjects of the election of grace by reason of their natural birth; and it was to Nicodemus, a ruler in that natural Israel, that Jesus said, "Ye must be born again."—John iii. 7. John the Baptist spoke to natural Israelites when he said, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."—Matt. iii. 7-9. These Jews claimed acceptance by reason of their being Israelites by

natural birth. If the Israel in this text refers to the same people, then their claim should have been recognized by John. But the Spirit distinguishes between the natural and the spiritual children of Abraham. "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 6-8. Failing to observe this distinction, we are involved in confusion, and the testimony of the Scriptures seems to conflict with itself; but the whole record exactly harmonizes when properly understood. Naturally, the fleshly descendants of Jacob were the elect or chosen people of God, and that election was manifested in their preservation nationally throughout their generations until that typical dispensation was ended in the finished work of Jesus, the Servant whom God upheld as his Elect in whom his soul delighted.—Isa. xlii. 1. In that election the natural Israelites were blessed temporally and favored above all the nations of the earth. But the blessings therein bestowed upon them were all of the earth; and even to the obedient subject of that natural covenant no heavenly blessing was promised. That law could not give life. It is expressly called the ministration of death and condemnation with all its glory. Yet it was given exclusively to that natural Israel, who were the elect nation separated from the Gentile world by the special favor of God. In their whole history they are typical of the election of grace which is in Christ Jesus, but the type or shadow is not the substance represented. Now, that the time of the typical dispensation is fulfilled, and the legal night has vanished in the light of the gospel day, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Gal. iii. 28, 29.

In the election of grace is revealed the choice of the saints in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. This election recognizes no earthly distinctions, whether of nations or condition; but regarding all its subjects alike as sinners in themselves justly condemned, it secures to every one of them justification and salvation in Christ Jesus, who is exalted with the right hand of God a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins. All this Israel shall be saved, not by virtue of their natural birth or relationship, but by the grace of God, being justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. This righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ is unto all and upon all that believe; for there is no difference.—See Romans iii. 21-26. Since

Jews and Gentiles are alike dead in sin, there is nothing to commend the natural Israelite to the saving grace of God in preference to the Gentile sinner. Indeed, such a consideration, if it could be accepted, would utterly destroy the claim of grace as bringing salvation to such as were thus commended to divine favor, so that they would have to ascribe all the glory of their salvation to their natural relation to Abraham.

In the preceding context Paul admonished those Gentiles to whom he wrote of the folly of boasting against the natural Israelites, as if there had been any superiority in those Gentiles over the Jews, for which grace had been given to them. In pursuance of this admonition he tells them in this last verse of our text that although those natural Israelites were as concerning the gospel enemies for the sakes of the Gentiles, yet in that election by which that nation was chosen in their patriarchal progenitors, they were beloved for the fathers' sakes. This consideration must effectually silence all boasting against the natural Israelites on the part of Gentile believers. The eternal salvation of the saints is secured in their election in Christ before time was created; but it was through the enmity of the natural Israelites that the apostles were driven abroad to preach the gospel of that salvation among the Gentiles. It was when the Jews contradicted and blasphemed, "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."—Acts xiii. 46-48. See also Acts xviii. 6 and xxviii. 24-31. In this way the Gentile believers were profited through the enmity of the carnal Israelites, in that they thereby received the proclamation of the gospel. And even common justice among men should prompt those Gentiles freely to reciprocate the great favor which they had thus received by gladly welcoming believing Israelites to their love and fellowship in that gospel. Indeed, this is the very essential spirit of the gospel. Instead of a covetous desire to exclude others from the enjoyment of the benefit of the preaching of the glad tidings of salvation, they who have received the blessed revelation as the truth is in Jesus, desire that its rich abundance should be made known to all men everywhere, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. The natural mind may suggest a resentful feeling against those who have persecuted us and opposed the truth, but the mind of Christ directs that the saints bless and pray for their persecutors; and in this respect the commandment

given by our Lord to his apostles will apply to every believer even in this day, "Freely ye have received, freely give."—Matt. x. 8.

It is well to regard the truth as settled that whatever difficulties may arise in our understanding of any portion of Scripture, it is only our own darkness which is the occasion of our inability to see perfect harmony in all the inspired testimony. The sovereignty of God is inseparable from his election, and nothing can limit either without conflicting with his infinity in wisdom and power. Therefore any doctrine which denies the effectual election of every saved sinner is simply infidelity, as it denies the perfection of God. May we be led by the Spirit to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

MARRIAGES.

On July 16, 1884, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, at the residence of Eugene D. Wood, Mr. Smith S. Frambes, of Atlantic City, and Miss Kate Waters, of Hopewell, both of New Jersey.

At the residence of the bride's mother, June 24, 1884, by Elder T. M. Poulson, Mr. Littleton J. Byrd and Miss Eliza S. Mears, both of Accomac Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

In compliance with the request of Elder G. Cottrell, I now forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of **Dennis Frank**, who departed this life April 3, 1884, aged 75 years, 3 months and 17 days. He died at Union City, Ind., and his remains were interred in the McKinney burying ground, near Piqua, Miami County, Ohio. His funeral was preached by Elder G. Cottrell, at the Providence Church meeting house, on the second Sunday in June. Brother Frank, in his younger days, about forty years ago, united with the New School Baptists, and remained with them a few years; but becoming dissatisfied with the doctrine and practice of the New School, he, with others, called a committee of Old School Baptists, who constituted a church among them, upon the faith and practice of the Old School Baptists. Brother Frank was a firm believer and disciple for about twenty-nine years. When suffering from pains and earthly troubles in the last hours of his affliction, he was a firm believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, who, he believed, was at the right hand of God, making intercession for his people. He also believed that all things were eternally fixed in the mind of Jehovah, not only as to the sure salvation of all his people, but that all earthly powers were fixed, and had their bounds, inasmuch that God's unchangeable love and mercy and salvation of his people could not be thwarted in the least. For by him all things consist, whether principalities, or powers, or things present, or things to come. All things were made by him, and for him. Well might the dear old brother be comforted, for he believed in the sure mercies of God, who hath power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor. Great is the consolation to every one of God's children, that he hath made all things for himself. For he saith unto Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up." Thus the aged brother had a shield and hiding-place in that God who has said that salvation is sure to all the seed.

NEWTON PETERS.

ROSE HILL, Ohio, June 16, 1884.

DIED—At the residence of her son, near London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., **Elizabeth Carille**, in her 96th year, being born September 28, 1788. Truly a mother in Israel is passed away. There are not many such

mothers. Her advice and admonitions, which she was always ready to give, were safe for any child of God to take and pay respect to. She was conversant with the Scriptures, and others were blessed through her knowledge of them, not only of the letter, but of the truth contained in them. I have been seeing her quite frequently for four years, and have enjoyed hearing her talk of the blessed hope that saved her from despair. When I first became acquainted with her she went to meeting, but it was not long before she got too feeble to enjoy going down to the meeting house; but she said she met with us in spirit. She would frequently ask, before I left her house to go to meeting, if I had a text or subject in my mind that I expected to speak from. If I had, she would turn to it and say, "Now I can read and think while you preach, and, it may be, some of the same things." She manifested a great desire at all times to be reconciled and submissive, saying that she was tired of living, but wanted to be willing to wait. She was baptized July 13, 1824, by the late Elder Thomas Barton, and remained a faithful and worthy member of the church at London Tract until her death, which was on the morning of the 16th of June, 1884. The neighborhood has lost a friend, the family a mother indeed, and the church a worthy and faithful member; but we feel sure that the one that sustained her here, and made her faithful and worthy, has taken her to himself; hence we only mourn her absence, and hope that our end here may be like hers, peaceful and happy. May the Lord sustain all who mourn by his grace.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

NEWARK, Delaware.

Howard Early died November 9, 1883, at his residence in Owen Co., Ky., in the 78th year of his age. Brother Early was born in Madison Co., Va., emigrated to this state in 1830, was married to Tabitha A. Lewis in 1826, was baptized on profession of his faith, in the fellowship of Poplar Grove Church, in 1832, and was elected clerk of said church. He was dismissed by letter in 1842, and was in the constitution of Little Hope Church, Owen Co., Ky., in 1843, of which he remained a member until his death. Brother Early was truly a Baptist, firm and uncompromising in the doctrine and order of the Lord's house, of stern integrity, and unflinching in whatever he believed to be his duty. He had an earnest desire for the welfare of Zion, desiring greatly that the members should keep up the regular meetings, and not forsake the assembling of themselves together. He spent a good deal of his time in traveling among the churches, and never seemed to enjoy himself so well as when in the company of the brethren. He was elected deacon of the church in 1844, holding this office until his death. He leaves nine children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, together with a large circle of friends and relatives, to mourn their loss. To the church the loss is almost irreparable. Often in inclement weather, and during his decline, which was for several years, the church met at his house, which was a home for the lovers of truth. His funeral was preached on the first Sunday in June, at Little Hope Church, to a large audience, by Elder J. M. Demaree, from Rev. i. 18, followed by the writer of this notice. Shortly before his death he quoted a portion of the hymn beginning, "Farewell, my brethren, the time is at hand." May God abundantly bless the sorrowing and afflicted ones, and save us all for Jesus' sake.

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

CHESTER, Mason Co., Ky.

OUR dearly beloved sister, **Virtue Sweet**, was born in Stephenstown, Albany Co., N. Y., March 8, 1794, and was married to Valentine Sweet, in Delaware Co., N. Y., in 1812. Her maiden name was Horton. She united with the Old School Baptists in Delaware Co., N. Y., about forty-two years ago, and was baptized by Elder I. Hewitt. Some time after she obtained a letter of dismissal, and moved to Ogle Co., Ill., and united with the Buffalo Grove Church, of the same faith and order. On the 3d of May, 1858, her dear companion departed this life, and left her and nine children to mourn their loss; but thanks be to God, she was blessed with a good family of children, who were kind to her in her

declining years. The writer has been personally acquainted with her and five of her children for twenty-five or thirty years, and can say that she was truly a mother in Israel, always for peace, and contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. She died at the house of her son-in-law, Dennis McKeel, in Ogle Co., Ill., March 25, 1884. She leaves eight children and a large family of grandchildren and great-grandchildren to mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope. The writer tried to preach on the occasion from 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4, to a large congregation of brethren and sympathizing friends, after which we deposited in the tomb the mortal body of the saint, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. May God bless the family of the bereaved sister, is the prayer of an old sinner saved by grace, if saved at all.

BENJAMIN SALLEE.

GRATIOT, Wis., May 26, 1884.

DEPARTED this life March 8, 1884, William Hendricks, aged 71 years, 3 months and 15 days. His disease was dropsy. He was confined to his bed two months, suffering a great deal during that time, but bore his afflictions with christian fortitude. He would often say that he was not afflicted like Job, and he was not afraid to die. He had a hope beyond the grave. What a comfort it was to me, to know that he was submissive to God's will. He had been a faithful member of the Old School Baptists for fifty-two years, and was also a deacon for twenty years, being faithful and upright in all his walk. He was a dear lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of which he had been a constant reader for many years. He leaves two sons and three daughters, with myself, to mourn our loss, besides thirteen grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. I often feel sad and lonely, but knowing that it is God's will, I live in hope that we will some day meet around the throne of God, where all will be peace.

"Dearest husband, how I miss thee,
And my loss I deeply feel;
But 'tis God who hath bereft me,
He can all our sorrows heal.
"Yet again I hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is fled;
Then in heaven I hope to greet thee,
Where no parting tear is shed."

REBECCA L. HENDRICKS.

In compliance with the request of the bereaved husband, Charles Stout, I forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of his wife, Mrs. Mary Stout, who departed this life June 26, 1884, in the 75th year of her age. Mrs. Stout was taken suddenly ill, about five o'clock p. m., with an apoplectic fit, and half an hour after being removed to her bed she breathed her last. The affliction was exceedingly severe upon our dear brother Stout, coming so unexpectedly; but that grace which had been his support for many years sustained him while passing through such a fiery ordeal. Our sister was baptized by the late Elder P. Hartwell, June 11, 1853, and therefore had been a member of the church in this place thirty-one years. She has left a husband and many children and relatives, as well as the church, who miss her company very much; for she was unalterably fixed in the doctrine of eternal, unconditional and personal election of the church, and not any of the sophistry of the carnal religious teachers of our time could move her from the steadfastness in the faith once delivered to the saints. Her funeral was very numerous attended June 29th, and the following declaration of Scripture was used as a text upon the occasion: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., July 22, 1884.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church of Fairfield, Michigan, will hold a yearly meeting at their meeting house in Fairfield, to commence on Friday, September 25, 1884, and continue three days. All of our faith and order wishing to attend are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

CHARLES B. LIVESAY, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will hold their next session with the Bowdoinham Church, at Bowdoinham village, commencing on Friday, September 5, 1884, and continue three days.

By that time we hope to have our meeting house completed, and it is our desire that those who love the truth who can meet with us will come and assist us in dedicating our house to the worship of the true and living God.

H. CAMPBELL.

THE Western Association of Predestinarian Regular Baptists will hold her thirty-third annual session (the Lord willing) with Middle River Church, in Madison Co., Iowa, commencing on Saturday, September 13th, and continue the two following days, being September 13th, 14th and 15th, 1884. All of our faith and order are invited.

Those coming by rail will stop at Earlham, about thirty-five miles west of Des Moines, on Friday before, where they will be met with conveyances and taken to the different places of entertainment.

ASA B. SMITH.

THE Sciota Regular Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Turkey Run Baptist Church, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1884, at ten o'clock.

Those coming from the north or northeast by railroad will come to Columbus, and take the Sciota Valley R. R. to Ashville, where they will be met and conveyed to the association Friday morning. Those coming from the east and south will come to Lancaster, Fairfield County, and take the Muskingum Valley R. R. to Amand, where they will be met on Friday morning at ten o'clock, and taken to the grounds.

G. N. TUSING.

THE Siloam Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Rock Creek Church, two miles east of Denver, North Co., Mo., on Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1884, and continue the two following days. Albany, Gentry Co., is the nearest railroad town, and the brethren will be there on Friday before with teams to convey those that come by railroad. There is a daily hack line from Albany to Denver. We extend a cordial invitation to all lovers of the truth to meet and worship with us.

ISAIAH J. CLABAUGH.

THE Mad River Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held at Rimer, Putnam Co., Ohio, beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1884, and continue three days.

Those coming from the north or south to Columbus Grove will take the C., D. & St. L. R. R., and go west to Rimer Station. Those coming from the west will change cars at Delphos, and take the above road and run east to Rimer. We cordially invite all.

URIAH TRUMBO, Clerk.

THE Des Moines River Regular Old School Baptist Association will convene, if the Lord will, on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1884, with the Des Moines Church, Wapello Co., Iowa.

Those coming by rail through Burlington will take the C., B. & Q. R. R. to Fairfield, and then the Rock Island R. R. to the county line. Those coming through Keokuk will take the K. & D. R. R. to Eldon. Those coming from the west through Ottumwa will take the K. & D. R. R. to Eldon, where they will be met with conveyances. The brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

ALPHEUS LINE.

THE Licking Association of Particular Baptists will hold her next annual session with the Mt. Gilead Church, the Baptist Church at May's Lick, beginning on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1884, and continue three days.

Those coming by public conveyance will take the train for Maysville, at Lexington, at about 5:00 o'clock on Thursday evening, or Friday morning at 6:00 o'clock, for Helena Station. Those coming via Cincinnati will

cross the river to Covington, and take the Kentucky Central, via Paris, at about 2:30 o'clock, for Helena, where conveyances will be in waiting. Those coming by private conveyance will come to May's Lick, and inquire for Frank Laythan, Mrs. Arzulia Laythan, or Anthony Laythan. May's Lick is on the Maysville and Lexington turnpike road, twelve miles from the former place.

We have the promise of several ministering brethren from both east and west, among whom are Elders Beebe, Durand, Smoot, Purington, White and Weaver. Brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited.

J. H. WALLINGFORD, Pastor.

THE Greenville Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association will convene on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1884, with the Refuge Church, in Allen Co., Ohio.

Those coming on the Chicago & Atlantic R. R., or on the Toledo, Delphos & St. Louis R. R., will stop at Spencerville, where they will be met by the brethren. A general invitation is extended to all who love the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. B. BREES.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Conference will commence on Friday, August 29th, 1884, at 10:30 a. m., in North Berwick, Maine, and continue three days. All are invited to meet with us who have a willing mind to do so. There will be teams at North Berwick depot, the day before the meeting, to take those who come to the place of the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will convene with the Mercer's Run Church, Greene Co., Ohio, on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1884, at 10:00 o'clock a. m., and continue the two following days.

Those coming on the cars will come to Xenia, Ohio, where they will be met on Thursday evening and Friday morning, and conveyed to places of entertainment and to the meeting.

Those coming by private conveyance from the north and west will call on brethren Edward Ferguson and Edward Davis. Those coming from the south and east will call on brethren Daniel Oglesbee and Wm. Miller.

We extend a general invitation to all lovers of the truth, and especially to brethren in the ministry of our faith and order.

ALLEN HAINES.

THE Mt. Pleasant Association will meet, if the Lord will, with the Cane Run Church, near Turner's Station, Ky., on Friday before the first Saturday in September, (5th), 1884.

Those coming from Louisville or Cincinnati by rail, will be met at Turner's Station, and cared for.

N. A. HUMSTON.

THE Salem Association of Regular Old School Baptists is appointed to be held with the Little Hope Church, Owen Co., Ky., 1 1/2 miles south of Glencoe, commencing on Wednesday before the fourth Saturday in August, 1884, continuing three days.

Brethren and sisters desiring to be with us are cordially invited to come to Glencoe, where they will be met with conveyances and taken to the grounds.

Those coming by public conveyance will leave Cincinnati on the Louisville & Nashville R. R., on Tuesday evening at 3:50, or Wednesday morning at 8:22 for Glencoe. Those coming from Louisville will take the Cincinnati train for the same station.

J. H. WALLINGFORD, Pastor.

THE Tallahatchie Association will be held with the church at Chewala meeting house, in Marshall Co., Miss., ten miles southeast from Holly Springs, commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1884, and continue the two following days.

Brethren are invited to meet with us, and especially brethren in the ministry.

S. A. WELLS, Mod.

J. S. SINGLETON, Clerk.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet with Harmony Church, in Peoria County, Ill.,

twenty-five miles west of Peoria, on Wednesday before the second Sunday in September, 1884.

Those coming by railroad will stop at Elmwood, on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy R. R., running from Peoria to Galesburg. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Big Spring Association will be held with the Pleasant Grove Church, in Coles Co., Ill., about six miles southwest of Mattoon, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1884, at 10:30 a. m.

All coming by rail from the east, north or south will stop at Mattoon. Those coming from the west will stop at Gasp, six miles west of Mattoon, where there will be teams to convey them to places of entertainment.

ISAAC TAYLOR.

THE First Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas will be held with the Little Hope Church, two miles north of Tonganoxie, Leavenworth Co., Kansas, beginning on Friday before the last Saturday in September, 1884.

Those coming by rail will stop at Tonganoxie, where they will be met by friends and cared for. We give a general invitation to all who love the truth.

T. J. HOUSH, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Middleburgh Church, on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, (17th and 18th), 1884.

The meeting will be held at their house of worship on East Hill, Schoharie Co., N. Y., six miles east of Middleburgh depot, and four miles north of Livingstonville. We give a general invitation to all who love the truth. Those coming by rail will be met at Middleburgh depot on Tuesday, on the arrival of the noon and evening trains, and taken to places of entertainment, and to the meeting.

G. J. BORTHWICK, Church Clerk.

THE Oconee Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord will, on Wednesday after the second Sunday in September next, at Moriah Church, Madison County, Ga. Brethren and sisters are invited to attend, especially ministering brethren. All such as desire to come by railroad will please correspond with brother W. J. Fleeman, at Winterville, Ga., and he will have them met at Winterville with conveyances.

F. M. McCLEROY, Clerk.

THE Salem Association of Regular Baptists will convene with Rock Creek Church, in Hancock County, Illinois, to commence on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, (the 20th, 21st and 22d), 1884, and continue three days. This church is situated near Ferris, on the C., B. & Q. R. R., and also the Wabash crossing at Ferris.

Those coming by railroad will be met at Ferris with conveyances. A general invitation is given, and we hope to have a good attendance, especially of the ministering brethren.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

THE First Northwestern Old School Baptist Association will be held with Buffalo Grove Church, near Polo, Ogle Co., Ill., commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in September 1884, at 10:00 a. m., and continue three days.

The brethren and friends will please remember the time for holding the association for this year, as it is changed from August to September.

M. PARSONS, Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association will meet, if the Lord will, with the New Hope Church, at Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Friday, September 5, and continue three days.

Those coming on the C., B. & Q. R. R. from the southwest, will stop at Avon, and from the northeast, stop at St. Augustine. Those

Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 52. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1884. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LITTLE RED, Ark., July 31, 1884.

W. J. PURINGTON, HOPEWELL, N. J.—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—It is contended by some in this country that when God first made man, he did not know that there would be certain men that now exist, nor that Satan would put such wickedness into man as he did, or has put into him; and that God did not know what would occur until the same took place. Now, brother Purington, if you can take the time, will you take up the subject of the foreknowledge of God, and discuss it according to the teachings of the Bible, and expose heresy, or the opposite of truth, and let the brethren and sisters read it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? Excuse the errors in my writing, and correct whatever you may notice wrong. Please attend to my request at your earliest convenient opportunity, and oblige a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, to the entire exclusion of anything foreseen in me, or afterseen.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

E. S. LEGGETT.

REPLY.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—In compliance with your request I feel to pen a brief reply to your desire; and, in my prefatory remarks, would state that persons making such statements concerning the eternal God either make willfully false statements, or else show an absolute blindness of the majesty, power and wisdom of Jehovah, and an unpardonable ignorance of the written Scriptures. But alas! we are living in an age of the world when plain, positive and cogent Bible truth is set aside, and what men call "science" is now taken, instead of the truth of God, given to his ancient servants, and recorded in both the Old and New Testaments. The God of heaven and earth says to and of such characters, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee," &c. When mortals, in the plenitude of their vain wisdom, undertake to advocate that blasphemous sentiment that God did not foreknow all events, it is the placing of the Infinite on an equal footing with the finite, and no sentiment can be more antisciptural and God-dishonoring than that; and Israel's God said, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." If these declarations do not show foreknowledge and perfect knowledge, then terms have no meaning, and there is no possible way to represent realities. As the word "altogether" has been in two of the quotations, it may not be amiss to give its force and meaning. It is in these passages from *yachad*, together, and admits of no separation comparatively or in the aggregate, but binds all in one form, *echad*, one; and the noun "foreknowledge" is from the verb or active participle *progno*, to begin to know beforehand. So much for technical terms; and those perfections belong to no being in heaven or on the earth except the "I am that I am."

Now a quotation shall be brought forward to show the infinity of Jehovah, and that nothing ever has transpired nor ever can come to pass so as to frustrate one iota of God's purpose. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient [Hebrew *olam*, indefinite time, and also *quedem*, what is before, or *ad*, eternity, duration, continuity, each of which words shows God's eternal purpose] times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel [Hebrew *etsah*, advice, not the assembly to give it] shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east [doubtless Cyrus], the man that executeth my [not our] counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." These momentous declarations show perfect foreknowledge of every event, eternal purpose, absolute predestination and almighty power, and that everything is ordered by unerring wisdom, and that there is not "a sparrow nor a worm not found in his decrees;" and it requires a mind intoxicated with rationalism, and under the baneful influence of atheism, and led far astray by avowed infidelity, to set aside such God-honoring truth as the inspired prophet Isaiah penned.

Now Scripture testimony shall be given to show that our God raised up wicked men to carry out his purpose; but it has been said, "O you make out that wicked men and devils, then, are God's ministers." But, by the grace of God sustaining me, I do not intend that caviling men, who are not willing to take Scripture testimony in such momentous matters, shall put words into my mouth in

order to make me say what I never did, nor distort what my pen has recorded, and attempt to pervert the same. The writer of this hopes that he is willing to take what inspired men have recorded, and cavilers may put what construction they please upon Scripture testimony. "For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this (cause) have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." "The Lord hath made all (things) for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy." Yet of his dear servants, his children, he says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Were not Joseph's brethren determined that his dreams should not be fulfilled? Certainly they were; but when they had exactly carried out the design of God, and their brother made himself known to them, his words were, "And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send [Hebrew *shalach*, to send, admits of no volition, but absolute sending] me before you to preserve life." "And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant [Hebrew *chashab*, to think, devise, reckon, &c., or in simple plain English, purposed] it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." A vast amount more of Scripture testimony might be adduced from the Old Testament, were it necessary, to corroborate the great, the important truth that Jehovah raised up wicked men to fulfill his purpose, as well as upright men to praise and adore him.

In the case of Joseph's brethren, every act and thought were determined in Jehovah's counsel before he stretched "out the heavens like a curtain."

We will now turn to the New Testament Scriptures, and see if the same awfully momentous truths are not therein recorded. The record made by the inspired penmen, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, concerning the betrayal and crucifixion of the Son of God, ought to convince any one that our God raised up the very characters to do the dreadful work; but it was no less wickedness on their part. In prophecy, some seven hundred years before the mocking, spitting upon and smiting of the dear Redeemer took place, the declarations made were, "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Now the record made by Matthew is, "And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him." See also Mark xv. 1-39; Luke xxii. 63-71; John xix. 1-11. In the terrible agony of our Redeemer, one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.— See Matthew xxvii. 47-49; John xix. 28-30. In the sixty-ninth Psalm, long before the advent of the Messiah, it is declared, "They gave me also gall for my meat: and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." And the pieces of silver were numbered in Zechariah xi. 12.

With what awe, wonder, delight and rapture the humble child of God at times contemplates the glorious truth that prophecy and fulfillment harmonize exactly. And now we will quote from an inspired apostle, who had given him the wisdom, after the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Immanuel, to set forth in awful majesty the reason of such perfect

agreement between prophecy and its fulfillment. "And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou (art) God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his [not their] Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined [Greek *proorizo*, to mark out beforehand] before to be done." Also, said the inspired judge, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man [not Deity] approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did [not simply the man, but God] by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom [the very man, 'approved of God'] God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

My dear brother, a sufficient number of quotations have been made to show the divine concatenation of the record made in the New and Old Testament Scriptures, and that there is no such thing as incongruity found in the record given by inspiration of God, and now some remarks will be made on the subjects embraced in your questions. As stated in a reply to a dear brother not long since, it ought to cause no surprise when the non-professing world and carnal religionists are found caviling with the written Scriptures, showing that rationalism is all the religion they know anything about, which is leading directly to pantheism, and filling our land with openly avowed infidelity, deism and atheism; but when dear brethren and sisters begin to cavil with the letter of the word, it certainly must give them who have stood like "an iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole" of the modern metaphysical teachers of carnal creeds and dogmas, a gloomy feeling; and one of the sure indications is when any of our brethren are not willing to abide by what the prophets and apostles have recorded concerning the purpose of our God. Some of the sure indications of a departure from the record are when the following can be heard: "O, God certainly predestinated all good things, [they in the meantime judging what are good and what are bad]; but as to wicked deeds, they come to pass by permission, or happen so; yet we believe that God foreknew all events," &c. Could anything be absolutely foreknown that was not eternally purposed? Leaving out that portion of the Bible denominated the Apocrypha, there are about eight hundred

thousand words; and in that recorded number of words no mortal can lay his finger on the passage that says God's foreknowledge and predestination are ever separated, neither can the passage be found where Satan has ever deceived God or thwarted Jehovah's purpose, nor that any "wicked man" happened along by chance, and did not exactly fill up the "niche" in the building of God's purpose which he designed he should. But there are an abundance of "wise, learned, modern authors," who tell us "what might have been if so and so had been done;" but such utterances are vanity, and they who declare the same have one difficulty to surmount, and that is, they cannot find a "Thus saith the Lord." All such sophistry avails nothing; for the Lord said, "Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together."

The writer of this reply, years ago, while attending an association, providentially tarried all night with a gentleman, and such he was in the strictest sense of the term; but early in the evening, in the presence of quite a number of brethren and sisters, he stated to me how much he thought of the Primitive Baptists, yet he had one objection against them, viz., they did not believe in a self-existent devil. As the remarks were directed to me, he was requested to produce the Scripture authority for a self-existent devil, and the answer was, "I can readily do that;" but he examined the Bible until nearly midnight, but could not find the passage, yet was sure it was "somewhere." He slept none that night, his nerves were so wrought up, because he could not find in the Scriptures what he wished. What a sad thing for a professed Bible reader and believer, to undertake to find what is not recorded therein. Christ said of his visible followers, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot (the son) of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve." No other person could do what Judas was chosen to do; neither could any other man do the part Pilate was appointed for; nor could any one take the place of Herod; and so with every wicked man connected with the crucifixion of Christ. Every "step" taken, from the slaying of the young children by that hellish monster Herod, to the nailing of Christ to the cross, was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; and so with every event to transpire in this world until the mystery of our God is accomplished and the last trumpet sounds. O God! if according to thy will, deliver the writer and the readers of this communication from caviling with thy written word, and clothe our minds with humility, reverential awe and childlike simplicity.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., August 7, 1884.

CANTON, Texas, April 14, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel inclined to write something relative to the mysteries spoken of in the Scriptures, man himself being one of the mysteries. Not because I feel able to explain or to unveil any of them, but because I have been made to meditate upon them. In 1 Timothy iii. 16, it is said, "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Too high, broad and deep for man to fathom or comprehend in all its relations to man in time and in eternity. Paul, who was inspired, and was able to speak with tongues, had just been writing to Timothy, instructing him in regard to the duties of bishops and deacons; and in his charges to him he made use of the language quoted above. And if it was a mystery to Paul, it is equally so to us now. God has ever been mindful of man, from his creation to the present time; but man has ever been proud, rebellious and vain, and has run counter to all the laws, precepts and examples given him for his government and rule of action. And were it not for the restraining power of God, even the best of men would run into all manner of excess and wickedness. But when the time arrives for God to show man what he is by nature, and what he must be by grace in order to see God in peace, he is humbled, and his cry is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Like Paul, he is turned about. Then he becomes a great mystery to himself. He finds himself in possession of two natures, or principles. With one he desires to serve God and keep his commandments; with the other he serves the flesh, which is prone to sin, and is in opposition to God and godliness. The spirit of antichrist, is ever present to captivate and mislead the children of the kingdom, and to bring them into bondage to sin, so that a continual warfare is kept up. And these are not all the mysteries we meet with. When we look around and take a survey of the earth, and the waters in and upon it, with the inhabitants of each, from the smallest insect, many of which are too small to be seen with the naked eye, in regular graduation up to the whale in the waters, and the lion and the elephant of land animals, and all manner of birds and fowls, all possessing natures and instincts different from each other, and having different modes of procuring a living, and then view the vegetable kingdom, with its countless variety, as well as the minerals and precious metals and stones, are not all these mysteries deep and profound, when we undertake to comprehend the infinity of them, their uses, &c.? And then we look above the earth, and behold the heavenly host of luminaries, varying in magnitude and brilliancy, and behold their order, and for aught I know they may be so many inhabited worlds.

Of all the earthly creation, man alone is endowed with reason, and a desire to know and understand these things. But when he undertakes to look into these things, he is lost in mystery. The tornado, the earthquake, the burning volcano, that belches forth fire and lava, the lightning that flashes in the clouds, and the terrible thunder that follows it, are all demonstrations of power so vastly superior to that of man that he can stand in awe and feel his utter unworthiness. It is said in holy writ, "What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" God has revealed himself to man as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And all things were created by him and for him. He had the wisdom to design, the power and mechanism to execute, a purpose to serve, and the foresight to see the end from the beginning. He was not dependent upon man or any other dependent thing for advice or for help to carry into effect any of his purposes or designs. Yet man is sometimes puffed up with pride and vain glory, and imagines that he is something great, and claims to be a co-worker with God. How any man that has ever been taught to see his true condition can arrogate to himself such power and dignity, I am unable to understand, when we are taught in the Scriptures that it was only by Christ taking upon himself a body of flesh and blood, and fulfilling the law that man had violated, and shedding his blood, that he redeemed man from under the curse of the law. Then how can he assist God in redeeming others, when he did not, nor could he, assist in redeeming himself? It seems like presumption in any man to assume such power, and to so teach people. Some wicked men have been worshiped and flattered until they have imagined that they had power to set bounds to the sea, and to remove mountains at their command. How any man in this enlightened age, with the Bible in his hand, and professing to know Christ as his Redeemer, can claim any such power, is strange indeed. Christ has said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." He is also Lord of lords and King of kings, and his power and dominion know no bounds. Then what can man do but let him reign supreme, and ascribe to him all honor, power and glory, and praise him for what he has been pleased to do? And I think that all who have been taught by the Spirit are willing to do that, and claim no worth or merit in and of themselves. He is the only way; no other can be found. Every one who feels that it was by the death and suffering of Christ that redemption and eternal salvation was wrought out, can adopt the language of the poet, who said,

"Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groan'd upon the tree?
Amazing pity! Grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!"

He who was Lord of heaven and earth assumed a body of flesh and blood, and lived a sinless life, no guile being in his mouth. When he had preached his everlasting gospel,

and his hour had fully come, he suffered wicked men to take him and crucify him between two guilty culprits, after they had placed a crown of thorns upon his righteous head, and mocked, derided and spit upon him, in order to make his death as ignominious as their malice could invent. And they took every precaution to prevent his resurrection; but in that they failed. So the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain, as in this case, and also that of Joseph's brethren, and thousands of other cases.

And now, in conclusion, leaving the subject of mysteries, I wish to say a few things that are better understood than practiced, I think. What I am about to say is not in a fault-finding spirit, but with the best of feeling toward the brethren. It is in regard to the duties of pastors and ministering brethren generally, and the churches to which they preach and administer the ordinances. I will begin with the minister, and qualify my remarks by saying that they are men of like passions with ourselves; and as such, through the weakness of the flesh, they sometimes fail to reprove and rebuke disorderly practices, and too often fail to exhort the brethren to love and to good works. It is well to indoctrinate the churches with sound doctrine; it is also well to admonish, entreat and exhort the churches to live up to their duty in all respects; and if there be any disorderly and unruly members, they should be reprov'd, rebuked, and that sharply, if need be; and if that will not reclaim them, they should be dealt with by the church, according to the gospel. Although Paul was so able in doctrine, he was also mindful to exhort the brethren to love and to good works; and he was bold enough to expose, reprove and rebuke all that he found going out of the way. Now, as to duties of the church toward their ministers, they should watch over them for good, with all meekness. If the minister advances doctrine or introduces practices into the church which are not according to "Thus saith the Lord," and not according to the precepts and examples of Christ and his apostles, the church should call his attention to what she thinks is amiss. The minister, if faithful, would thank the church for showing him his error; and if he is not faithful, but is stubborn and unruly, he will be apt to manifest it by not listening to the voice of the church. And whenever a minister labors for a church, it is her duty to see to his temporal wants. The church should not wait for him to call upon her for help; for if he is faithful, and is preaching because he feels it a duty that God has laid upon him, and he is not preaching for filthy lucre, he will be slow to call for help. And it certainly would be wrong in the church to neglect him, so far as to drive him to that point. Many of them have families, and as a general thing, are poor men, as far as this world's goods are concerned. And if they have to labor for the en-

tire support of themselves and families, they are the worst burdened people we have. They have but five days in the week to make their living, for the other two are commonly spent in traveling and preaching. They have no time to rest, no time to read, no time to visit the brethren. My opinion is, (and I think it is sustained by the Scriptures), that whenever a church has a faithful minister, it is the duty of the members, as many as can conveniently do so, to visit him at his home, encourage him with words of comfort and consolation; and not only so, but they should make themselves acquainted with his daily wants, and if he lacks for food or raiment for himself or family, provide them for him, so that when duty calls him to preach he can leave home with a lighter heart, when he knows that his family is as well provided for as his brethren's. I will go a little further, and say, that while it is the duty of the church to sustain her minister, I do not think it is enjoined on the church to raise the minister and his family above themselves, or exempt him entirely from labor, when he has spare time, nor his family from all household duties, when the brethren and sisters all have their daily work to do. There would be no equality about that. Most of the brethren and their families have to labor, and deny themselves many of the luxuries of life. And if there be any indigent brethren or sisters belonging to the church, they should be looked after and cared for in the proper way. If all these things were properly attended to, I think there would be more life and unity among the churches, and a better state of feeling. From one who feels himself to be very small, not even as the small dust of the balance.

E. J. PARSONS.

HEDGE'S STATION, Ky., Feb. 25, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I forward to you a letter from a dear sister in Christ, which I have long desired to see published in the SIGNS, and even had her consent. Should you see proper to give it a place in the columns of our dear paper, I believe it would find its way to the heart of the true believer, and perhaps comfort some poor, tried soul, whose faith is being tried in the furnace of affliction. Its power will be felt by all who have tasted of the heavenly gift, and have known what it is to partake of the joys and sorrows of our crucified Savior.

ANNA STEVENSON.

FEBRUARY 24, 1880.

ANNA STEVENSON—DEAR SISTER:—I have often thought of trying to write to you, and I feel this morning that I must write, although I do not feel well. But I must tell you how much I appreciate your love and true regard for me as a christian. If you knew me as well as I know myself, I fear your love and regard for me would not be so great. I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing. I often feel that I am so full of sin, there is no room for anything good; that my sins have banished the pres-

ence of my Savior, and I have to say with weeping Mary, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." I have to mourn an absent God, seeking rest and finding none, until the well known voice returns, which spoke peace to Mary when weeping at the tomb. If ever I should reach the heavenly clime of immortal bliss, it will be alone through the atoning blood of the crucified Savior; for I could have no righteousness of my own to plead before the face of a thrice holy God. I could only say, as Jeremiah the prophet did, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." But I hope I have a righteousness that is of God; for my faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. How sweet it is to have a faith that sometimes takes our affections from things on earth, and places them on things in heaven, where Jesus is, who is the Mediator between God and man, and maketh intercession for the saints, his people, whom he loved so well that he laid down his life for them, and suffered death on the cross, that there should be a pure fountain opened to wash away the sins of his people; that he might present them holy, without spot or blemish before the Father. There is no other cleansing power; for self-righteousness belongs to the Pharisees; but justifying righteousness belongs to God and his people. How sweet to know that the salvation of his people was completed when he was nailed to the cross, and cried, "It is finished." Jesus suffered, that his saints might find comfort in suffering; for they are tried in the furnace of affliction. The redeemed are those who are brought up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Our trials and afflictions are very needful, though we may feel that they are more than we can bear. They are the furnace that consumes our dross and refines the gold. They draw us nearer to God, who has said, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." He alone can know all our heartburnings and anguish of soul. He is a sure refuge in time of trouble. He is a friend in need, and a friend indeed. He is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Friends may leave, and brothers may forsake, but he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. No night is too dark, no place is too lonely, for him to meet the way-worn pilgrim, who often seeks loneliness, and loves the loneliest places he can find, to commune with God in spirit. He can calm the stormy sea and speak peace to the tempest-tossed soul, who feels that he is ready to perish, and says, "Lord, save, or I perish." Dear sister, let us try to put our trust in him, for he is faithful who has promised to be with his saints and bring them safely through the deep waters and fiery trials, though he may hide his face for a season, to teach us that he can withhold or give as he pleases, and that without him we can do nothing. "He will give grace and glory, and no

good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." He gives them his watchful care, his presence and grace, to sustain them in every time of need. I care not for the costly robe and the flowery crown that look so pleasing in the eyes of the world; for if we seek to please the world, we shall fail to please God. I often feel to say, O that I may be clothed with the robe and crown of righteousness that never grows old! The more they are tried and worn, the brighter they will appear. We may be tried by fire, but the flames will not kindle upon us, for the Lord is the righteousness of his saints. He is the author and finisher of their faith. What a perfect faith they have! for Jesus does all things well. O, sister, how it grieves me to hear my friends say that they can of themselves please God; for I know that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." There was a time when Paul chose to serve God, as the Scriptures tell us. He thought he was doing God service in persecuting the saints. So do all, unto this day, who choose of themselves to serve God. They call the saints all manner of hard names, and say, "Away with such people; away with their doctrine; it is a hard doctrine; we will not have it." So did those who followed the Savior while in a state of nature. They said his sayings were "hard sayings: who can hear them?" They went back and followed him no more. But how different with his apostles when he said, "Will ye also go away?" They said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." They loved his "hard sayings." They were "words of eternal life" unto them. They would follow him, though they had to pluck the ears of corn and eat when they became hungry. They cared not for the feast that satisfied the natural appetite: they were feasting on the bread of life that came down from heaven. They loved the humble Nazarene because he first loved them, and was drawing them by cords of love. They followed him faithfully until the time that God willed they should forsake him. God willed that he should suffer alone, because he knew his saints would often feel lonely in their deep afflictions. When he was nailed to the cross, there was no kind hand to bathe his bleeding wounds. There was no friend near to give him drink when he cried, "I thirst." He had to drink the bitter cup to the very dregs before he finished the work he came to do. O how bitter the cup must have been when he felt that God had forsaken him, when suffering the agonies of death! Well might he cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Do not his saints sometimes, when in pain of heart and bitterness of soul, breathe forth the same prayer? If we be partakers of his joys, we must also be partakers of his sufferings. In my meditations I feel to ask, Why should Jesus suffer so? The echo responds, For the great love he bore to his people, that they might find comfort in suffer-

ing. Do we not sometimes feel that we are partakers of his sufferings, when our heart is burdened with many sorrows, and we think there is no one on earth that can understand our feelings? And often when we have turned to God in agony of soul, he has withdrawn his presence, as he did from his Son when he was in the agonies of death. We may not have our side pierced with the enemy's spear, but our hearts are often pierced with many trials that make us feel it is bleeding at every pore. Our hands and feet may never be nailed to the cross, but our spirit often receives wounds equally as grievous to be borne as the rugged nails that pierced the Savior's hands and feet, when those we thought to be our friends have betrayed us with a kiss. And when we thirst for love and peace, we have to receive the vinegar, the wormwood and the gall.

OLIVIA SEWELL.

NEAR PANOLA, Ga., July 8, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the goodness of the covenant-keeping God, I am permitted to make another attempt to communicate a few scattering thoughts to the brethren and sisters. The Lord being my helper, I will write a short letter. Without his help I cannot write to profit. I am still clinging to my little hope, which is a sweet comfort to me, and without it I do not know how I could get along through this world of sin and temptation. Although my pilgrimage here has not been as long as many of the dear brethren and sisters, yet I have met with many troubles and trials along my way. This blessed hope has been an anchor to my poor soul. I sometimes feel much cast down and disquieted, dark clouds of unbelief gather around, and I have only a faint glimmer of light; but after awhile the dark clouds disappear, and day begins to dawn, and light appears. Then I am made to rejoice, and can realize more fully the goodness and mercy of the all-wise and powerful God, and feel a thankfulness to him for his loving-kindness and tender care in sustaining me. What a refuge for poor, weary, laden pilgrims, when leaning on his bosom. His love is such as tender parents feel for their children, and even more tender. O wondrous love! How good and marvelous are his works! How sweet to think upon the loving-kindness and tender mercy which he shows to his little ones. He is continually showing us love, pity and compassion. And yet we sometimes are ready to murmur at his dealings with us, when he sends so much trouble and suffering upon us. But we ought to remember that it is only the chastening rod he lays upon us. He chasteneth whom he loveth, and no doubt the stripes are for some disobedience on our part. His love never fails, neither does he leave or forsake us. Earthly friends may leave and forsake us, but he is ever a friend. O how unworthy I feel for such love, and of a place among the followers of Christ. My desire is to

live rightly, but my evil nature will not let me, and it gives me much trouble. Surely I am the vilest of the vile. Can it be that Jesus died for such a poor, sinful worm as I?

"Alas! and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Savior die?
Would he devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

It is a sweet blessing to have the evidence that we have been born of the Spirit. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I know that I love the brethren and sisters, but whether it is the right kind of love or not I cannot tell. This one thing I do know, that their company is sweet, their union dear, and their words are delightful to me. I would meet with them much oftener than I do, if it were in my power, for their communion indeed is sweet. I meet with many disappointments in that way, which causes me heartaches. Sometimes I think, Surely I am not a child of God, or there would not be so many things thrown in my way to keep me from our meetings, which makes my road much rougher. It is a sweet blessing to be in the arms of the church. What a sweet tie it is that binds us together as brethren and sisters! No earthly power can break that tie and relationship. We are heirs together, and joint heirs with Christ. The world may frown and scoff at us, but why need we care? If the Lord is for us, who can be against us? We are few in number, but it seems to me that it is clear proof that we are right.

"Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there;
But wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveler."

The doctrine of the Old School Baptists is indeed a glorious doctrine. I believe that everything was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, and that everything is working according to God's counsel, so that we need not question his works. He has a purpose in everything he does, although his purposes are unknown to us.

"He works in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

When I was sixteen years old I was stricken down suddenly with typhoid fever, and lay at the point of death. Often, after my recovery, I thought of what I had passed through, and of being so near death, and at the time was not prepared for death, for I was without hope. But, my beloved brethren, the Lord spared me, and completed the good work he had begun; for two years before I was taken sick, I was in trouble concerning my condition, and five years after my recovery from that spell of sickness, I was relieved of my burden, and was made to rejoice in hope of eternal life, and was given a heart to praise my Maker, and sing the praises of Jesus. My hope is there, my trust is there, my refuge and my resting-place. He is my rock, my tower, my sure defense. Nowhere else can rest be found for our troubled souls.

Brethren and sisters, I desire an interest in your prayers. O pray for me, that I may ever walk in the

christian's pathway. It is only now and then that I have the sweet privilege of enjoying church meetings and hearing the gospel preached. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES, coming twice a month, richly laden with precious truth, is a blessing and a comfort to me. I do not know how I could do without it. Sometimes when cast down, shrouded in doubts and fears, I get the SIGNS, and in reading the letters of the dear saints I find that some of them have the same trials and temptations that I meet. A few months ago I was so cast down that there was scarcely a ray of light to beam upon my pathway. I felt as if the Lord had forsaken me. In my troubles I plead for mercy. He heard my cries, pitied my groans, and came to my relief. O how thankful I was to feel that sweet love, and to believe that I still had a friend in Jesus.

In hope and tender love,

ARMINDA L. DULIN.

P. S.—Will Elder Wm. J. Purington please give his views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on James v. 1, and also on Matt. xix. 24?

A. L. D.

BROUGHTON, Ill., Aug., 1884.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS:—DEAR BRETHREN:—While reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which comes to me laden with precious messages from God's dear children, I am made to rejoice in God my Savior for the hope of eternal life, which he promised before the world began. O blessed doctrine, which proclaims salvation for poor, undone sinners like me; for I have no righteousness of my own to plead. But God is good and kind, and he works all things after the counsel of his own will. That is the reason why I have a hope of a better life. I have many times felt that I would like to tell the saints what I hope the Lord has done for poor, unworthy me. I was born in the state of Virginia, in the year 1829. My father moved to Kentucky when I was quite young, and my mother died when I was small. After her death my father broke up house-keeping, and I was left in the care of an older brother. I finally learned the carpenter's trade, and also served as a soldier in the war with Mexico. I was married in 1852, and moved near Owensville, Ind., the same year, and remained there until June, 1866, when I moved to Illinois. During all this time I was without hope and without God in the world; yet I thought that I could and would get religion whenever I wanted it. I lived in sin and rebellion against God until he caused me to see what a great sinner I was. Then I went to work to try to get clear of my great load of sin which oppressed my sick soul. But there was no rest for me. I went to the mourner's bench, and did all that I knew, or was told to do; yet I got no better, but rather my trouble grew worse, until I finally gave up all hope of ever seeing God in peace. I thought God was too good and just to save such a vile sinner as I was. Then I saw that

"If my soul were sent to hell,
God's righteous law approved it well."

I can never forget the days and nights of trouble and sorrow that I then passed through. But God, in his own time and way, spoke peace to my poor soul, on the 19th of February, 1867. While I was sitting and looking toward the heavens, as the stars began to make their appearance, one by one, and I felt that I had no friend on earth, in my sorrow I cried, "Lord, save, or I perish." In a moment I saw a light shine from heaven, and it shined around me and into my heart. Quick as the lightning's flash my burden of sin was gone, and I was made to rejoice in God my Savior. I then thought that I never would have any more trouble. I loved everybody, and everything appeared different to me. All things seemed to be praising God, my blessed Redeemer, who redeemed his people with his own precious blood. But I soon found that trials and troubles beset me on every hand, and doubts and fears came thick and fast to mar my peace. Thus it has ever been with me since I have had a hope. Sometimes I am in great trouble, and sometimes I am rejoicing in God's love. I have great comfort in knowing that I love the brethren, unworthy as I feel myself to be. My heart warms with love to them when I read their sweet epistles in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. O how impatient I sometimes am to receive my paper, that I may hear from God's dear children. It is indeed food to my hungry soul. I thank God that I have a hope of a better life than this, and it is not for works of righteousness which I have done, but according to his mercy. When I would do good, evil is present with me. The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

After I received a hope in Christ, I united with the Methodists, and remained with them about three years. During this time I read the word of God all my spare time, and my understanding seemed to be enlightened. The more I read, the more I let go of the doctrines and commandments of men. I never had heard the Old Baptists preach, nor did I know anything about their doctrine at that time. I would ask my brethren questions concerning the Scriptures, which seemed to offend them, and finally they grew cold toward me. I became greatly distressed, and if it had been possible for me to fall from grace, then indeed I must have been lost; for I lost confidence, to a great extent, in all religious orders. While in this frame of mind, I was in great trouble; and while under this cloud I moved to Hamilton County, Illinois, near Broughton. Here I went to hear the Old Baptists preach, where it was my lot to hear, for the first time, the gospel of the Son of God preached. It was their communion season, and for the first time I saw the saints wash one another's feet. The scene filled me so unutterably

full that I had to leave the house. I wandered off alone into the woods, that I might commune with my God, and return him thanks for having permitted me, like Simeon of old, to see his salvation. O how I did thank and adore him for having directed me to the place where his people were.

"For in this world I fain would see
The way to endless day;
I wish to run the christian race,
And never go astray."

And now that I had found the people I loved, I thought I must ask for a home among them; yet I felt so unworthy that I deferred, for those people have always seemed too good for me to live with. It seems to me that if I am a saint at all, I am the least of all. But at their April meeting, in 1873, I asked for a home among them, and thanks be to God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, the dear brethren and sisters received me, and I was baptized in the fellowship of the Regular Baptist Church at North Fork.

And now, dear brethren, farewell. May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ keep us during our sojourn on earth, and afterward receive us to glory, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in tribulation,

W. W. GAYLE.

MADISON Co., Ala., June 30, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I now take up my pen to try to drop a few thoughts that may arise in my mind. As I have no particular subject to write upon, I will only write those things which may offer themselves to my mind. I will first notice the character of God, and his dealings with the children of men. I do not view God as some do. I view him as being an all-wise and all-powerful God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; a merciful God, a God of love, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the same unchangeable Being. I will now notice a passage of Scripture, which reads as follows: "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."—Ephesians ii. 8, 9. This grace I understand to be a free favor, and is unmerited kindness on the part of the sinner. I understand that this favor cannot be merited by anything that we can do, as some would have it. It is taught from the pulpit, in all parts of our land and country, that a sinner can begin and work himself into the favor of the Lord. Some will tell the sinner that there is something for him to do, that the Lord has done his part, that he has done all he is going to do, that he has now set life and death before you, and now choose you this day whom ye will serve; that it is now at your choice whether you will have eternal life or not. Now, brethren, we know it to be true that such doctrine is taught, for we hear it daily. We will now see whether there is any good in the sinner, or, in other words, whether there is any life in the sinner or not; for we understand that there must be life before we can work. We understand that the sinner is dead in trespasses and in sins. The Scriptures

say that they are full of wounds and bruises, from the sole of the foot, even to the head, and there is no soundness in them. They have eyes, and see not; ears, and hear not; hearts, and understand not. Now, brethren and friends, would it not appear foolish to go to a dead person and say, "Arise, my friend, and walk: you can if you will." This I understand to be as reasonable as going to a dead sinner, who is as destitute of spiritual knowledge and power as one who is naturally dead. It is just as possible for one who is naturally dead to raise himself to natural life, as it is for a dead sinner to procure eternal life. It is as possible for the child who is born naturally to produce the natural birth, as it is for him to produce the spiritual birth. And it is further taught that a sinner can resist the Spirit, and thus thwart the Lord in his work. Brethren, such a savior is not worth a farthing: one that has given man more power than he himself has. Let those who want such a god have him, and I will try to serve the God that has all power, both in heaven and on earth. Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and the forgiveness of sins unto Israel. If such could be the case, that a sinner could possibly resist the Spirit, there would be a possibility of God being disappointed in the salvation of some of his children; but we do not hold to any such stuff, that God will fail in any of his works. If it were not for the shalls and wills of his holy Word, we might have some room to believe that he could fall short of some of his purpose. Now, to the law and to the testimony. "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Again, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass: as I have purposed, so shall it stand." So we see that if God ever thought of saving his people, or purposed to save them, it is certain to come to pass. So I do not believe there will be one of his children lost. Furthermore, we believe that when God calls a dead Lazarus, he is sure to come forth; or, in other words, a dead sinner. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." He taketh away the stony heart, and giveth them a heart of flesh, a feeling heart. He giveth sight to the blind eyes, and hearing to the deaf ears, and understanding to the heart. Then they are made to see and feel their guilty distance from God, and are made to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Then, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." We believe that all that hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled, and only those that were given to the Son in the covenant by the Father will inherit eternal life, and not one of them will be left out. If there could be one left out, it would not be a complete body, or a complete

house. The only thing I desire to know is, that I belong to that house or body. If I only knew that I belonged in that house, I would be satisfied. We hear Jesus say, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," and, "I will raise him up at the last day." Then it is by grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," &c.

Yours in hope,

L. D. HUDSON.

HIRAMSBURGH, Ohio, Dec. 16, 1883.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—How often my mind is engaged in contemplating divine truth, and how many things are mysterious. There are mysteries in the Scriptures, and it would be well for us to look upon them in their true light, instead of attempting to define them so as to be understood by finite beings. Perhaps I am not just right; but I believe that whatever can be brought to the understanding of unregenerate man, is of no avail in the church of Christ. Since the days of the apostles vain man has attempted to interpret the Scriptures to his own notion of things. This has given rise to divers opinions of Christ and his doctrine. The blessed Savior said that many lo heres and lo theres should be; but he commanded his followers to go not after them. Paul said that after his departure grievous wolves should enter in among the chosen of God, not sparing the flock. He speaks to Timothy on this wise: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." This, then, is the spirit at which the man of God should wage war. We know that sin abounds in the world. God could take us from the world, should he so desire; but he has otherwise decreed. The Savior prayed not that they be taken from the world, but that they be kept from evil. Since, then, we are in the world, we are to battle against untruth as long as God gives us breath. The truth itself can never be overthrown. It is of God; and not until God can be foiled, can infidelity eradicate truth. Our belief must be predicated upon evidence; and such evidence never changes nature. In speaking of the doctrine of God our Savior, we should be careful and not get it doctrines, for such a thing is not taught in God's word. Whenever we see doctrines, we may know that Satan is at the bottom. His cunningly devised fables may look very nice to us sometimes, but to follow them is to end in death. These seducing spirits are not always easily distinguished from truth, and many of us follow them only to find that the supposed friend was but evil made to appear light. Does it not, my dear kindred in Christ, make your heart bleed when you think how easily one is led from the simplicity

of the gospel? How many foes are lying in wait at every turn and corner. Some tell us (and dear brethren, too) that we can speak the truth, but in such a way that none can take offense. How strange! Did our Lord ever lay down such a rule as this? No; but he declared that we should be hated of all men. Again, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" How any can speak the truth without wounding carnal pride, is one of the things that the New Testament does not teach. Again, some tell us to speak of God as having all power, &c.; but some doctrinal points are deep and mysterious, and are not very edifying, and it would be better to leave such points. To this I say that there is not a doctrinal point in God's word but that is edifying to the children of light. As regards these things being mysterious, the apostle has so put it. One was that God was manifest in the flesh. Who of Adam's children has ever understood how such a thing could be? Can any child of God explain it? No; it lies shrouded in mystery. In fact, it would be no mystery if it could be explained. Some have attempted to explain it; but trace those writings, and you will find them to be doctrines. One may say that Christ was neither God nor man, but superangelic, and others that he was one of the trinity; but these all have their foundations in antichrist. Though but a boy, I heartily indorse the writings of Elder Purington on the doctrine of the Godhead. I have been much troubled on that point, but could believe it in no other way than the apostle has it—one God. I well remember one passage that would come to me with much force and beauty: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." But one God himself. The Savior told his followers that the same Spirit which now dwelleth with you shall dwell in you. Now this was the same Spirit, not two. The Holy Ghost was this Spirit poured forth upon all flesh; and the Lord said by the mouth of his prophet Joel that it would be of "my Spirit." The doctrine of election, the doctrine of Christ, is held as a thing that God cannot be guilty of, say these same seducing spirits. Brethren, we do not have to go far to find these spirits, and we must save ourselves from them if we wish to be free. To follow after them would be to put ourselves into bondage. We are told to save ourselves from this untoward generation. May the Spirit lead us in the way of truth.

Your brother in affliction,

GEORGE A. BRETZ.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I have heretofore written you what I hope have been the dealings of God with me in bringing me to feel my lost condition, without hope and without God in the world, and also, as I hope, in giving me a saving knowledge of the truth, and you have seen fit to publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I have thought that I would like to write something of how

my mind has been exercised since I professed a hope in Christ, which has been beclouded with so many doubts and fears that I have sometimes feared I am not a child of God. His word informs us that "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." I find myself often going astray, and many times disobey the Savior's commands, and am so unthankful for his mercies and blessings from day to day, that I am led to conclude that if I am a child of God, I am the least of all. When I read the many communications from those whom I have never seen in the flesh, and your editorials, which so plainly describe my feelings, it is truly strengthening and comforting to my poor heart. The writers all seem to be taught by that same Spirit of truth. When I read your editorial of February 1, 1883, in reply to "A Doubting One," it was very comforting to me, and it seemed to strengthen my hope, as have also the communications from the ministering and other brethren in the SIGNS. Truly it is a medium of correspondence through which the children of God can send words of comfort and encouragement to each other. Although strangers in the flesh, yet they are taught by the same Spirit, and can understand each other, and be edified and strengthened thereby.

"When I turn my eyes within,
All is vain and dark and wild;
Filled with unbelief and sin,
Can I deem myself a child?"

But when I am enabled to look to Jesus, as I sometimes hope I can, then I can say with the poet,

"Plenteous grace with thee is found,
Grace to pardon all my sins."

And, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. It is written for those who are born again, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." O how secure! It is beyond the reach of Satan, who goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and would deceive, were it possible, the very elect. But Paul said to his Corinthian brethren, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way for your escape, that ye may be able to bear it." O how many great and precious promises there are in the Scriptures, for those who are the children of God, and are called according to his purpose. Then what manner of persons ought they to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, who have received a good hope through grace? But alas! I am often led to exclaim, as did Paul, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." I know that none but the dear Savior can deliver me

from this body of sin and death. I thank God that it is not by the will or works of man, but by the gift of God's dear Son, that every member of Christ's body will eventually be saved. If I were as sure that I am a member of that body, as I am that every member of that body will be saved with an everlasting salvation, and that not of themselves, there would be no room for all these doubts and fears. But it is the lot of all God's people to pass through trials and afflictions while in this world of sin and sorrow; but when they shall have passed through all that is designed for them, they shall come forth as gold tried in the fire, and will ascribe all honor and glory to God and the Lamb.

I have already written more than I intended to, and am well aware that there are many more able writers than I am, therefore I will stop, and submit this to your better judgment. Do with it as you see fit, and all will be well with me. If it is not asking too much, I would like Elder Beebe's views on Psalm lxxiii. 4. What is meant by the bands there spoken of? May the God of all truth aid you in your labors of gospel truth.

P. P. N.

LACONIA, Ind., June 28, 1884.

BELOVED BRETHREN BEEBE:—

Perhaps you remember of myself and sister Lavinia Boone having dropped the SIGNS for this year, until we had become more settled in life. When I wrote you, I expected to sell my present home and live with one of my sisters, either in Corydon or Crawfordsville, Indiana; but I was disappointed in selling out, and am still remaining at my old home. I expect to renew my own subscription for the SIGNS at the end of this year, if not providentially hindered. If the dear Lord opens up the way, I may leave here before another new year, as I wish to live where I can have the privilege of meeting with my dear kindred in Christ, and of hearing the truth preached. For some five years, owing to the sickness of my kind husband, I have been deprived of the greatest blessing of this life, that of hearing the truth preached, only what I read in the SIGNS, and other good, sound reading. But I do not wish to murmur, for shall I not drink the cup which my heavenly Father giveth me to drink? He cannot err nor be unkind. "And prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there." But alas! we cannot at all times feel the everlasting arms underneath us. At times we are made to walk through the valley, and to mourn an absent God. This world is not the christian's resting place, and yet the living children of God are the only ones on earth who are truly blessed. "In the world," says the dear Savior, "ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace." Then where are the living children to look for solid comfort, aside from Christ? The peace of Christ passeth all understanding. It is sweet to sit at Jesus' feet, as Mary

did, and have no cares of an earthly nature to take our thoughts and affections off from our blessed Savior.

"With him sweet converse I maintain;
Great as he is, I dare be free;
Tell him of all my grief and pain,
And he reveals his love to me."

My dear sister, Lavinia Boone, and myself are all that remain of our dear old church called Goshen. The house was built some sixty-five years ago. It was then blessed with sound gospel preaching, with some fifty or sixty loving brethren. I joined that church some forty years ago, when nineteen years of age. Sister Boone and myself look back upon the happy days that are past and gone forever. All the loved ones, both the ministering brethren and the other loved ones, have gone to their long home, and the dear old house stood empty until the last few years, when the Campbellites commenced having Sunday school in it. The people around here seem to be rejoicing over the death of those who "preached such hard doctrine, and were opposed to good works, such as Sunday schools and missionary societies." A few Sundays ago I went to hear a New School Baptist, thinking perhaps I might get one crumb from my Master's table; for you know, brethren, the poor prodigal went among the swine seeking food, and would have fed upon the husks which the swine did eat, but could not, for it would not satisfy his hunger, although almost starving. It was my desire to get one morsel of that living bread from heaven; but alas! what did I hear? Not one word that I could feed upon. When closing his sermon, he said he had been told that there was an old church now standing alone for many years, having gone down owing to that people opposing good works, Sunday schools, sending the gospel to the heathen, &c. But, said he, in Kentucky the Baptists believe in works, and we have respectable numbers in our churches. As I bent my steps homeward I thought of the seven thousand that God had reserved, who were not permitted to bow the knee to the image of Baal, and on my road I was filled with good things from above. O what a love I felt for my dear Savior and his heaven-taught people. I felt to rejoice that I was one among that happy number who love that religion which man, with all his boasted power, can neither give nor take away. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" No weapon formed against them shall prosper. Dear brethren, what have God's dear children to fear?

KATE BARTLEY.

STATE ROAD, Del., August 4, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I inclose a short communication on the subject of the power of God, and of his wills and shalls, which we can rest safely on, knowing that they will not change as we change.

"And they shall be my people, and I will be their God."—Jere. xxiv. 7. From my childhood I always enjoyed that preaching which ascribed to the Lord all power in heaven and earth,

who is above, before and underneath all things; that even I, in my weakness, might trust in that great strength, and know that all would be right. I have a peculiar feeling of love for many that I know, who seem to be just where I was for ten or fifteen years, doubting my interest in religion, yet hoping that the happy day would come when the Lord would say to me, "You shall be mine, and I will be your God." Although I waited a long time, even until I had about given up all hope that the Lord would ever manifest himself to me in such a way that I might know that he was my Lord indeed, yet his own time came at last. It was not in word only, but in power and much assurance. I could hardly realize for a time that every prayer and every longing would be or ever could be so fully satisfied. If it is possible to give comfort to those who seem to be waiting for the Lord's time, I would say to them, Rest assured that his time will come, and he will say to you, You shall be mine, and I will be your God. It was a great sermon to me that Elder Barton preached at Bryn Zion, some nineteen years ago, from the text, "We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." I remember that great orator, as he stood in the pulpit, proclaiming the everlasting wills and shalls of the gospel, and the great strength of the city which the Lord himself had built, and walled by the eternal bulwarks of his grace. Again, at the close of a three days' meeting of the Welsh Tract Church, Elder J. F. Johnson said, "His mother called him Jesus; but he was named long before. 'And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.'" Thus in his name ascribing might, endless duration and a reign of peace to the Lord. Another text which is often with me is one that our dear pastor, Elder J. L. Staton, preached from on the afternoon of the third Sunday in May. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head." Who are these ransomed of the Lord? Are not these waiting, hoping, longing ones among them, who are hoping that the Lord will some time give them a hope, and yet are thinking, Is it possible that even I shall one day rejoice in that blessed peace which the ransomed of the Lord talk about? Sometimes I doubted if even they really knew and felt these things. I have often wished to tell brother Craven of the encouragement his experience, as it appeared in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, was to me, when he said he waited for the Lord's time, knowing that where the Lord begins a good work, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I feel to rejoice that we have an almighty and unchangeable Power in which to trust, knowing that he is faithful to finish all that he begins, and that he is able to save to the uttermost, even me.

Yours in hope,

A. E. RITTENHOUSE.

VARNA, Ill., July 16, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Having finished the business part of my letter, I ask for a little space in our beloved paper for the following letter to brother Stipp, of Oregon:

Dear brother Stipp, I was pained to see what I designed as private matter brought before the readers of the SIGNS. If it were not for the publicity of the charge you make against me of misrepresenting you, I would write you a private acknowledgment and ask your forgiveness; but as it is, I feel it a duty to do so through the SIGNS. If we were perfect, or if language was perfect, we would have no painful misunderstandings. Whether I willfully misrepresented you, and "coined words not found in the Bible, nor in your communication, and cast them into your teeth," I will leave with our God, who knoweth the hearts of the children of men. I regret that I wrote to you, regret that I misunderstood you; and to the extent that you feel grieved and hurt, to that extent I ask you to forgive my ignorance and dullness in failing to understand you. I will close by giving two quotations from your letter which I misunderstood, and which led me to the conclusion that I came to:

"I believe that all those who were at that time commanded to be multiplied in Adam and Eve, were given to the second Adam in covenant before they were given to the first; and their names were all written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world."

"Now, in what sense was Cain of that wicked one? Those who are called 'Two Seed Baptists' say he was conceived by that wicked one. Well, I believe he was, indirectly, but not directly. The wicked one under God was doubtless the cause of his conception. If God had not permitted sin, through the instrumentality of the old serpent, to enter the world, God would not have said to Eve, 'I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception.' Consequently Cain would never have been conceived and born into the world."

Yours in hope of a perfect state,
JOHN DOWNEY.

MACOMB, Ill., August 6, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In connection with the obituaries herewith sent you, I wish to say to you and your readers that my silence as a correspondent of your paper for some time past has not been caused by a want of deep interest in and a constant concern for the prosperity of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but for other reasons. First, because the SIGNS has been so constantly filled of late by able correspondence and editorials; secondly, because my time and mind have been incessantly engaged in the work of the ministry. I would add that many of our churches in this part of the state have of late been blessed of the Lord by ingatherings of the purchase of his blood, and have been made to rejoice.

Now, brother William L. Beebe, I request an editorial from your pen

upon several passages of Scripture, which I will merely cite, and you can quote and compare them as you write. My own mind is not settled respecting some of the passages, and some of our modern teachers, from the schools of men, entertain what seems to me very false notions respecting some of the passages I cite. Compare 1 Cor. xii. 13 and Gal. iii. 27; and compare Rom. vi. 3-5 and Col. ii. 12. Other Scriptures on the same subject may be noticed, and I hope you may have light and a mind to write.

I am yours to serve in Christ Jesus,
I. N. VANMETER.

ROCK POND, Ga., July 15, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been a reader of your paper for a number of years, and the many precious and edifying communications have been very comforting and consoling to me; therefore I would say to the writers, Continue your work, for you do not know how many poor, hungry, thirsty souls you may comfort and feed. The blessed Savior enjoined upon the apostle Peter to feed his sheep and lambs; and if any of you should, by expounding the word, comfort, admonish or feed one of the little flock, you will have your reward.

I now request the views of Elder Wm. J. Purington, through the SIGNS, on the twelfth chapter of Revelation. I desire an explanation of the woman clothed with the sun, &c., and of the great red dragon, with his heads and crowns, and of the stars of heaven that his tail drew and cast to the earth.

Yours in gospel bonds,
W. C. THOMAS.

BROUGHTON, Ill., August 4, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have a great desire for our brethren to take the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it comes bearing such precious tidings to me, a poor, unworthy sinner; for if I am ever saved, it will be a poor sinner saved by grace, and grace alone. Brethren Beebe, I do hope and trust in the Lord that he will spare you for many years to publish and send out the SIGNS, to edify and comfort his dear children. I feel encouraged that there are others of our brethren here who will send in for the SIGNS before very long.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

W. W. GAYLE.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH

MECOSTA Co., Mich., August 5, 1884.

WILL Elder Wm. J. Purington please give his views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on Deuteronomy xxxii. 39, and oblige a poor pilgrim?
STEPHEN HAMMOND.

INFORMATION WANTED.

ROCKDALE, Milam Co., Texas, Aug. 5, 1884.

WILL some of the brethren please let me know where I can get Jones's Church History?

A. M. JONES.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Primitive Baptists, convened with Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun Co., Va., August 13th, 14th and 15th, 1884, to the churches, associations and meetings with whom we correspond, sends greeting.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind protecting care and unchanging goodness of our heavenly Father, we are again permitted to greet you. We hope that we are graciously enabled to appreciate, at least to some extent, the high privilege that we enjoy, and the invaluable blessings that surround us; blessings flowing from that never-failing fountain of grace and mercy through our dear Redeemer to the poor and needy in Zion, and by which we are enabled to meet, to write, and to talk of the wonders of his love. This is a theme above all earthly considerations, and none but the heaven-born and heaven-taught are inspired to comprehend its exalted worth. With solemn reverence we would write of such a subject and to such a people, calling your attention to the following Scripture, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."—Acts ii. 42.

The Scriptures reveal to us the church of the living God in all her impregnable power and heavenly beauty, built upon the Rock of eternal ages, against which the gates of hell "shall not prevail." No earthly eye can look upon her beauty, nor can the natural mind comprehend in the least her glory. It is a kingdom not of this world, and no earthly pen has ever been able to trace its glorious travel. "God is in the midst of her," is the reason assigned for the perpetual existence of this church amid the changing scenes and persecutions to which she has been and will ever be subject while time continues. The text gives an evidence by which this church is to be recognized in all ages and among all nations. The connecting verses show very plainly the class of persons to which it refers, persons who had been "pricked in their heart," and thus made to see Jesus the Savior of sinners, and to gladly receive the word of the Lord. Nor are we writing of a protracted human effort, and of poor, deluded mortals frightened into a profession of which they have no possible conception. No; but we write of the day of the Lord's power, the day when he descended upon the glowing mountains of Zion, and spread the glory of his triumph there: The God

"Who can dash whole worlds to death,
And make them when he please."

"The day of pentecost was fully come," the day selected in his infinite wisdom, with all the circumstances surrounding it, and that led in an unbroken path to it. The redeemed of God who were to gaze upon that glorious scene were gathered under his mighty and guiding hand "with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind." How different this from the sounds of

earth, the opinions and investigations of the carnal mind. While believing in the education of the earthly mind to fill its proper sphere, we say most emphatically that earthly education is of no possible benefit to throw light upon divine truth, or to qualify the preacher to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. All these qualifications are comprised in that gift given from above. "We have this treasure," says Paul, "in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Jesus is the preacher. "I have preached righteousness," he says, "in the great congregation." The gospel is a revelation from heaven, and shines in its own light, and not in the light of the investigations of the carnal mind, whether educated or uneducated. The indispensable prerequisite, either to proclaim or to receive the everlasting gospel, is the gift of the Holy Spirit; and this blessed Spirit will teach and that blessed gospel will shine whether the individual is educated or uneducated in nature. Qualified in this manner upon the day of pentecost, Peter spake as the Spirit gave utterance "of the wonderful works of God." Imagine Peter endeavoring by weeks of diligent study to prepare himself for this occasion, how long would it have taken him to ascertain in this manner what the Spirit taught him in the "lightning's flash" of its power, that "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel?" Notice carefully the doctrine preached upon this occasion—Jesus all the way through, a crucified and risen Redeemer, the strong doctrine cemented with the sweet savor of gospel experience. The church thus organized, we are informed in the text, "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine."

A similar expression is found in Paul's solemn charge to Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." This is a solemn admonition to the ministry, "continue in them." It is evidence of an unhealthy condition in the church when fault is found with doctrinal preaching. We are to mark well the bulwarks of Zion. Opponents may sometimes be raised up within our borders to controvert the truth, and such opposition may compel the faithful ministry to dwell more particularly upon the points opposed, and the church become established in the doctrine, and the God of heaven glorified in its proclamation. This has been the case in the travel of the churches composing the Corresponding Meeting, particularly so during the past thirty-five years. It is well that all should remember that the controversies of these years have been something of far more importance than a personal difference between preachers or a mere war of words. Great and important principles have been attacked, principles that underlie all immortal joy. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" Through floods of misrepresentation

and false accusation, able and valiant ministers of the cross, whose voices are now hushed forever in the silence of death, have borne the banner of eternal truth. We love their memory, and are witnesses of their faithfulness. In contending for the truth they have but spoken as servants of the churches, and the doctrine which they have preached is the doctrine which we hold. We cannot allow them to be separated in this matter from the churches which they have so faithfully served. The attacks upon them are attacks upon us whose servants they have been, and there is as much reason to attack us now as there has been at any time during the past thirty-five years. We are holding to-day the same principles of gospel truth; our ministry proclaim them, our churches receive them; eternal and vital principles, in which the church has continued from its organization upon the day of pentecost to the present time, and in which it will continue throughout all time. Men die, but everlasting truth, never. "They continued," we are informed, "steadfastly." This does not look like conceding some things, compromising and smoothing up some others, and thus open the way for the introduction of disorderly elements, though they may wear our name and assume to fight under our banner. This is not steadfast work. This is not what Paul means when he says to the Corinthians, "Watch ye, stand fast, quit you like men, be strong," "be ye steadfast, unmovable." Or to the Ephesians, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." In an unbroken succession from the apostolic age the church of the living God has "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine;" hence divisions have marked the Baptist name, verifying the truth of the apostolic assertion, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."—1 John ii. 19. A faithful proclamation of the gospel is like a fan upon the summer threshing floor. The spirit of compromising truth has never prevailed in the church, else our fathers could have compromised upon the mission system, Sunday schools, &c. Nor will this spirit ever prevail among us. It is not the light given to guide us. It is not the Holy Spirit with which we are blessed, our infallible and unfailing guide. The text assures us of the steadfast continuance of the church in the truth. Built upon the Rock, in the Rock, and of the Rock, this church must continue steadfast forever. "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved."

But notice the expression, "the apostles' doctrine," in which she continued steadfastly. Mark the oneness presented in the form of expression. It is called doctrine, not doctrines. The latter would imply a multiplicity of views and variety of opinions. There is but one doctrine, and that is "the doctrine of God our

Savior." We may sometimes make bungling work in preaching it, but that does not detract from its power and glory. The apostles were divinely inspired to preach and to write of it; hence the term, "the apostles' doctrine." It is an "unparalleled battering-ram" to level all carnal religion, tradition, and opposition to divine truth. It is an impregnable fortress, behind which the church finds perfect security. Continue in this divine standard, not in the creeds and regulations of men's invention. These things are of no possible moment to the child of God. What cares he for the decision of the Nicene or any such council? Where is the Bible authority binding such decisions upon the church? Where the authority for such gatherings except in the impudence of antichrist, written upon a brow of brass? We must have a "Thus saith the Lord" for what we practice and preach. This is the divine measuring rod; and the opinions and customs held and observed even among us are of no benefit, only so far as they conform to this divine standard. It is not our purpose in this letter to enter into an exposition of what we understand to be embraced in the teachings of the apostles, but to simply call attention to the doctrine which they preached and of which they were inspired to write, as that in which we are to continue. This is a lamp unto our feet, and following its light we cannot err. May the Lord enable us to look away from all else, and to look unto this our never-failing guide, and to obey the apostolic injunction, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."—Rom. xvi. 17.

Let us briefly consider the word "fellowship" in the text; "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship." From the connection it will be readily seen that this fellowship is based not only upon an experience of gospel grace, but upon a steadfast continuance in the apostles' doctrine. A church to be in apostolic fellowship must be contending for apostolic doctrine. This follows the experience and baptism that the text requires. We have also a "more sure word of prophecy" than mere opinion in regard to continuing in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. The New School party claimed that they were upon the apostolic ground when they went out from among us, and make the same arrogant claim to-day, but this does not make it so. The Holy Spirit does not teach conflicting lessons. We must also learn the difference between respecting an experience of gospel grace, and holding one in fellowship though he may have such an experience, yet be found opposing the doctrine. A religious organization is certainly not in apostolic fellowship when misrepresenting and falsely accusing the faithful ministry of the Lord Jesus, and that for their firmness in contending for the truth of the living God. But we are glad to know that this blessed experience,

this love and knowledge of the doctrine, and this holy and sweet fellowship, are things beyond our control. They are all included in that blessed revelation through our Lord Jesus Christ, sweet consolations, blessed instructions, flowing like a river clear as crystal from the great white throne of God, and bearing unto his children the precious evidence of life eternal for their comfort and encouragement. "That which was from the beginning," says John, "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us; that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Fellowship is a fellow-feeling among the members of that one body of which Christ is the Head, uniting them to one another and unto him in an eternal oneness; and this fellowship is in the life which is in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is an evidence of the eternal, vital unity or oneness of Christ and the church. "And gave him," says Paul, "the head over all to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." "So we, being many," he says again, "are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Here is fellowship, blessed fellowship, eternal and vital. But Paul speaks particularly of the outward evidence of this fellowship in the travel of the visible church. In this they "continued steadfastly," we are told, "and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." This church, composed of baptized believers in the Lord, and continuing steadfastly in the truth as it is in Jesus, was divinely authorized to administer the holy ordinances of baptism and communion. No organization except his church has ever received such authority. Baptism can be administered only by the ministry held in the fellowship of this gospel church; and no child of grace can see clearly who fails to see that none have a right to minister about its altar, and to a seat at its communion table, who has not been baptized by the ministry held in its holy and blessed fellowship. These are sacred and solemn facts, in the light of which opinions and customs avail nothing. An error here must ever stand as in the glare of eternal noon, never to be condoned, but ever to be punished; every transgression of the gospel commandments will bring its "just recompense of reward."

They continued "in breaking of bread." This was to them a holy sign of the great work which had been done for them. "This is my body," said the blessed Savior, "which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me." In all nations and ages this is a perpetual remembrance to the people of God of his goodness and mercy. It is a light which burns

upon the gospel altar. It is the Lord's table, and upon it are spread emblems of the bounty of the Father's house. It is for the Father's children, a sign written in the gospel heavens, and to continue through all time. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

We are informed, in conclusion, that they continued in "prayers." The spirit of prayer graciously given unto them remained with them. Through this they held a blessed communion with our God; and this spirit remains with the saints ever, but is found with none others. It sheds a blessed fragrance upon their path, encouraging them ever amid the conflicting scenes that surround them. It recognizes their utter helplessness, and the power of him before whose throne they bow, and upon whose strong and everlasting arm they lean. O what a blessed privilege to be drawn to the throne of God in prayer; to know that though we are weak, he is strong. This continuing in prayer tells us that the church of God is never the leader, but always the follower of the Lamb. Look abroad upon all the religious organizations of time, whether of Catholicism or Protestantism it makes no difference. See them in their vain attempts to go before the Lord, and to legislate for him. Where is the consistency in praying to another to do what they claim to have power to do themselves? There is no room for prayer among these people or in their systems. Religion is to them but a mere form, and prayer but mockery. Lacking all the other evidences worn by the church of Christ, they lack this. But it is a bright pearl in that rich cluster of evidences graciously given by the Lord to his church; emblems of a Savior's love, worn by "the bride, the Lamb's wife," in all ages; jewels of heavenly beauty, that shine in the splendor of gospel light. Baptism, the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers, are heavenly ornaments with which she is adorned as she stands before the throne in the radiant beauty of her King. The world has ever endeavored to counterfeit these things, and the nearer the counterfeit in appearance to the genuine, the more important to shun it. But this beautiful church, arrayed in the righteousness of her Redeemer, and adorned with the precious emblems of his love, must ever stand as "the pillar and ground of the truth," and truth must finally triumph over all opposition. From off its holy altar the light of the gospel ever falls. It stands an eternal Gibraltar against the dashing and roaring waves of antichrist, and all the misrepresentations and false accusations of its enemies. The everlasting gospel of the grace of God in all its distinguishing principles is an eternal bed-rock underlying all its holy joy and glorious travel. These eternal things are the everlasting arms which hold us up. There is not one principle of gospel truth, one point of the doctrine of God our Sav-

ior, that we can afford to yield. All must be held more near and dear than life itself. Convince us of the failure of one of these eternal and vital things, and we know that the new covenant is undone, and that we are lost to all eternity. But "thanks be to God," this cannot be the case. Jerusalem is "a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." It is a covenant "ordered in all things and sure."

"Here let us rest our weary head
When lightnings blaze and thunders roll."

In concluding our remarks upon this subject, we will state that nothing contained in our letter should be construed to deny our ardent desire for the unity of our churches everywhere upon the eternal principles of gospel truth. It is this that we earnestly desire. But we must have good doctrine before there can be good order, and there can be no unity upon any other basis. This is the unity referred to by the psalmist in the language, "Behold, how good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity!" We rejoice to know that there is such a "unity of the Spirit" among us. Our God has churches to-day contending earnestly for "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," in an unbroken bond of eternal unity. Their fellowship cannot be severed, because it is "with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." And now, dear brethren, amid the storms that enshroud and the clouds that envelope us, amid the many attempts to break our sweet and blessed fellowship, and to misrepresent and decry the doctrine which we love, while dangerous errors of various forms, innovations upon the doctrine and order of our Lord, seek an entrance among us, in this dark, deluded age, while vain pride and ignorance reign in the carnal world, O may our Lord sustain and keep us. Truly without him we can do nothing. What a precious consideration, to know that he whose prayers ever prevail with the Father has prayed for us. "I pray," says he, "not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." Before his throne they must finally shine in immortal splendor, their vile bodies changed, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of their Redeemer. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Our meeting has been a refreshing season from the Lord's gracious presence. Ministers have come to us from different parts of our country, proclaiming with one voice the wonderful way of salvation. The Lord has graciously granted unto us a manifestation of unanimity, of love and of fellowship, for which we desire to feel thankful.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with Ebenezer Church, Loudoun Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday preceding the third Sunday in August, 1885, when and where we hope to meet with your messengers again.

J. N. BADGER, Mod.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH.

"NEVERTHELESS we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 Peter iii. 13.

To natural reason this passage of Scripture seems to refer to a new creation of a material universe which may be seen and comprehended by the carnal mind; and hence the vain efforts of men since the apostle's day have been directed to find out by diligent study the particular time when this glorious revelation shall be manifested. This manner of understanding this and other similar passages of Scripture associates the new creation with the close of time and the end of the world in a literal sense. Many very gifted and justly esteemed brethren, in their anxiety to understand the future and undeveloped purpose of God in this matter, have studied out theories, apparently founded upon the letter of the Scriptures, by which they have supposed they could anticipate the fulfillment of the revelation given, and thus foretell the end of time. While this knowledge, if it could be attained, might gratify the pride and curiosity of the natural mind, it would not benefit the saints in their spiritual comfort or growth in grace. It is sufficient for those who trust in the Lord to rest in the assurance that their God has "determined the times before appointed," and that there can be no failure in that predestination. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. It is not revealed at what date, as we count time, the end of the world shall be, as our Lord expressly told his inquiring disciples. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."—Matthew xxiv. 35, 36. This is true of all events which are hidden in the unrevealed purpose of God. No created intelligence can read the sealed book of the hidden will of God.

Immediately preceding the words under consideration the beloved saints are reminded that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, that is, the Lord is not as we are subject to time; for while he has appointed time for his creatures, he still is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy." His word endureth forever, and by it we are assured that all temporal things pass away; yet this does not affect the certainty of the promise to all who love his appearing, that they shall see him as he is. In this "coming of the day of God" "the elements

shall melt with fervent heat," consuming all our filthy rags of self-righteousness. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The peculiarity of this looking is that it depends exclusively upon "his promise." In our weakness and unbelief we often try to strengthen our hope by some work of our own, such as taking heed to our way, or washing with snow water, using nitre and much soap; but these are all dissolved and consumed by the brightness of that day of God when the light of his presence shows the vanity of all such efforts, and we see our pollution and vileness still remaining. This is the perpetual experience of the subjects of grace; and it would drive them to despair were it not that they are saved by hope which rests alone in the promise of God that cannot lie or fail. According to this precious assurance we "look for new heavens and a new earth."

Under the old heaven of the legal and ceremonial covenant we have found only the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the justice of our condemnation. Burning with just wrath, all that heaven is clothed with terror, excluding every ray of hope, as its awful thunder peals the terrible sentence, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." If there were no better covenant than that, the gloom of endless despair would rest upon every conscientious sinner, for under that heaven there was no possibility of justification for any one who failed to fulfill continually the utmost requirement of the law. To those who know their just condemnation under the holy law, is given the revelation of the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This was not the case under the former heavens. While by the law was the knowledge of sin, it had no righteousness to bestow upon the guilty. But this does not hinder the saints from confidently trusting for righteousness in that grace by which God justifies the ungodly, because they have his promise according to which they "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This is the ground of their justification before God. Their strong Redeemer has fulfilled the demands of the holy law and redeemed them from all condemnation, being of God made unto them that perfect righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, in which infinite justice is satisfied, so that they are completely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Being thus made free from sin, they are reconciled to God, and experience fullness of joy in his presence. This is the bliss of the new heavens and earth in the text, and perfect righteousness dwells nowhere else. This is the "fine linen white and clean" in which the followers of the Lamb are clothed, "for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."—Rev. xix. 8, 14. In this

glorious clothing they are accepted in the judgment of God, and therefore they are satisfied.

The saints whom Peter includes with himself as looking for the "new heavens and a new earth," are those to whom this epistle is addressed, "them that have obtained like precious faith with us [the inspired apostles] through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." By that faith only can they look for that to which Peter refers. If it were only some great temporal event which reason could apprehend, then this looking for it would not be confined to those whose faith receives the assurance of "his promise." But as it is "according to his promise," it is hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed only unto babes, "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. These are led by the Spirit of God to know that there is no salvation in the works of the law, nor in anything which they can do. Therefore they look away from that old covenant, (the old heavens and earth,) and look for the promised rest in the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, which is their only hope for justification. It is this sweet confidence in the immutable promise of God revealed in the experience of every saint, which is the only ground on which they rest. This is the "new earth" to each of them, for it is a resting place of which they knew nothing until it was revealed by the Holy Spirit in their experience; and that revelation was given at the very time when the old legal heavens wherein they had trusted were consumed in the blazing light of "the coming of the day of God," leaving them no place (or earth) whereon they could dwell. The Spirit of Christ in the saints leads them to look for the fulfillment of this promise of God throughout their sojourn in time, so that they continually seek first (or look for) the kingdom of God and his righteousness. This longing desire arises from that new heart which is given to them that they may fear the Lord forever, for the good of them and of their children after them.

—Jer. xxxii. 39; Ezekiel xxxvi. 26. No such hunger and thirst after righteousness can originate in that carnal mind which is enmity against God, and cannot be subject to his law; therefore every one in whom that desire is found must be led by the Spirit of God, and all such are sons of God. This world is not the home of these vessels of mercy; therefore, like homesick pilgrims, by faith they look for "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The distinguishing characteristic of these heirs of glory is that they can find no dwelling place in this world, and therefore they "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

In the order of manifestation, the first heavens and earth appeared in the dispensation from Adam to Moses, when the universal reign of death displayed the dreadful condemnation

which rested upon a guilty world. The darkness of that night is but feebly illumined by the light of the revelation of faith in the few saints who shine as stars in that gloomy firmament. Then, in the legal dispensation the second heaven is revealed, extending from the giving of the Mosaic law to its fulfillment by our Lord when on Calvary he said, "It is finished." The desolate house of Judaism was not utterly destroyed until the overthrow of the city of Jerusalem, which is said to have been soon (about four years) after this epistle was written. The third heaven is revealed in the gospel dispensation or kingdom, which was established when the Lord Jesus endowed his apostles with power from on high by the wonderful baptism of the Holy Ghost on the day of pentecost. Yet the form of legal worship continued, though destitute of life, until the destruction of the Jewish temple and dispersion of that once favored nation. This utter desolation of those old heavens is doubtless included in the declaration preceding the text, and in that sense the gospel church in her visible organization is the new heavens and earth in our text. But if that were all that is contained in the declaration, it would have only a historical interest to the saints in after ages; therefore in this, as in all the testimony of inspiration, the Comforter shows the things of Jesus to his saints as included in the personal experience of each individual. In this application, the first heaven answers to that gloomy period of sensible condemnation when the darkness almost sinks the trembling sinner into despair. Then, in the typical shadows of the law the holiness of God is more clearly displayed, causing his sin to appear exceeding sinful, and producing death to all hope of justification from that source. This second heaven seems even more intensely dark and terrible than the dim and undefined shadows of the former experience; and when the awful thunder of that holy law proclaims, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," these heavens being on fire, are dissolved in his view, forbidding hope, and compelling him to confess the justice of that sentence which condemns him. The glorious gospel comes to him in this lost condition, proclaiming the new heavens and earth, as in our text, revealing the righteousness which is of God by the faith of Jesus, which dwelleth (that is, remains forever) therein. This is the perfect robe of justifying grace which secures the salvation of every one who is clothed in it. In these heavens there is no condemnation, and consequently there is no more curse or death.—See Rom. viii. 1; Rev. xxi. 4; xxii. 3.

While it is evident that none can "look for new heavens and a new earth" until they have received the knowledge of them, it is also true that those in whose experience they have been revealed can never cease to look for them with that longing desire which can be satisfied only with the full realization of that per-

fect righteousness which dwells therein and can be found nowhere else. That earnest desire for conformity to the holy perfection of Christ Jesus is the infallible seal of the Spirit which distinguishes the subjects of that salvation which is of God. No effort of the carnal heart can counterfeit this heavenly mark. Therefore it is certain that they never shall be disappointed who are "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 13, 14. It is positively declared that "Unto them that look for him [Christ] shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Then the very fact that we look for such things is assurance that we shall not look in vain.

These thoughts are submitted to the consideration of our readers, in compliance with the request of a young sister in Ohio; and we earnestly desire that they be received only so far as they are found in accordance with the word of inspiration, and the truth revealed in the experience of them who love the truth of salvation alone by the grace of God revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ. The subject is not exhausted; and we add our own wish to that of our inquiring sister, for the views of any reader who feels to write upon the text.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It is with a heart filled with sorrow that I try to write for publication a notice of the death of my dear husband, **Frederick H. Ely**, who departed this life very suddenly, June 9, 1884, at his residence in Charleston, Tioga Co., Pa., aged 68 years, 10 months and 29 days. He was born in New Hampshire in 1815, moved to Pennsylvania when five years old, where he lived the rest of his life. He had been in very poor health for the last year, and for several years had been subject to very distressing spells, when it would seem as though he could hardly live. A physician called it neuralgia of the heart. When he got over one of those spells he would go about his work and feel quite well. The last year he had them much oftener and more severe, and would feel very poorly all the time, although he would go out and work a little. He had been feeling as well as usual the day he died. He was coming from the barn to the house, when he was taken very bad. When he got to the door he asked for some medicine that he had, and took it, and said, "O such distress!" and died in a very few minutes. He was not a member of any church, but I think he gave good evidence that he was a subject of grace. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace through Jesus Christ alone. I think he once felt as though he would like to be baptized and join the church; but as something prevented him doing so then, he never joined. When spoken to on the subject, he would say that he did not know as he had any right to join any church, as he was afraid he might dishonor the name of Jesus. He would sometimes make remarks like these, "Is it not wonderful to look abroad and behold the rising sun, and all the wonders of creation, and feel that it is God that hath created all these things? Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name." At another time he said, "How much is expressed in these few words, If I am his, and he is mine, what can I want besides?" The most of the time he was very reserved about talking on the subject. He was married in 1835 to Eliza S. Gillett, with whom he lived very happily nearly

eight years. They had three children, when the Lord saw fit to take his wife and two children from him. He afterwards married Sally S. Rose, the sorrowing writer of this notice, with whom he lived almost forty years, ever ready to do all that a kind husband could do for his family. When that dreaded disease, diphtheria, prevailed, we had to part with a little daughter; but he bore it more calmly than the unworthy writer. He leaves a sorrowing wife, one son and four daughters, besides other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, yet not without hope. His funeral was attended June 11, at his late residence, when a sermon was preached by Elder Wm. Campbell.

Yours in sorrow,

S. S. ELY.

WELLSBORO, Pa., Aug. 2, 1884.

My dear wife departed this life March 28, 1884, aged 21 years and 4 days. After nine days of painful illness I was compelled to witness her death. She had been a lover of the truth ever since her childhood. About the seventh year of her age, we hope that God for Christ's sake pardoned her sins; but she had never let these things be known until the night of her death. About two hours before she passed away she called me, her mother, brother and sister to her bedside, and told us that she was going to die. I then asked her if she was ready and willing to go, and she said, "I can't say that I am, but I hope that the Lord will make me willing. And I want you and all the rest to pray for me, that I may be made willing." Brethren, I do hope and believe that her feeble prayers and ours were heard and answered; for after a few moments I asked her if she felt any better satisfied to die than she did a while before. She said, "O yes, I am willing to go now; I want to go home, out of my pain; I want to go where there is no sickness nor pain. I know that it is hard to give you up, and all the rest of those that are near and dear to you by the ties of nature; but I must go and leave you all. And now I want you all to sing. O sing to me of heaven!" We sang one verse as best we could. When we began to sing, she raised her sweet voice with ours, and when the verse was ended she said, "O that I could sing!" Then she began to clasp her hands together, and praise her God, and tell us how she was saved. "It is by grace that I am saved.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.'

It was not for anything that I had done, but grace has done it all." A little before she was taken away, she gave me her hand and bade me farewell, and likewise all the rest of those who were near and dear to her by the ties of nature. She said, "And now my last request is, that you have me laid beside my two little babes, [which had only been laid beneath the sod four days previous to that time,] and that you be laid by my side, and that John William Bragg preach my funeral." Her funeral was attended on the third Sunday in May, by a large congregation. The brother's text was as follows: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

Yours in tribulation,

L. D. HUDSON.

NEW MARKET, Ala., May 25, 1884.

Aunt Betsy Herring, widow of Deacon David Herring, fell asleep in Jesus July 5, 1884. It may be said that she was paralyzed at times for two years or more, and that that was the immediate cause of her death; but really she was worn down by age. She was born May 16, 1801, and was aged 83 years, 1 month and 20 days. Our sister was twice married; first to Mr. Lewis Mayne, by whom she had five children, all preceding her to the grave, except one loving daughter, sister Lucy A., wife of Dr. Brantly, all of this place. Aunt Betsy has been for over half a century a firm, devoted and consistent Old School Baptist, attending her meetings regularly until infirmities prevented, and was greatly beloved by all the brotherhood, for her christian work and godly conversation. She was naturally a very amiable and pleasant woman, having a host of warm friends. All the stations in life that she was called on to fill, she adorned and illustrated. Besides

sister Brantley, she has left quite a number of grandchildren by a departed daughter. Sister Brantley, though having a tender husband, has neither father, mother, brother nor sister, and in that sense feels lonely and sad; but she ought to, and no doubt does, feel that no labor of love nor pains were spared by either her and husband, or any of the kind neighbors, to do all to render comfortable the condition of the dear departed one. While I so much sympathize with the kin, I feel that Miss Emily Whitley, who has lived with and tenderly cared for aunt Betsey for the last sixteen years, is especially entitled to mention, for her kindness and attention. She feels that she has lost a mother. It was often my privilege to visit our dear departed sister; she was always ready to speak of her hope, and of her perfect willingness to die; indeed these were her engrossing thoughts. In the peaceful slumber she lies near her last home, full of years, full of worthy deeds, worthy of imitation by all. As none of our ministers were present at her burial, an aged deacon was called upon to speak on the occasion to the many who were present, who complied with the request.

Your brother,

WM. S. MONTGOMERY.

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga., July 9, 1884.

OUR dear sister, **Mrs. Eliza Smith**, departed this life June 12, 1883, aged 54 years, 2 months and 3 days. Born April 9, 1830, sister Smith united with the Old School Baptist Church at Cherry Flats, in the year 1871, and was baptized by Elder A. St. John. Her disease was consumption. She was a great sufferer, although she bore it with christian fortitude and without murmuring. About a year ago she was brought very low, so that the friends had given her up, thinking that the time of her departure was at hand. But the Lord's time had not yet come, and she revived, and was quite strong again, so that she was enabled to go to Cherry Flats and see her daughter, sister Jennie Ely, and also to meet in church capacity with her dear brethren for the last time here on earth. It was my privilege to be there at that time. I had an excellent visit with her. Although she was weak in body, yet she was strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. She loved to talk of Jesus and his salvation, the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved; the only fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness. The King in his beauty was revealed to her as the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely; and in the galleries of his grace she beheld him as the desire of all nations, fairer than the children of men. Jordan was driven back, and she sweetly passed the river, telling the triumphs of the King. Her funeral was attended by a large concourse of people, both of relatives and friends. The writer of this notice used on the occasion as a text, Psalm cxxvii. 2, "For so he giveth his beloved sleep." Sister Smith leaves a kind and affectionate husband and four children to mourn their loss; yet we sorrow not as those who have no hope. May reconciling grace be given the afflicted husband and children, and may they be still and know that he who is the governor of the nations doeth all things well. Our dear sister was lovely in her life, loved by all who knew her, and the church will greatly miss her; but the Lord's will be done.

W. A. CAMPBELL.

JERSEY MILLS, Pa., July 12, 1884.

William H. Mann departed this life on the 6th of May, 1884, aged 71 years, 7 months and 24 days. He was a worthy and honorable member of the Regular Baptist Church. He joined the Indian Creek Church, Monroe Co., W. Va., over forty years ago, and served as deacon for a number of years. He was unwavering in the apostolic doctrine. Brother Mann was of a kind and obliging disposition toward his fellow-men. We think he has entertained strangers in the full sense of the term. He would take in the sick and afflicted, and keep them for months, free of charge. Himself and his afflicted wife spent the greater portion of their lives in administering to the wants of the sick, afflicted and distressed ones around them. May God in his

Signs of the Times.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

HERRICK, Bradford Co., Pa., Aug. 6, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." When the time of the singing of birds is come, it is easy for the birds to sing; but we would try in vain to make them sing in winter. When we experience the shining of the Sun of righteousness in our souls with healing power and comfort, how can we help speaking of his love and goodness and beauty? If the tongue cannot utter a word, the face must tell of the love to his dear name which fills the heart; and it will be manifest also in the desire for the company of those who love heavenly things. If we have ever felt that sweet and glorious love of God which humbles and melts the sinner's heart, how can we but mourn when its power is withdrawn from us, leaving us cold and dark? If Jesus has ever been precious to us, we shall certainly be filled with sorrow and complaints when his dear presence is no longer felt. Then our cry is, "O that I knew where I might find him!" When he is absent, I can only speak of my own darkness and vileness. My sins and depravity come fully into view then, and oppress me so that I cannot rise above them. If I should try to speak of the joys of God's salvation as "in the days when by his light I walked through darkness," it would seem but mockery. I find it was so with Job when the Lord tried him, and with the psalmist when in the depths, and with Hezekiah when he was sick, and with Jonah when "cast out of God's sight." These, with all the prophets and holy men of old, spake out of the abundance of their own hearts as they were filled with either joy or sorrow. They did not try to suppress their emotions, and force their intellectual powers to work according to their natural will; but, moved by the Holy Ghost, they complained or sang just according to what was in the heart. When their sins oppressed them, and the weakness of Zion and the strength of their enemies made them afraid, their words were heavy with sorrow and grief as they bemoaned their sad state, and called mournfully upon their God; but when victory was felt within them, its joyful and triumphant notes sounded from their tongues. And thus we find in the Bible an expression of all the experience of the children of God in its full measure, with all its changes, from the lowest depths of sorrow and wretchedness on account of sin to the most rapturous heights of love and joy and praise.

Nothing can be truly known of spiritual things but by revelation; and that revelation is only according to the will of Jesus. The creature can do no more toward effecting that revelation in any way, than the plant can do toward effecting the dew or the sunshine. We are the passive recipients of what our God is pleased to give us. Only he who is born again can see the kingdom. "No man," the Savior says, "knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." All spiritual things are "hid from the wise and prudent, and are revealed unto babes." "No man by searching can find out God," nor can any spiritual truth be discovered by study. What the Lord is pleased to reveal to us we know; all other knowledge is of this world and is vain. That which I can search out by the voluntary exercise of my intellectual powers, will be as clear to me, and can as readily be explained, at one time as another. But it will be of no true profit to the people of God, however much it may interest their natural minds or affect their natural hearts. What the Lord gives to us in the free riches of his grace is all that we can give. So fully did the apostle Paul believe this that he said, "We have this treasure [the light of the knowledge of the glory of God] in earthen vessels." The vessel does nothing whatever toward producing or procuring to itself any part of this treasure, nor toward preparing itself to receive and contain it; nor does the base quality of the vessel detract from the value of the treasure, nor would a vessel of gold add to its value or interest in the least degree. The excellency of the power in every instance is to be of God, and not of man.

What changes I experience. Now in the dark almost totally, now feeling a little ray of light and comfort, and then for a little season rejoicing in the full sunlight of the truth. Now cold and apparently unfeeling, with no power to warm or soften my hard and frozen heart, but seemingly given over to the harrassing power of the enemy through the depravity and evil propensities of my nature; then suddenly, through some precious word of Scripture, or some soul-cheering view of Jesus as the righteousness of the poor and helpless, finding my heart softened and broken up, and filled with tenderness and love and humble thanksgiving and praise. My winter seasons seem to be very long and tedious; but one ray of light when it does come, one

breath of the warm and fragrant south wind, causing the flowers to appear on the earth, and calling the spices forth in the garden of the heart, one sweet word of heavenly love from my dear Savior, more than compensates for all the weary days and nights of darkness and pain. I know the truth that Jesus died for the sins of his people, and that he is their righteousness, at one time as well as another, since it was first revealed to me; and also my hope that he died for me I feel a comfortable assurance is a good hope even when I am in the dark. But it is only when that blessed truth is somehow especially applied to me, and the Spirit makes me feel its power, that I can be filled with all joy and peace in believing, and abound in hope. Such an experience is only by the grace of the God of hope, "through the power of the Holy Ghost."—Rom. xv. 13. In a cloudy day I am as sure the Sun is in the sky as I am when it is clear, though I cannot enjoy the warmth of his beams. So it is a great consolation to the child of God, when walking in darkness and having no light, to know that God does not change, that the changes are all with us, that our hope is in him and not in ourselves, that whom Jesus loves he loves unto the end, that the Sun of righteousness once risen in our sky will never more go down, though clouds may often come between to hide his face from our longing sight. May this truth be applied with comfort to those many dear children of God who sorrow so deeply because the darkness has come upon them. May they trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God.

How many of our dear kindred in Christ are sorely afflicted in various ways; and how our hearts ache in sympathy when we learn of any especially severe and sad affliction coming upon one of those whom we love in the Lord. But I have sometimes thought that there is a sense in which the most severe affliction is the greatest blessing, though we shrink so fearfully from it. Do we not see in ourselves and in our brethren that it is only afflictions of one kind or another that separate us from the world and bring us experimentally near to God? "When he slew them, then they sought him."—Psalm lxxviii. 34. "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses."—Psalm cvii. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."—Acts xiv. 22. I lean upon earthly comforts until some affliction separates me from them in some way. It

is sad to be afflicted with temporal distresses, or with trials of mind about temporal things; but how much more sad to a child of God to be afflicted with coldness of heart, worldliness of mind, and separation from spiritual joys. Temporal comforts are blessings to be thankful for; but O how much sweeter than any earthly comfort is the communion of the soul with God, the gracious and solemn experience of his presence, and the power of his love shed abroad in the heart, that perfect love which "casteth out fear," and gives an experience of purity and infinite rest. Under such an experience we can patiently endure any suffering, though it causes this poor earthen vessel to cry out in agony, and can even "rejoice in the tribulation" that has brought us to so rich a blessing. After some great suffering I have felt a desire arise in my heart to the Lord, and have tried to ask him, that I might be spared any more such affliction, feeling that I could not bear it, but that I might be permitted to remain quietly in his presence and rest in his love. But how soon would I forget my God and wander from his holy presence, until I would find myself again crying unto the Lord in my trouble, lost and bewildered in the wilderness of my own vile nature. At such a time I think that some continued trouble, some sharp and heavy trial, may not be so great an affliction after all, rightly regarded, but a great blessing, a mark of especial favor. How well I remember the peaceful face of a dear sister in Christ who had been in the severest pain of body for six years. The Lord had taken her near to himself during all that period of time, and held her in the arms of his love, and had soothed her with words of infinite tenderness. As my sister and myself stood by her bedside, she had nothing to tell but of the Lord's great goodness to her; and her only complaint was that she had sometimes forgotten his goodness for a little while.

"And must it, Lord, be so?
And must thy children bear
Such various kinds of woe,
Such soul-perplexing fear?
Are these the blessings we expect?
Is this the lot of God's elect?"

"Boast not, ye sons of earth,
Nor look with scornful eyes;
Above your highest mirth
Our saddest hours we prize.
For though our cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all."

How many of my trials come through the rebelliousness and disobedience of my heart. The Lord will fulfill his promise to visit the transgressions of his children with

the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; but one thing is comforting to remember, that the rod in his hand never awakens wrath in the hearts of his people. His chastisements never drive them from him, but cause them to seek his presence. They do not desire the rocks and mountains to fall on them and "hide them from the wrath of the Lamb;" but they want to draw near and fall at the dear feet of their Savior, and lie there in the dust before him until he shall bid them rise and live. I once thought those spoken of by our Savior in his teaching as thrown "into outer darkness, where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth," were disobedient children; but my mind has since been changed upon this subject. "Gnashing of teeth" is an expression denoting baffled rage, impotent fury. This does not characterize the Lord's people, but graceless professors whose hypocrisy has been exposed. The unbelieving Jews when rejected, (Matt. viii. 12,) the same characters spoken of as the wicked, (xiii. 42, 50,) the same character as a false professor, an intruder at the wedding feast without a wedding garment, (xxii. 13,) the same characters as the evil and unprofitable servants, not using the carnal ordinances of the worldly sanctuary imposed on them till the time of reformation in such a way as to bring forth their true gospel value, but burying them in the earth of our fallen nature, referring them to the power of the natural man as works which are to commend him to God, and beating those servants who teach the true spiritual meaning of those things, (Matt. xxiv. 51 and xxv. 30,) and the same character making mention of those works as a means of acceptance with God, (Luke xiii. 28,) all these are cast into outer darkness when the Savior comes in the searching power of gospel truth. Not that their condition is changed, but their pretensions to be the people of God are shown by the light of truth to be false, and it is made clear that they do not belong to the kingdom of God, but are of the world; and so the preaching of this blessed gospel is a stumbling-block to them, and they weep for the loss of their standing with those who had been deceived by them, and gnash their teeth with rage, as they did upon Stephen when he exposed their false pretensions by the preaching of the truth whose power cast them into outer darkness.

In the SIGNS for January 1st, 1883, while writing upon the parable of the great supper, I presented my belief that the man who had not on a wedding garment was not a child of God. I have since meditated some upon the subject, and have carefully considered the question whether the wedding garment might not represent obedience instead of the righteousness of Christ experienced by faith; and I feel impressed to express here some of my thoughts in addition to what I wrote in the article referred to, especially as a dear brother has since

presented a different view. I cannot regard the wedding garment as representing something which can be put on and off at pleasure. When it is said to a poor sinner, "Thy Maker is thy Husband," and his soul experiences that he is joined unto the Lord in that blessed and unspeakable union, and he can say, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels," then I would suppose is the time when he experiences the putting on of the wedding garment, and his soul enters into the enjoyment of the heavenly feast. These poor creatures who were brought to the marriage out of the lanes and streets of the city, and from the highways and hedges, are themselves the very ones who are to be married to the King's Son; and while this figure represents them as guests at a marriage supper, we may also consider them as more than ordinary guests; for their being "brought in hither" signifies the first experience of a hope of salvation, and of acceptance with God, through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, and of the heavenly marriage union with the Lamb; and until that marriage can be disannulled, the token of it cannot be put off. The acts of obedience, the walking in good works which God has before ordained that his people should walk in, are duties and privileges of those who are already married, or, to speak of this figure, of those who are already brought in to the feast, and not the cause of the experience of that union, nor the cause of acceptance. They were brought in from the lanes and streets of the city, and compelled to come in from the highways and hedges; therefore no obedience of theirs but the obedience of faith could be the cause of their having been admitted to the feast. But every one of them had on a wedding garment, for they were in charge of those who would not omit thus preparing them for proper entrance to the wedding feast. When the king found the man who had not on a wedding garment, he did not inquire, "Where is your wedding garment?" nor, "Why have you put it off?" nor, "Why do you not keep it on?" nor, "Why did you come here without one on?" nor, did he say, "You cannot eat unless you put one on." Any such words would have implied that the wedding garment had been provided him, and it had been left with him to put it on or not as he saw fit; and might have implied that the wedding garment represented that obedience which God works in his people, "working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight," and which he enables them by his grace to work out, and thus enjoy the sweetness of spiritual things, which cannot otherwise be fully enjoyed. But the king said, "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?" The question was not why he came,

but how he came. Those who were brought in and compelled to come in, came by the king's command, carried by his servants. This one was not among them, or he would have had on a wedding garment, and the king would have known how he came. His being there in that condition would seem to appropriately represent those who "creep in unawares," who enter without any experience of grace into a profession of christianity, claiming to be one of the children of God, yet not having on the righteousness of Christ, but seeking and claiming acceptance by the works of the law; "feeding themselves without fear," until they are found out by the entrance of the Lord in the discriminating power of his truth, and their false claims denied, and they rejected as reprobate silver. Then they are filled with rage against the Lord and his truth and people, which is expressed by the phrase, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Peter wept when the look of Jesus awoke him to a full sense of his awful guilt, but there was no gnashing of teeth. If he did not have on the wedding garment then, I cannot think of any place in his after life when it was put on. It is a question worthy of careful consideration whether this wedding garment represents the experience of the righteousness of Christ in the soul by faith, or the obedience which follows as a fruit of that experience. I love to think of that garment as that in which we appeared before the King at the first, when we experienced a betrothal unto the dear Savior in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies, and in faithfulness, and as a token that the betrothal was forever, and as something that can never be put off, neither by ourselves, however far we may wander in disobedience, nor by all the powers of darkness. There are robes spoken of which represent the walk, and these may be defiled, and have to be washed in the blood of the Lamb. But they, even, cannot be put off; but whether soiled or clean, they are still upon us, either to our shame and trouble, or to our joy and comfort among the saints. But the wedding garment in which we first entered into the palace of the great King is beyond the defiling power of earth and sin, and they who have once entered there shall go no more out forever.

Your brother in a precious hope,
SILAS H. DURAND.

THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP.

(John x.)

DEAR BRETHREN:—Sister Emilia F. McKelvy, of Camden, Tennessee, has requested me to write upon the above subject through the medium of the SIGNS, especially mentioning the twelfth and thirteenth verses of this tenth chapter of John. I do not know what was the special question in the sister's mind, and so will endeavor to pen down a few general thoughts upon the subject which our Redeemer and Teacher has presented in the discourse recorded in the tenth chapter of John.

1st. The Savior made use of many figures, drawn from the natural world and the common scenes of life among men, to illustrate matters that pertained to the kingdom of heaven. All the parables are pictures drawn from common everyday life, intended to convey to the minds of men some particular truth concerning the affairs of his kingdom; while the miracles which Jesus performed more vividly still illustrated that divine power and Godhead which is manifest in the redemption and regeneration of every soul that is saved. I think that each parable has a special object in view, and that we do violence to the Savior's meaning when we endeavor to attach a special signification to every word of a parable. As a rule, one leading thought is presented and illustrated, and other things in the parable are only the drapery or dress in which the one leading idea is clothed. In this way Jesus often illustrated his relation to his living people by a variety of figures, all intended to show his care over them and their security through him. In this chapter he used the figure of the shepherd and his sheep, to present his interest in them and watchful care over them. If we, my brethren, feel as we ought our weakness and dependence, we shall be glad of the precious things said for our comfort in this tenth chapter of John.

2d. Let us see briefly what this chapter contains for the believer's comfort. Here Jesus exhibits the strength of his love to his people, (verses 11, 12, 17, 18,) the constancy of his care, (3, 4,) the unfailing abundance of the provision which he has made to supply all their wants, (9, 10,) and their safety while defended by him from every foe within or without, (4, 5, 16-18). He declares that he knows them all, (3, 14, 16,) that they also know him, (3-5, 8, 14,) that he will willingly lay down his life for them, (11, 15, 17, 18,) that he had come in the appointed way as none other had, but that all others were thieves and robbers, (1-3, 7, 9,) that he was come for their benefit and not his own, which was not true of others, (3, 4, 9-13,) and that he came willingly, and was able to do his will, (15, 17, 18). Now what child of God can read this brief chapter without being struck by the multitude of the precious assurances which it contains? And they need all, yes, every one of them. What one could we do without? They are all precious to every needy soul. Exceeding great and precious promises are they indeed! And the only condition required of the recipients of them is that they shall be so poor and weak and helpless as to be unable to comply with any terms and conditions, or to do anything to merit these favors.

3d. This chapter is a discriminating chapter: first, as regards the presenting of Jesus as the only true Shepherd of the sheep; and second, as regards the sheep of Christ, who are separated and distinguished from all other people in many ways. The love of God is a discriminating love.

will come to claim his blessed bride, dearly bought with his own blood. While the world will be filled with terror, awe and consternation, the church of the living God will be preserved safe from harm by the same mighty power that kept them during the tempestuous turmoils of life. "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." And ye shall be glad and rejoice forever in that which God creates. O grand and glorious resurrection of all the blood-bought family who have crossed the river of death! Blessed, thrice blessed change for those elect who remain alive until his coming! That voice that once with power divine called, "come forth," to the sleeping Lazarus, shall again reverb-erate, not only in the little village of Bethany, but to the remotest parts of earth and sea, and shall be as promptly obeyed. Peter plainly tells us, "All these things shall be dissolved." He then puts the important, heart-searching question to them, and left it for us also, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Those who know the poor, faulty writer, will, I know, join with her in saying, "It looks like the height of presumption for her to write on such a subject; one who comes so far short of walking in gospel order, or keeping the commandments of Jesus. Let us then study together this subject of vast importance to each of us. "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" This same apostle says, "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." "See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men." "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ." How much excellent admonition there is on the inspired pages for our instruction! How distinctly Paul separates the workings of the flesh and of the Spirit. "For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Do we not find this true in our own experience? When we follow the desires of our carnal minds, walking after the flesh, and in direct opposition to duty, do we not die to all spiritual enjoyment? "This I say, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty." "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled

again with the yoke of bondage." Jesus told his disciples that if they had faith as a grain of mustard seed, they should remove mountains. "And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." How poor, how weak, how sickly, is our faith when once compared with that which characterized those happy saints in primitive times. O! I feel that we are not the manner of persons that we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Brethren, ought we not to "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard," rather than spend our time and thoughts in searching after mysterious things, and trying to pry into things that are not revealed? O that the Lord would increase our love, increase the fruit of our righteousness, and make us stronger in faith and zeal! Perhaps this may fall into the hands of some of God's people who know and feel their duty, yet through the weakness of the flesh, the suggestions of Satan, or feebleness of faith, refuse to obey. Let me speak a word or two unto you. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "I beseech you by the mercies of God," not by the terrible thunderings of Sinai's law. God is love. He draws by the cords of love. He loved you while in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. He showed you your condition by nature, and has given you reason to hope in his mercy. Therefore "present your bodies a living sacrifice." It is your reasonable service. In view of your great deliverance, well may it be called your "reasonable service." Can you not say with the poet,

"He justly claims a song from me,
His loving-kindness, O how free?"

"And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized." It is not only a duty you owe your God, in publicly professing him, and putting him on in baptism, but for your own comfort and spiritual enjoyment. There is more sweet peace and real satisfaction in the discharge of our duty, than in all the stubbornness of rebellion and disobedience. Obedience is better than sacrifice. When Philip preached Jesus Christ and him crucified to the eunuch, and his preaching had been sealed home to the heart of his hearer, what did he say? "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" The word and work of God calls for immediate action. Carelessness or slothfulness is not commendable in worldly affairs; how much less commendable in spiritual things; especially where the word of the Lord and the convictions of the mind both cry, "Arise, and be baptized." When blind Bartimeus heard that Jesus passed by, he cried out, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." So when his cry was

heard and answered, he was called. "And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus." When his eyesight had been restored, he arose and followed Jesus in the way. So, dear children of God, it must be with you. You must cast away your garment of self-righteousness, your garment of Pharisaical religion, your garment of unworthiness, yea, every garment in which you have trusted as a cloak of concealment, and rely alone upon the imputed righteousness of Jesus. His righteousness is fine linen, white and clean, without spot or wrinkle. It is the only garment in which we can stand in a justified state before God. But it was my intention to show further from the Scriptures the ready obedience of God's saints in primitive time. On the day of pentecost, "They that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there was added unto them about three thousand souls." Ananias, according to the command of the Lord, went to Saul, and told him, "The Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost." "And he received sight forthwith, and he arose, and was baptized." "If ye love me, keep my commandments," says Jesus. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." Love is the fountain from whence all true obedience flows. It is that divine fire in the breast, that which makes his commands joyous, rather than grievous. It is that which makes our imperative duty a blessed privilege.

"Blest is the man whose shoulders take
My yoke, and bear it with delight;
My yoke is easy to his neck,
My grace shall make his burden light."

May God bless all his dear children who have taken up his cross and followed him in his first command, and are living to his praise and glory, with smiles of approbation; and those who are standing out of duty, may he give them grace to follow their Lord and Master. And to such I would say, Thou blessed of the Lord, come in: wherefore standest thou without? Go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for you.

Asking your forbearance I will close. Yours in hope of immortality,
SARAH A. BLAKE.

WATERLOO, Iowa, Aug. 15, 1884.

"THAT is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 8.

In order for a better understanding, I will add the 6th, 7th and 9th verses of the same chapter. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called." "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a Son." The line of distinction is here drawn between the two classes, those

of the flesh and those of the Spirit. Now Isaac was a type of Christ, who was the heir and promised seed, and the embodiment of national Israel: also through him the spiritual seed, or the Christ, was to be born. And by this Christ, the head of the serpent should be bruised. Now the family of the flesh are the natural descendants of Adam, and those of the Spirit, by the second Adam, to wit, Christ. The first Adam is defined in 1 Cor. xv. 46, as follows: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual." To show the ability of the natural family, see 1 Cor. ii. 14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Now we read, John xii. 24, in reference to the spiritual family, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Jesus here speaks of himself and the spiritual family in him as a seed. But with all the will, power and ability which the natural man has, he cannot produce spiritual life, and without that life he cannot truly worship God. From these considerations we are led to ask, How shall we get this life? The answer is, It is a gift. As Jesus said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."—John x. 28. And again, John i. 12, 13, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Now, as Adam was only a natural man, all who receive their life through him are the same by nature; and being dead in sin, they cannot perform spiritual action, nor truly worship God in spirit and in truth. We may as well look for fruit from a dead tree. Although it may be planted in the best soil, with all the required rain and sunshine, yet, being dead, it will not produce. So the fleshly man will not produce spiritual fruit, but will bring forth "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition, heresies, envyings, murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such like."—Gal. v. 19-21. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."—Gal. v. 22. These give evidence of the character of the tree, showing that the tree may be known by the fruit it bears. But by nature there is no difference between those who bear the good fruit and those who do not, at least to the natural eye. All have one common father, and all are sustained in nature from the products of earth. All are held by the law of sin and death, and all must die. For sin entered the world, and death by sin; so death hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned.—Rom. v. 12. I have read in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE.

"He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."—Luke xiii. 6-9.

A dear sister writes that she is troubled by the suggestion that this parable may represent her own case, as she is continually compelled to mourn her failure to manifest that fruit of the Spirit by which she desires to glorify God in her daily life and conversation. She is not alone in this temptation. Many of the saints are tried in the same way; and in this they only follow their Lord, who in the days of his flesh was assailed by the adversary, who quoted the words of Scripture to give weight to his cruel questioning of the character of the Captain of our salvation.—See Luke iv. 10. But it is important to observe that while Satan is ever ready to quote the letter of the inspired word, he always distorts it by misapplying and perverting its meaning. And since he dared thus to turn the truth of God into a lie when trying our divine Leader, those who would be followers of Jesus need not be surprised that the same devices are brought to bear against them. Therefore they are admonished, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."—1 John iv. 1-3. Tried by this test, the spirit which thus tempts the saints is manifested as being antichrist and not of God; for it judges and condemns the saints without looking to the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, by whose grace alone they are justified, whose name is called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.—Jer. xxiii. 6.

While it is certain that neither this parable nor any other portion of Scripture can be rightly understood to teach that the righteousness by which God is glorified in his saints is dependent upon their own works, it is not always easy for them to see just what is the truth taught in such passages as are presented by their adversary for their trial. In such times of perplexity it is well to notice carefully the occasion of the expressions cited, and the connection in

which they are recorded. It will be seen that this parable was spoken in reproof of that very principle of relying upon self-righteousness for justification, in support of which it is brought up by the tempter. Some had told Jesus of the cruelty of Pilate in mingling the blood of certain Galileans with their sacrifices, and in the reply of Jesus it is intimated that they supposed the victims in that slaughter suffered because they were excessively sinful. The Lord corrects this error, and assures them that they can expect nothing better from that legal service in which they were trusting. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." Hence they could hope for no justification from that source. And as the law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good, it is evident that no other works can be more acceptable to God than legal works; therefore there could be no escape from condemnation without repentance, that is, turning away from that system of self-righteousness. The reference to those who perished by the fall of the tower in Siloam shows that the calamitous death of those who trusted in their own legal works did not result alone from the wickedness of the cruel Pilate. Then follows the parable which has been perverted to the troubling of our sister. The Lord was not treating upon the walk and conversation of the saints in this discourse, but used this parable to illustrate the unfruitfulness of all systems which required righteousness at the hands of creatures. Neither in the garden of Eden, where man was placed in his primal innocence as the very good creature of God, nor in the patriarchal, nor yet in the legal dispensation, had this fig tree of creature righteousness borne the fruit of obedience to the glory of God. Therefore, the just sentence of condemnation went forth, as represented by the command to cut down the fruitless fig tree. In this is the truth displayed that "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

The fig tree in the parable represents not the individual sinner either as dead in sin or as saved by grace. It is used throughout the Scriptures often, if not in every case, as the symbol of that righteousness which depends upon the obedience of the creature, to which this peculiar fruit bears a very striking likeness. We know of no other tree whose fruit is but an imperfect blossom as is the fig. It was the first resort of the sinner in his effort to hide from the scrutiny of his Judge; as it is recorded that our parents in the garden, after their transgression, sought to cover themselves with aprons of fig leaves.—See Gen. iii. 7. From their frailty and irregular form the leaves of the fig seem as unsuitable for a garment as any leaves which could have been selected; and in this particular also there is striking resemblance to the vain works of righteousness by which the conscious sin-

ner seeks to secure the favor of divine justice. It is therefore the appropriate type of all systems of religion which depend upon creature merit for acceptance with God. As such our Lord uses it in this parable. While justice invariably condemns it as unfruitful in its failure to give glory to God, man, the dresser of the vineyard (Gen. ii. 15), still clings to it as the sole dependence in which he trusts. So, when the convicted sinner hears the awful sentence of God dooming this tree to be cut down, he still intercedes for it, in the vain hope that with increased efforts on his part it may yet bear fruit which will be acceptable to justice. We are not told that the sentence was revoked or suspended in accordance with this suggestion. The Lord leaves the subject with the command still enjoining the removal of the unfruitful tree. Is not this the truth in the experience of every subject of grace? While paralyzed by the dreadful thunder of legal condemnation, the sinner yet desires another trial to find favor by observance of the commandments of the law. Realizing his failure to find life in the works of the law in all his past efforts, he yet knows nothing of any other way of acceptance but by his own works; hence, when this fig tree is cut down, he sees only the gloom of everlasting despair awaiting him. As the Israelites in the desert longed for their state of slavery in Egypt, so the hopeless sinner desires even the bondage of the law rather than that just sentence of death which he feels to be his inevitable portion in his present condition. But the glorious gospel of divine grace reveals by the blood of Jesus a new and living way, which he hath consecrated (*made new*) for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.—Heb. x. 20.

In this parable is illustrated the impossibility of justification by the efforts of the sinner, as the Lord had just declared to them to whom he spoke, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." We are not left to suppose that this repentance is something by which the natural man may propitiate divine justice. None can repent without the grace of God; for Jesus alone is exalted with the right hand (that is, the almighty power) of God a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins.—Acts v. 31. This repentance is the turning away from self-dependence and works of their own to trust in the perfect righteousness which is in "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." They to whom this repentance is given are themselves the fruit by which the praise of God is proclaimed, as they are living evidences of his almighty power "to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Hebrews vii. 25. They are not fig trees bearing the imperfect fruit of self-righteous obedience to a law written on tables of stone; but they have the law of the

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus written in that new heart which God has given to them, "that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."—Isa. lxi. 3. These are plants which shall not be rooted up, since they are securely kept by the immutability of the eternal purpose and love of God. Not only is their preservation assured by the omnipotence and faithfulness of their Redeemer; the truth of God that cannot lie must fail before one of them can be lost, for he has declared that they shall never perish. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16.

"The least, the feeblest of the sheep
To him the Father gave;
Kind is his heart the charge to keep,
And strong his arm to save."

But some trembling little one may say, "All this is indeed very comforting to them who are embraced in the exceeding great and precious promise of the grace of God; yet it fails to comfort me, because I find no evidence in myself of the work of the Spirit sealing me as a chosen vessel of mercy." To such characters exclusively belong all the promises in the gospel; for the fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil, is the distinctive characteristic of those to whom the word of this salvation is sent.—Acts xiii. 26. It is this very principle within the saint which causes that mourning over the sinfulness felt in the heart, and produces that longing hunger and thirst after righteousness. Carnal enmity against God could never counterfeit that desire for holiness and abhorrence of sin as its motions are felt in the natural heart of the saints. This realizing sense of inbred corruption is never known by such as love sin. It is peculiar to the subjects of saving grace to feel their own vileness and hate their own life because of sin. Herein is the grace of God manifestly glorified, that sinners are cleansed from all sin by the precious blood of Jesus Christ his Son. If any could be found who merited salvation by their own works, that would be their just desert, and grace would not appear at all in such a case. But the sovereign Judge has found none righteous; no, not one. All are under sin. Then, it is manifest that there is no salvation upon the ground of creature merit. Those who are saved must therefore repent; that is, they must *turn away* from that system of merit in themselves, before they can receive that righteousness which is of God by faith.—Phil. iiii. 9. But such is the enmity and pride of the carnal mind that it is impossible that the natural man should have this repentance. It is the gift of God by Jesus Christ alone; and it is given to no others but to those whom God gave to him in the eternal covenant of grace. These are ordained unto eternal life, and because Jesus lives they shall live also. Jesus as the exalted Savior of sinners can no more live in the throne of his glory while

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CORRESPONDENCE.

RUTH.

To ALL classes of Bible readers Ruth appears one of the most lovely characters, and her story one of the most touching interest. But to those who are spiritual there is an interest in this sweet character different from that which it inspires in any others, and a comfort derived from the record of her life based upon principles which the natural man does not see in this history, nor admire where seen. It is so with all the inspired Scriptures; natural men may have an absorbing interest in them, but it will be of a natural kind, as in any other books or subjects. To the people of God alone are they of true, vital and eternal value, for only to them is the righteousness of God revealed therein; and nothing but the revelation of that righteousness to his soul can be of true and lasting comfort to a poor sinner, nor can anything so command his attention afterward, and call forth his affection, as that which relates to the experience of this righteousness in the heart, and its manifestation in the life.

We are accustomed to regard Ruth as far more kind to her mother-in-law than Orpah. So also it is natural that we should esteem Abel a better man by nature than Cain, Isaac than Ishmael, Jacob than Esau, and David than Saul. But if this were so, if the difference between these several characters were natural, proving the favor of God to be bestowed because of superior natural merit, then instead of the Scriptures showing any ground of hope that a poor, justly condemned sinner could ever experience the favor of God, they would consign to everlasting death every one who has to say with Job, "Behold, I am vile." The doctrine of the total depravity of all the human race, that all are equally vile by nature in the sight of God, and that those whom he accepts are in no wise better than those whom he rejects, (Romans iii. 9,) except as he makes them to differ by his electing love and gracious power, according to his own eternal purpose, (1 Cor. iv. 7,) is a doctrine which when plainly stated calls forth the enmity of the natural heart. Even the believer can often see that his carnal mind is not reconciled to it, does not love it. How can he wonder, then, that the world should hate and despise it? Yet it is the plain teaching of the Scriptures, is the only ground of hope for a sinner, displays the glory of God, abases the pride and vain confidence of man, and is loved with all the heart of the new man of grace.

Our ways of thinking and judging naturally can never bring us to the truth of God. The finite mind cannot comprehend infinite things, nor judge correctly of the ways of God. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isa. lv. 8, 9. The natural man will boldly and arrogantly condemn such doctrine and such ways as the Scriptures plainly present; but the spiritual man, knowing that we must rise above all our own ways and thoughts and powers before we can judge of the things of God, which no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God, (1 Cor. ii. 11,) bows in humble submission, and says, "I will hear what God the Lord shall speak." To Abel the Lord gave faith whereby he offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous. If righteousness were by our own works, then as soon as those works were accomplished we would know we were righteous. But none can know that he is righteous in the sight of God until the Lord gives him the witness, testifying of the gift of righteousness to him.—Heb. xi. 4. The choice of Isaac was made known to Abraham before he had a child. Jacob and Esau were not yet born, neither had done any good or evil, when God's electing love to Jacob was made known to Rebecca. Both Jacob and David, with many other of the saints, were left to show most clearly that by nature they were as vile as the vessels of wrath. Well may we wonder at the riches of God's glory made known "on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Well may we exclaim, as we contemplate this, and the incomprehensible power made known through "enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

Elimelech had gone from Bethlehem-Judah to the country of Moab to sojourn, because there was a famine in the land. He represents a child of God, as the meaning of his name also implies, one to whom God is King; and he met with the fate of all those who in any sense go away from the church, forsake her order or doctrine or privileges, because of a famine

experienced there. The Lord sometimes sends a famine upon his people to try their faith. Then if they undertake to obtain food by their own efforts, they shall soon find how vain such efforts are, and how sad are the effects of going away from Bethlehem, the house of bread, hoping to find it elsewhere. No food or comfort for the soul can be found except in the way of his commands. While walking and dwelling there, if he withhold the food, we have but to wait till he sees fit to give it to us again. "If we live after the flesh we shall die." If we attempt to walk in the light and warmth of a fire of our own kindling, this shall we have at the Lord's hands, if we are truly his children, we shall lie down in sorrow.—Isa. l. 11. Elimelech died, and also his two sons, whose names may signify the consequence of forsaking the house of bread; Mahlon, sickness, and Chilion, pining or wasting away.

Naomi "was left of her two sons and her husband. Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread." The Lord is faithful. Sooner or later he will visit his people who have been favored to continue steadfastly in the doctrine and fellowship of the church, and give them seasons of refreshing. It is our privilege to trust in his blessed name, and to wait patiently for him, however dark the night, and however great the apparent distress, looking unto the hills, from whence cometh our help; not the hills of Moab, not the exaltations of human excellence and power, but the everlasting hills of God's power and holiness; for "our help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

Naomi "went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah." Judah was her home, but it was not theirs. She had the strong ties of nature, and all the tender recollections of her early years, and the undying fellowship and affection of her people, to draw her back; but not so with them. It appeared therefore an evidence of great kindness of heart on the part of her daughters-in-law to thus go with her, a poor and lonely old woman. She truly appreciated this unselfish kindness, but was too thoughtful of their own welfare to let them act upon it so greatly to their disadvantage as this would be. So after they had accompanied her perhaps a long distance upon the

road, she said to them, "Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people." Here was a full expression of their kind feelings toward her, and of their willingness to go with her. She certainly could be excused if she now accepted the offer of their company, it would seem so much better than for her to return alone; but she persistently declines it. She cannot allow them to make the sacrifice for her. She knows that all their treasures are in Moab, and there must their hearts be also; and she could not wish companions who would be with her only in person, while their hearts were ever returning to the fields and cities of Moab. And she said, "Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me?" Then she showed them how impossible it was that the advantages they would ordinarily be expected to seek could be found by following her. The prospects of their being settled in the house of a husband were utterly dark. So she absolutely refused their offer, and repeated her command to go back. "Turn again, my daughters, go your way." "For it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her."

So instead of invitations and appeals and promises of reward being given to persuade people to come with the church, every temporal discouragement is thrown in the way of those who offer to come. An offer to come, indeed, cannot be accepted. "Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." This certainly seemed like a kind and zealous offer; but the Savior met it by showing how poor a lot his followers had, less comfortable temporally than the foxes and birds of the air. We hear no more of him. Orpah was kind, as her name sometimes signifies, in offering repeatedly to go with Naomi; but she could finally be induced to go back. More kind in her offer than Ruth, as we learn when we are permitted to see into the heart of the latter; for she still loved her native land with all the power and freshness of her young heart. There all her treasures were, there all her interests, there the wealth of her affection.

Signs of the Times.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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CORRESPONDENCE.

"FOR whosoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."—Matt. xxiv. 28; Luke xvii. 37.

DEAR BRETHREN:—By request of a dear sister, I will try to furnish a few reflections for the SIGNS upon the above words of our Savior. I have often thought how wonderful in their depth of meaning and in their fullness of application were the words of Jesus. He not only wrought miracles which attested his divine power, and which contained the prophecies of the "still greater works" which he came to do, in raising men dead in sins to life again, and in cleansing from sin, but he took common things and made them into parables, by which to declare his kingdom and his glory; and as he thus used common events, so also he used common sayings or proverbs for the same purpose. The words of the text at the head of this article were a common saying or proverb of that day, the general meaning of which every one could comprehend. Jesus here uses it to enforce the great things of which he was speaking upon the minds of his disciples. He did the works that no other man ever did, and he spake as never man spake before. The plainest language, when he uttered it, took on a divine force, because there was a divine meaning in it. Jehovah said, "This is my beloved Son: hear ye him." In comparison, no one else was worth hearing. He said, "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." So in these words there is a fullness and variety of meaning. May he who uttered the words give us the guidance of his Spirit while we shall for a little contemplate them.

1st. The disciples had come to Jesus, as will be seen in the connection, and entreated that he would tell them when the temple should be destroyed, and what should be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world. The answer of the Savior is recorded in the two chapters named at the head of this article. He does not give day nor date; but he gives signs by which the coming of the time may be known to those who can read the signs. He describes the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, with the signs preceding it, and seems to say nothing about the last two questions of the disciples. I say seems to say nothing; in reality he answers all three in answering one. God works not only among the Jews and at Jerusalem, but he works among all nations and everywhere, and always works consistently with himself. In

the destruction of Jerusalem, with its causes and signs, we may see a picture of all destructions, with their causes and signs, and even of the end of the world itself. The saying in the text well illustrated the case with that old covenant people and worship. They were now like a worn out carcase, from which all its former life and glory had departed. There had once been use for this old heaven and earth, but they had now accomplished their purpose and must pass away. There had been life of its kind in that body, but now it lay prone as a dead body, to which the eagles would gather ready to devour. And it was time it should be devoured. Its usefulness was lived out; and it could remain henceforth, if it remained at all, only as an offense in the sight of men. Thus God has provided eagles for every dead thing under heaven; and in everything, when we see the eagles gathering to devour, we may know that the end of that thing is nigh. Its life and spirit have departed, and the God of providence is about to bring in some better thing, and therefore he sends forth his eagles to remove the old decaying form out of the way. Thus Jesus takes a general truth and applies it to the passing away of that old dispensation. He may also allude to the eagles painted upon the standards of the Roman army, whose legions were to be the instruments by which Jerusalem should be overthrown. Be this as it may, the lesson which he taught in this saying was wholly pertinent to that people and that system of worship.

2d. I understand, then, that the first application of this saying was to that Jewish economy. The analogy is very plain here. Once they fulfilled the purpose of God by shadowing forth as a people, in all their worship, sacrifices and ordinances, the spiritual things yet to be more clearly revealed. Jesus also was to be born of that people after the flesh. He was the new wine which was in the cluster, which saved it from destruction because a blessing was in it. But now the new wine, the life, the blessing, had been removed, and the cluster is to be thrown away and destroyed. The real life that was in that Jewish body was not destroyed; it never could be destroyed; and the body could not be destroyed so long as any life was in it. But whatever of spirituality had been among that people was gone, and they would tithe herbs with one hand, while they robbed widows' houses with the other, and made long prayers in the corners of streets to be seen of men. God

took away the first, that he might establish the second. He shook earth and heaven, that all things that could be shaken might be removed. All life left the old forms and ceremonies forever, and henceforth they were proper food for the eagles; and those who could discern the signs of the times could see the forces gathering that should overwhelm and destroy forever that city and that nation. But Israel blinded could discern the face of the sky, but could not discern the "signs of the times." The true glory of Israel had departed long before. The life was gone. Why should not the carcase be removed? The eagles gather to the feast by an inherent law of their nature. To the eye or ear of one looking on, no call is apparent, and yet the eagles come. So the forces which gathered to the destruction of that city obeyed no call of man, but came as God called them. The carcase was ready to be devoured, and the eagles came. Ere passing from this more natural view of the matter, I wish to add that God has made like provision all over the world and in all time. Whenever anything has wrought his will and fulfilled its day it is a dead carcase, and God has provided his eagles to consume that thing out of the sight of men.

3d. But I desire especially, if I can do so, to talk about these words in an experimental light. A similar thing takes place in all christian experience, not only once, but many times. Every believer has once been a Jew, a Pharisee, in his adherence to forms and ceremonies and self-righteous works. In these things, or in some of them, we all once put our trust. Morality, or religious forms, or both, we trusted should save us. In prayers, alms-giving, church ceremonies, we all rested our hope of favor with God. We saw no deeper than the outward form, and felt no need of blood to cleanse us and our sacrifices from defilement. When we began to inquire after God, we still looked for him in these same things. They became a great howling wilderness, in which, unknown to us, the Lord led us about and instructed us. All the weary days and years of this our bondage to the law the Lord never forsook us, and little by little he taught us to see that here was not and could not be our rest. The law was made to us a school-master indeed, but it was to Christ only, and then the school-master must step one side. During all that time we knew only the law, and we rested our hope in the deeds of the law; yet by the same law in which we rested our vain

hope, God was teaching us to know ourselves, and to know him and his perfect holiness and inflexible justice, that by and by we might cease to trust in the deeds of the law for justification. The law gave us the knowledge of sin, and so we were led to the Sin-bearer and away from the law at last. Just as the old dispensation passed away at the coming of Jesus, who was the real life of all its forms and ceremonies, (that is, they all pointed to him, and were of value only as men could see that Jesus was in them,) so in our personal experience there was a passing away of the old ideas, of the old hope, faith and trust. Our good works, forms of religious worship, prayers, mortifications and self-denials, were all become as a dead carcase in our view, and were devoured before our eyes, and became as though they had not been. All these things belonged to the road in which we must travel, that so we might come to know the fullness of the salvation that is in Jesus. In all these things God was teaching us great lessons of our own helplessness and vileness. We could learn to know ourselves in no other way; and we could not know the gospel revelation of the Savior until we had come to know ourselves by the law; therefore our works and forms were of use just as the old legal covenant was of use. But there came a day, the day of Christ, when these things were no longer of use. Now as a dead carcase they must be consumed out of sight; and our God sent forth the proper messengers to accomplish in our experience this work. We had thought this body of dead works and forms was alive, and could serve our use; now that its one use of teaching us the knowledge of sin is accomplished, it becomes in our sight in reality a dead body, and in the revelation of this knowledge to us it passes away forever. In that experience the word of God and his Spirit and our living experience consume all such trust as had been ours before. Moses and Elias pass away from the sight of the disciple forever, and he sees no man but Jesus only. In this vital experience the old carcase of creature works must be consumed, or else remain an offense and stench forever.

4th. Not only must there be a consuming of the old legality in the first coming to Christ of the soul with whom the Lord is dealing, but there are scattered all along the believer's pathway many dead carcasses, and God must send forth his eagles to consume them out of the way. How good it is that in his love and pity

spect, all being subject to bondage through fear of death. Although our Savior has effectually destroyed Satan, so far as his power to destroy the children of God is concerned, yet he is not sufficiently destroyed to prevent his walking about like a roaring lion, seeking to destroy these children. And they are so constituted that at times they almost despair, and are ready to say with David, the man after God's own heart, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." David, being a man after God's own heart, is a fit representative of all the children of God; and they are all after God's own heart, in the same sense that he was; for God gives all his children one heart and one way, that they may know him, that he is the Lord. As we have shown that David had fears, in this we have shown that all God's children have fears, as they all have the same mind. And as fear, in part, at least, destroys our peace and cuts off our enjoyment, the object of the text, and all similar ones, is to encourage the children of God against these groundless fears, and to encourage them to hope in the mercy of God, who has declared in his word that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." In view of the many exceeding great and precious promises contained in the Scriptures, the Lord by his prophet has said, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." For the further encouragement of his people against fear he has said by the same prophet, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." And again, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel: I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." What wonderful assurances are these, and how encouraging to the little flock. But Satan makes many suggestions against the members of this little flock, such as these: "You are no child of God. If you were, you would not have all these vain and foolish thoughts. If your people were the people of God, there would be more of them. See other denominations around you, how they prosper, gathering new members by scores, while you are dwindling out. Surely you will soon be all gone." But, dear child of God, Satan is a liar, and the father of it, and you need not believe a word he says. These suggestions seem very reasonable, when viewed from a natural standpoint, and consequently the poor child of God is made many times to fear and tremble when thus beguiled. Consequently there is the greater need for such strong assurances as are found in the text, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

One of the most encouraging features of the case is, that this little flock has a Father in this kingdom, who has all power in heaven and in earth, and is as much interested in the matter as they can be; for they are his heritage, of whom he speaks when he says, "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." National Israel, who was a lively type of this little flock, was not chosen because they were more in number than other people, for they were the fewest of all people. Their inheriting the promised land did not depend upon their numbers or their strength; for the Lord fought their battles, drove out their enemies, and gave them possession of that good land. And so he has conquered all the enemies of his spiritual Israel, has fought the one decisive battle, by which he has perfected forever them that are sanctified; to which the prophet doubtlessly was looking when he said, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Dear saints, with all this array of positive assurance in favor of this little flock, and its final triumph, though few and far between, it seems that we might with propriety adopt the language of the apostle, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." With a view to this kingdom, and the certainty of its establishment, seven hundred years before the King made his appearance in the world, in a body of flesh like unto our own, the Lord by the prophet said, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." And again, six hundred years before his appearing, another prophet declared that in the days of certain earthly kings should the God of heaven set up a kingdom

which should never be destroyed; that the kingdom should not be left to other people, but it should break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and should stand forever. Then, fear not, little flock, for

"Your Father will a kingdom give,
And give it with delight;
His feeblest child his love shall call
To triumph in his sight."

"Brethren, while we sojourn here,
Fight we must, but should not fear;
Foes we have, but more a Friend,
One that loves us to the end.

"Forward, then, with courage go;
Long we shall not dwell below;
Soon the joyful news will come,
Child, your Father calls, come home."

W. D. CHANDLER, Mod.
F. M. McLEROY, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, to the several churches of which it is composed, sends greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed away since our last communication, and according to our usage we will now address you again, concerning the things which pertain to the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."—Isaiah xxxii. 1. This prophet has spoken much in his prophecies concerning this King and his government.—See Isa. ix. 6, 7. It is said, Psalm ii. 6, 7, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." A king implies government and subjects, or a people governed by his authority. His people were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.—Eph. i. 4. Daniel, speaking of this kingdom, says, "In the days of these kings [Cæsars] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Isaiah also says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever."—Isaiah ix. 6, 7. When the time came for his manifestation in the flesh, forasmuch as his people are partakers of flesh and blood, it was necessary that he should take part of the same. He came in the end of the world, (Jewish dispensation,) to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. When the angel announced his advent to Joseph, he said to him, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matthew i. 21. In being made of a woman he was made under the law, to redeem his people from under the curse of the law, and

to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He died, arose, and ascended up on high, and now sitteth on the right hand of God, exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. To this church, of which he is the Head, this kingdom, of which he is the King, he has given laws and regulations, to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. The princes which rule in judgment are the twelve apostles of the Lamb, which followed him in the regeneration, to whom he said, "When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Matt. xix. 28. "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."—Matt. xvi. 19. These judges have recorded their decisions on all points of the doctrine, order, ordinances and discipline of the kingdom, and from their recorded decisions there is no appeal, for they are ratified in heaven. Our Lord Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. When he ascended up on high he gave gifts unto men. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."—Eph. iv. 11–13. How important it is that the subjects of our King should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, in honor of him who has made them kings and priests unto God, that they may reign with him forever.

In the militant state of the church and kingdom the members have various trials to encounter. They have the world, the flesh and the devil to oppose them. If they were of the world, the world would love its own; but Jesus says, "Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." But be of good cheer, for our King has overcome the world. This kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of peace. Under his government it is a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down. Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, neither shall any of her cords be broken.—See Isa. xxxiii. 20. Even the subjects of this kingdom have a carnal nature to contend with. The judges have said, "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Any departure from the laws of Christ, as expounded by the apostles, will engender strife and vain glory, disturbing the harmony and peace of the saints. All the subjects of this kingdom are born of the Spirit. None else can see or enter it. They, as a fruit of the Spirit, love him that begat them, and also all them who are

begotten of him. They love to have their King rule in and over them. As they have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so are they to walk in him, in all his ordinances, blamelessly, as the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. The laws of Christ, the King, as expounded by the princes, must be adhered to, in the reception of members, in regard to their call from darkness to light, and in the calling of his servants to the work of the ministry; that we may know that they are called of God to the work, as was Aaron to the priesthood; that a dispensation of the gospel is committed to them, to feed the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood; for only such as are called of God will be for the peace and edification of the church. The subjects of Christ's kingdom, when exercised by his Spirit, desire to be subject to the laws of Christ and to the brethren. Every departure from the laws of Christ and instructions of the apostles is hostile to peace and quietness, and is productive of opposition, strife, evil surmisings, hatred, and every evil work. The King will certainly chastise his subjects for their faults. He will visit their transgressions with the rod, but his loving-kindness he will not utterly take away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Dear brethren, are we the subjects of the Redeemer's kingdom? Are we united to him by a vital bond and in a living faith? Have we been made partakers of the heavenly calling, and tasted the good word of God? Have we entered into the holy city? If so, then he has given us laws and rules, which, when duly observed and obeyed by his subjects, will lead us to love one another with a pure heart fervently; and our love will be exhibited in long-suffering, kindness, meekness, gentleness, humility and temperance, and by delighting in the truth, patiently bearing afflictions and distresses for Christ's sake. Let us believe and trust in what God has said of his everlasting love to the subjects of his kingdom, for the protection of which he has appointed salvation for walls and bulwarks. "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." Against this kingdom the gates of hell shall not prevail. God is a wall of fire around about it, and the glory in the midst. He has set watchmen on her walls that shall never hold their peace, day nor night. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence. Dear brethren, let us dwell in the city of the great King, and let our feet abide within her gates, and we need not fear the rage of earth or hell. Let us contend earnestly for the faith of the gospel, and for the laws of Christ; and as we have received a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us look to our God for grace, whereby we may serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire.

I. B. WHITCOMB, Mod.

JAMES MILLER, Clerk.

EZRA MEAD, Ass't Clerk.

The Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association called Mad River, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth christian salutation.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—We send you this our annual epistle of love, according to a long established custom, as was practiced in the apostles' days, when they addressed their epistles to the churches, to them who had obtained like precious faith, to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance; not because they did not know the truth, but because they did; that by grace they were saved, through faith, and that not of themselves, for it is the gift of God, and is not of works. The apostle Paul says there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." This faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, is given to the children of God, who are often pressed down with a sense of their sins, by which they are enabled to rely on the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and which relieves them of their burden. This is that faith which is spoken of throughout the Bible, as the gift of God. Jude exhorts the saints to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. Can any believe that the apostle Paul intended that his letter to the Ephesian brethren should give them faith by reading it, even though written by inspiration? It is, like all the Scriptures, a testimony of the works of God. If it was not intended to give faith then, how can it do so now? It was not intended for the natural man; for the apostle says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." And again, in his letter to the Philippians, Paul says, "As ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in mine absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This is an exhortation to the brethren in the church, to continue in the faith of God's elect, which they had received by revelation of Jesus Christ. The work that he speaks of is the work of grace, which they had received by the Spirit. He says, in the first chapter, "Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." He never designed it for dead sinners, that they might work to obtain salvation; for that would be in contradiction to his letter to the Ephesians, wherein he says we are saved by grace, and not by works, lest any should boast. In 2 Tim. i. 9, he says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." The apostle designed this for a particular people, for he wrote to the brethren of things which they knew. He tells them to hold fast the form of sound

words which they had learned of him. He says he was made a pattern to them that should believe on Christ.—1 Tim. i. 16. Now, if the pattern to the faithful in Christ Jesus worshiped God and preached after the way that some called heresy, believing all that is written in the law and the prophets, they who are like him will do the same. Paul says to the Roman brethren, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son;" that is, receive his doctrine as he preached it, bear his cross, and be ready to bear reproach for the cause of Christ. If the apostle's doctrine was called heresy in his day, and he was persecuted because of it, for his conformity to the image of Christ, is it not an evidence that we, who believe the same doctrine, are somewhat like the pattern that was made for us? For it is called heresy in our day, by those who tell us that God only works some things together for good to them that love him. Hear what the Savior has said: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father."—Matt. x. 29. If God directs the stone with which the cruel boy kills the sparrow, shall we say that he is unjust, because he used it to accomplish his will, when the bird's days were numbered? He then says, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." Christ said that he knew them that his Father had given him; and he knew from the beginning all who should believe, and also who should betray him; and here he used a devil to accomplish his will, whose chief design was to secure the thirty pieces of silver which the prophet said he was valued at. Yet that act brought about the redemption which Jesus accomplished by his sacrifice, when he paid the redemption price for his people. John says that it is his blood which cleanseth us from all sin. In Rev. v. 9, we read that John heard the redeemed singing the new song, saying, "Thou hast redeemed us by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." This is Scripture, and was written by inspiration of God. This doctrine is gospel, or good news, to all who have seen themselves poor, helpless sinners, and are made to hunger and thirst after righteousness; and the Savior says, "They shall be filled." The epistles to the churches are gospel, or good news, testifying of that salvation which Jesus accomplished when he died and rose again. It is a finished work, and not an offered salvation. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me."—Heb. viii. 11. The idea of collecting money for missionary purposes, to teach the heathen to know the Lord, is nothing but antichristian, and says that money is the means. It is no better than Si-

mon's money, which he offered the apostles, to purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost.—Acts viii. In the epistles to the churches the brethren are warned to beware of antichrists, for they are already in the world. Everything that is set up in the world in the place of the gift of eternal life, is antichristian, as the Savior has said that he gives eternal life to as many as the Father has given him.—John xvii. 2. If any of the heathen are his, he says he will give them eternal life, and we believe he will do it. We will trust him, and not be afraid. Antichrist says, "We are afraid he will not, and we must help him." This very act speaks unbelief. The apostle says, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." The angel of God said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." And the apostle says he has saved them, and we believe he has. Antichrist says that he is trying to save sinners, and will do so if they will let him. Brethren, trust alone in the Lord; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

Written unto the churches of our faith and order, and to all that are called of God everywhere.

J. G. FORD, Mod.

URIAH TRUMBO, Clerk.

The Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association called Western, to the churches of which she is composed, sendeth christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—Through the tender mercy of our gracious and all-wise God we have been brought through another year, and have the privilege of meeting, and of hearing from you through your messengers and epistles of love; and as, according to our custom, you will expect from us a Circular Letter, we will call your attention to the words recorded in Galatians v. 1, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

The first two chapters of the apostle Paul's letter to the Galatians are mainly devoted to the defense of his apostolic office, which was rendered necessary by the attempt of the false teachers to disparage his apostolic standing. He then enters with peculiar fervor upon the great theme of justification by faith. His argument is, in substance, the same as that in the first half of the epistle to the Romans, only that it takes, from necessity, a more controversial form. He brings the main discussion to a close by carefully guarding the doctrine of christian liberty against antinomian abuse. See chapter five, verses thirteen and fourteen. "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Zeal in a good cause, united with judgment, is excellent, and is calculated to give a person influence.

False teachers often make great professions, and express high regard for the welfare of the people. All should therefore be on their guard against wolves in sheep's clothing, and take heed not only how, but also what they hear. Prove all things by the word of God, and hold fast that only which is good. "And as he [Jesus] sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you."—Matt. xxiv. 3, 4. Again, in the twenty-fourth verse, he warns them that false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. We find these false prophets now, as we verily believe, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men; warning and exhorting the people to good works for eternal life and salvation; teaching the false doctrine of works as a means of reconciling God to the creature. This, dear brethren, is not the liberty that the apostle Paul exhorts the brethren at Galatia to stand fast in. God's people are not at liberty to believe false doctrine. We find the Scriptures in no place teaching good works as a means of reconciling God to the sinner; but we find the apostles and all the prophets teaching that the sinner must be reconciled to God. Now for the testimony. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. v. 17-20. Again, see Paul's letter to the Colossians. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard," &c.—Col. i. 19-23. God has not called us to works of darkness, which the unregenerate walk in; but he has called us to works of righteousness, in the light and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Think ye it would be reasonable to call upon dead men to work? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. "I must

work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."—John ix. 4. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men," &c.—1 Peter ii. 15, 16. God's freemen are not at liberty to walk in riotous conduct and excessive living. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass," &c. "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain."—James i. 22-26. God will have all the glory. "The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens."—Psalm cxlii. 4. "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."—Isa. xlii. 8. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen."—1 Peter iv. 11. "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."—Numbers xx. 12. Thus we have line upon line, and precept upon precept, of the absolute sovereignty of God: he that is holy; he that is true; he that hath the key of David; he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. May he give us grace sufficient for all our needs, and enable us to put all our trust in him. In our pilgrimage through this world of sin and sorrow, though afflictions may await us, and temptations meet us on the way, and false teachers annoy us, and all the world speak evil of us falsely for Christ's sake, may we through the sovereign grace of our God be enabled to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Many of us are growing old, and perhaps this is our last meeting on earth. O, brethren, live godly, uprightly, soberly, and in peace with all men, as much as in you lies, especially with the brotherhood; and may the great Jehovah bless us with his choicest spiritual blessings, guide and direct us in all our walks through life, and finally enable us to meet where parting and tears will be no more, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. Amen.

AARON WOOD, Mod.
WM. J. REEVES, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, in session at North Berwick, Maine, August 29th, 30th and 31st, 1884, to the associations and meetings with whom she corresponds, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—As it has become a time-honored custom, upon the return of our annual gathering, to send you a letter informing you how we fare, and also presenting some spiritual theme for your edification and comfort, we send you this another letter; and as a profitable subject for our mutual contemplation we call your attention to the subject found in the first thirteen verses of the twelfth chapter of the gospel of Matthew. It refers to the teachings and practice of our Savior with regard to the sabbath.

1st. We do not suppose it needful in this letter to present the proofs that the old Jewish sabbath has been (we will not say abolished, but) so completely fulfilled in Christ that to argue that it is still binding, and must be kept, is to deny the liberty that there is in Christ, and to say that Christians are still under the weak and beggarly elements of the ritual law, and bound to observe days and times and seasons. We do not suppose it necessary to enter into these proofs, because we are persuaded that you are established in this very thing, and need not that at this time we should write you about it; but we wish to call attention to some other things which seem to us of great importance in regard to this matter. Our Savior did not come merely to destroy, but to build up. He took away the first, but it was that he might establish the second. If he tore down the old building, it was to make room for the new. It seems to us of more importance that we go round about the new building and mark it well, than that we gaze so much upon the ruins of the old. To say and to prove that the Jewish sabbath is done away, is of no use to us, and can do us no good, unless we are prepared to see what has taken its place, and to enter into the spiritual meaning of the true Christian or gospel sabbath. The old sabbath was of many uses in its time. God gave it for a time, and we must not speak lightly of any of his appointments. But we have come to a better mount than Sinai, and our privileges and obligations are greater than before; and it is of these new covenant blessings that we would now speak.

2d. The Jewish and creation sabbath was God's provision for the good of man, and to encourage the people with the promise of something better. It was a present blessing, and a preacher of future heavenly things. We can all see what some of its daily blessings would be to that people. Chief among them would be the idea of temporal rest or cessation from toil, and the gathering before the Lord for his worship; for we are told that after the captivity and restoration the law was read in their

synagogues every sabbath day. It seems to us that the ideas of rest and worship are inseparable. If any man has it in his heart to worship God, in that same heart there is rest; for true worship is a heartfelt acknowledgment that from the hand of God we have received all, and from his hand we must receive all. It is a confession that in him we live, move, and have our being, accompanied with an abiding confidence that he will supply all our needs. This, we think, is the very ground of rest in the believer's heart. Under that old covenant God demanded one-seventh of the time and one-tenth of the income of the people, to keep them mindful that all time and possessions were alike his. Now when the spirit of the sabbath enters into the heart, every day is the Lord's day, and there will be no need of special days for sabbaths. If men have not the full, large spirit of liberty of the true sabbath, they will straightway regard days and times and seasons; and Paul said that he was afraid of such, in the sense of being fearful that they had not entered into true rest or worship, since they needed days and times. All time ought to have been their day of rest. The Jewish sabbaths preached these better things; and having these better spiritual privileges, shall we desire the form and throw away the substance now? Having the kernel, shall we desire the husk instead? And do we have the substance in our hearts? We throw away the shell of the formal sabbath; have we retained the kernel? Are our hearts resting in God, worshipping God? This calls for self-examination. Can each one say, I have the true sabbath in my soul, and I worship God in the spirit, while I have no confidence in the flesh?

3d. Jesus came in the flesh, and he comes in the Spirit to each individual experience as the fullness of all that the sabbath meant. He called himself the Son of man; and he said, "The Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath day." This and all other days were his. It is worthy of note that just as many times as he is called the Son of God, he is also called the Son of man. Each term is used three times in the New Testament. In the sense in which he is called the Son of God, no other being must ever dare claim it. And so he was the Son of man in that peculiar exalted sense that no sinner can ever claim until, freed from his sins, he is one with Christ; then we shall be like him. Now he does not say the Son of God is Lord of the sabbath day, but the Son of man. It was as man, in all that that term could mean, that he asserted his Lordship over the sabbath, and over all rites and forms and ceremonies. The Jewish ritualists, to whom he spake, were themselves the slaves of their own forms. They had ended by making the good gift of God an idol, and failed to learn what God meant to teach them by his sabbaths. Then we do well to ask, Have we who profess to be Christians so drunk in of the free Spirit of the Son of man that we are

Signs of the Times.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

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NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DIVINE STRENGTH.

"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever."—2 Tim. iv. 16-18.

Our God, for a wise purpose, has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction; for by the prophet Isaiah he said, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it; for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another. Harken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he: I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens; when I call unto them, they stand up together." This quotation shows, if there be any meaning in terms, that the God of the universe is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent, being under no law separate from the counsel of his own will, asking no support from any of his creatures, either men or angels; therefore has led, still is leading, and will continue to so lead and instruct his people, that each one shall know the truth of those awful words, "Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." Israel's God causes his children to know, at some time in their experience, their entire dependence upon him, the absolutely independent Sovereign of all worlds and all beings, the source whence all blessings come, both temporal and spiritual. Jesus said to his disciples, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

"At my first answer no man stood with me." When "the Lord in a vision" said, "Ananias," he answered, "And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, [*euthis*, upright, correct, showing that providence and grace are cognate, that the preparations and effects of God's arrangements are always perfect] and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus; for behold,

he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name." These declarations of Ananias show that Saul's "mission" from those carnal, persecuting Jews was known, and that Ananias was afraid of him; but how quickly all his fears were dispelled when "the Lord said unto him, Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

Whether Paul refers to the time when he answered king Agrippa, or some other circumstance, need not particularly concern us, for he says "my first answer," and in making that "no man stood with" him, a trying position for one, unless sustained by superhuman power; but he was thus sustained; and adored be the name of our God, what he said to Paul, upon another occasion, remains true to-day—"My grace is sufficient for thee." When any of God's servants become so worldly minded, and love popularity so well that they seem willing to wear the "grave clothes" of carnal traditions, and are in love with the very chains which bind them, they then seem to have a large number standing with them, and sometimes applauding them; but when our God enables them to "throw off," or loosen themselves from traditions, which have not apostolic authority, and ignore what wise, learned men have invented, though such forms of expression may have been used and regarded as truth for hundreds of years, then comes a trying time, for it appears to the true servants of God that they are, as it were, standing alone, but they are not; for if God is with them, they have a support, equal to their day and trial; for said the beloved disciple to his dear little children, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." Because error has been current for centuries amongst men, its antiquity does not make it true, neither because apostolic truth has been brought out from the "rubbish" of carnal teaching does not make it something new, for said the Savior, "Every scribe (which is) instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like

unto a man (that is) an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure [mark it was a treasure, not some chimera of his own brain] things new and old"—how new? recently manifested. How old? the eternal purpose and grace of God. The apostle said of certain persons, "But of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me; God accepteth no man's person; [must be something deeper and of more importance than the personal appearance, for God knoweth the heart,] for they who seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me;" therefore there could be no striving together for the faith once delivered to the saints, because they added nothing to him. How lamentable, in our day, that some, who in private conference, seem to be well established in the faith, when it becomes necessary to openly defend some important principle of the doctrine of God, our Savior, such either shirk responsibility, or so vacillate, that instead of adding any strength they prove an element of weakness; and such conduct is not something of recent origin, for that dear servant of our God, the apostle Paul, had to know the deep sorrow, on his part, of just such a course of conduct; and he has left on record the names of some who left him; therefore we have the example, given by the apostle himself, that it is right and proper to name persons, if need be, for said he, addressing Timothy, "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus [fugitive, rightly named surely] and Hermogenes," (begotten of Mercury, or generation of lucre) which shows they were two noted characters; but the time came when they no longer desired the company of the apostle Paul; for doubtless they had discovered that to be openly associated with the "bigoted Paul," was rather a poor place, or position, to replenish their "pockets with filthy lucre;" therefore they "cut loose" from such unprofitable company. The apostle was equally careful and positive in naming persons who had ministered to his wants and refreshed him; for said he, "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphones; [who brings usefulness, &c., and thanks be to God, there are some such houses yet] for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain. But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day; and

in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well."

In all of his afflictions, sorrows and persecutions, the apostle remained unmoved; for said he, "That in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting;" therefore when criminated for the truth, brethren, and feeling very lonely, may we be enabled to look to the pattern, and not be disheartened, nor discouraged; for the apostle knew measurably, at times, what would be the consequence of his openly and faithfully defending the truth of the gospel; for said he, upon one occasion, "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

They who contend according to the ability given them, or as the apostle words it, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ," for the same faith that the apostle did, and strictly adhere to what Moses, the prophets and the apostles have recorded, concerning the eternal Spirit, the Almighty God, and the gospel of his grace, and who will not admit that modern scholastic phrases, creature imagination, the wild "chimeras of the brain," and carnal philosophy, are a proper interpretation of the Scriptures of divine truth; but that any position assumed, which conflicts with the general tenor of the Scriptures cannot be countenanced, and that the writings of "standard authors," the ancient fathers, or modern "divines" (?) are not authorities to be heeded any further than they have a "thus saith the Lord," often find themselves, like Paul, in a measure at least; for some modern Phygellus, or Hermogenes, has turned away. In the immediate connection of our text he says, "For Demas [popular] hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest bring

left the New School Baptists right away, and O what peace and joy I have had since. True, I have trouble, and expect to have; but O the happiness of being set free to go to those I love. Two weeks ago this morning I was baptized by Elder Bundy, near Locktown, and was permitted to commune with the Lord and his chosen ones. Although I feel too mean to be called by his name, yet I rejoice in the privileges that I am permitted to enjoy. I have had a long, wearisome journey coming through the wilderness out of Egypt, but I hope I have entered into that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

I was not able to tell much when I gave my experience to the church; and so, my dear brethren Beebe, if you have room, without crowding out more important matter, please print this, after you kindly correct all mistakes, and oblige a young sister in Christ. It may encourage some poor soul who is traveling the same road that I have so lately come.

Yours truly, in hope,
CLARA E. PARSONS.

HINESTON, Rapides Par., La.

DEAR AND HIGHLY ESTEEMED EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have received a letter from brother William Perkins, which I will send to you for publication, as I think it would be profitable to the little, despised flock of Jesus. I submit it to your better judgment. May the dear Lord sustain you, is my prayer.

Yours, in hope of eternal life,
DAVID RICHEY.

EDGERLY, La., Aug. 10, 1884.

ELDER DAVID RICHEY—DEAR BROTHER:—Your letter, written while on your tour in Texas, was received on the day of our meeting, and was read to the brethren and sisters, much to our comfort. It afforded me great pleasure to hear that our Louisiana brethren were blessed with the privilege of attending the union meeting, and that love, union and fellowship prevailed throughout the meeting. If there is anything near my heart on earth, it is the peace and welfare of Zion. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," says David. Yes, to see the brethren and sisters joined together in the love and fellowship of the gospel, bearing each others' burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ.

We felt disappointed in your not reaching us at the meeting in July. We had a large and attentive congregation. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." If I am not mistaken, we felt and realized the glorious presence of him in our midst who has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." I felt that the Lord was with me, in a very special manner, affording light and liberty. The text on Saturday was, "He hath filled the hungry with

good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away."—Luke i. 53. On Sunday, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."—Acts v. 20. O, my brother, when I consider the responsibility resting upon the servants of God, seeing that it is required at their hands to speak all the words of this life, it often makes me fear that I fall short. O, how broad and deep and unfathomable is this life! It is an ocean without bounds, a sea without a shore. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."—John i. 1. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men."—Verse 4. This, I understand, is divine life, life eternal. This life is the light of men. I have said it is deep. It reminds me of the vision of the holy waters, (Ezekiel xlvi.), which, I think, has reference to eternal life, or the gospel with all its blessings. It is said (verse 5) to be a river that could not be passed over. Paul speaks of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. The rich supplies of sovereign grace, the effusion of the Holy Spirit, and the blessings of divine life, are often represented by the holy writers under the metaphor of rivers and streams, watering the dry and thirsty land. Jesus says, "The water which I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." "I am the Resurrection and the Life." "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "With thee," says David, "is the foundation of life." Enough has been said to establish our view of the life referred to. We will turn again to the river and streams. It seems that the prophet Ezekiel, and John in the Revelation, though living long ages apart, saw in their respective visions many glorious, sublime and wonderful scenes connected with the life and salvation of the people of God. We will trace a little of the striking similarity in the visions shown to each of them, concerning the waters, the river, and the effects produced. Take notice, that the waters seen by Ezekiel (verse 12) issued out of the sanctuary, which is the inner court, and the most holy place. As seen by John, it proceeded out of the throne of God and the Lamb. Now, my brother, consider the healing properties of the waters described by the prophet, "Every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the river shall come, shall live." Now, hear our Savior, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Take notice, a little further, that the prophet saw trees growing, "for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed." Here we evidently have set forth the mediatorial work of our

dear Redeemer, and his all-abounding grace to supply all our wants in time, and complete in the end our uninterrupted felicity. Look up, O my soul, and consider from whence cometh the exalted privilege and honor conferred upon thee, of being called a child, a son and an heir of God, and a joint heir with the Lord Jesus Christ. Do they not all spring from the everlasting love of God, through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, our great high priest, who is our temple and altar, and through whom we have access to the Father? Has one of his precious promises ever failed? And though millions of the dear redeemed of our Father's children have been made the happy recipients of gospel grace, and have all drunk from the living streams that make glad the city of our God, do we to-day find any lack? O no. Now, remember, John saw the tree of life on either side of the river, which bare twelve manner of fruit, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. In both visions life and healing are set forth, representing the gospel with all its blessings, with all its fullness of salvation, suited to the wants of all the election of grace, all the vessels of mercy which he hath afore prepared unto glory. The prophet Isaiah (xxxiii. 21) was enabled by revelation to behold some of the beauties of these rivers and streams of salvation, saying, "But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby."

Now, in the vision of the prophet, we discover a display of the sovereignty of our God.—Verse 11. "But the miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed: they shall be given to salt." Now, literally speaking, salt in a marshy place, and the place itself, could be of little use. But to the point. Remember that every thing was healed and lived where the river cometh. Here is, evidently, something represented that never experienced the life-giving power of the waters herein described. Now let us see what Paul says about it. "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy; and whom he will he hardeneth."—Rom. ix. 18. Again, hear our Savior. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for it seemed good in thy sight." I must leave the subject, although I feel that I have but just touched a few points in it.

I hope, brother Richey, that the good Lord may enable you to fulfill your desire in visiting us this fall. The health of my family is tolerably good. I have improved considerably in health myself. My wife sends christian regards to you. Remember me to sister Richey, and the brethren and sisters generally in your vicinity.

Your brother in gospel bonds,
W. W. PERKINS.

PALESTINE, Texas, August 22, 1884.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN—As I hope we are, in the Lord. The time is come for me to send what has been your due for some time. The reason I have been slow about remitting is simply because I am a very poor man, and cannot command two dollars every time I want it. I have been reading the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for five or six years, and I am well pleased with what it contains. Your editorials, together with the corresponding letters and sweet experiences, are very consoling to me. All in that department is well conducted. The SIGNS and the Bible are all I read; and the reason, I think, I admire what is published in the SIGNS, is because it is sustained by the infallible standard, the Bible.

Now, brethren, I wish to say something by way of asking for advice, as I am ignorant concerning many things. But allow me to tell of one thing which I think I am apprised of, which is this, that the world is a cheat, especially that part of it which is professional. This is no more severe concerning them than brother Purington was in his reply to brother Garret, of Clayton, Texas, in speaking of events now transpiring, such as the setting aside of the New Testament by carnal religious teachers. This is what I want you to instruct me in. I want a Bible of the old, original translation, for I can scarcely find one but what is a newly revised work; and the few that I find which I think are the old translation, are very costly, so much so that I am not able to buy one. This, brethren, I lay before you, hoping that some of you may be able to devise some plan or way by which we can have the original at a reasonable cost.

Now, dear brethren and sisters, see what carnal religious teachers would do; yet I may be mistaken. These are professional and very religious people, and very zealous for their cause, no doubt believing that they are doing God's service. But believing a thing to be so does not make it so; for the belief and religion of Saul of Tarsus was just like that which the world to-day has. We know what Saul's religion did, and we know what theirs is doing. The very spirit of their religion develops or manifests their threatenings. The Scriptures inform us concerning eternal salvation, that this is of the Lord, and that it is not for nor according to any works of righteousness which we have done or can do, but according to God's own purpose and grace. The Bible tells us that God hath saved his people with an everlasting salvation, and that God is the Savior. "For I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." Well, they know all this, at least they know it is Bible doctrine, for they have seen it with their eyes. Well, as they teach, so I suppose they believe. And as the original Scriptures or Bible will not support them, they want (as it is natural with them to desire to control, and not to be controlled) a Bible they can control; and they may get

it, for our God suffers many things. Our God suffers all liars, and their father also. The reason why I say our God suffers these things, is because our God has all power both in heaven and in earth. I think that many things which God suffers are designed to show his power. God would not reveal himself by making manifest his power, if there were not here something to comprehend it. Brethren, our God within and of himself is divine; and according to his own purpose and in his own time he communicates to or implants within these vessels of his mercy a principle which in and of itself is pure and divine. This, I understand, is begotten in us of God. Then here is something (a principle, if you please) in us begotten and born of God, which cannot sin; therefore it cannot die. It comprehends something of the will, goodness, greatness and power of God, its Father. We would be bereft of the Bible, and be made to bow to the reasonings of the carnal mind of these carnal teachers, if our support, which is the true and living God, could be hindered. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If our God should suffer them to do away with the original Scriptures, they might think they had it all their own way; but not so. The blessed gospel would still be preached by those whom our God has called to this great work. The gospel is not said to be the power of the Bible, but the Bible says that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Again, here is something of great worth to us, similar to the killing of the body, with no more power after that. They may eventually destroy the Bible, but the Bible tells us of something which is our sure support. They cannot destroy the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, which shall guide us into all truth. Again, the Bible tells us of eternal life; but the Scriptures are not that eternal life. "They are they that testify of me," says Jesus. Brethren, there are many things possible for them to do, and they would deceive the elect, if they were left to "paddle their own canoe." The carnal mind would soon steer or conduct it down into Babylon. But I hope to be kept by the power of God; and if I am so kept, there is no chance nor way for them by which they may trap or ensnare me. Dear brethren, this is not boasting of my goodness, worthiness or shrewdness, for I hope I know, with the apostle Paul, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." As to worthiness, I hope that he who is Mediator, and who now is Intercessor, is my worthiness; for he is our sufficiency, and we are complete in him. As to my shrewdness, I come under the head of the "ignorant and unlearned." Occasionally I have just enough rejoicing to feel thankful to my God that it is as well with me as it is. I hope I have a desire to trust in God, and to give him

all the praise, all the glory, and all the honor. I hope also that I am of the number who are circumcised in the heart, and have no confidence in the flesh. Brethren, if these things be so, why cannot I rejoice in God as my Savior? Why cannot I, with one of old, say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth?" Well, but for the world, the flesh and the devil, which I have to contend with, I might do so. From the best understanding I have of the Scriptures, I believe there has always been a people who have had doubts and fears; and, comparatively, they were the fewest in number, the little flock, and their doubts were not as the doubts of others. No, their doubts and fears were of themselves; not, as others, doubting the power of God, his purpose, or his ability to save. They doubt not the Bible, and they want to take it as the man of their counsel. Then what do they learn? "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." They are glad it is so. They can say, We have a Savior, who is our God, who has all power, and rules in all worlds, working all things after the counsel of his own will. When they so understand it, and find their own strength to be indeed weakness, and fail utterly by their own might to establish one prop for their steadfastness, they then must give up all hope as to themselves. This being the case, instead of establishing a prop, they have lost one which they did have, which is self-confidence. Instead of falling in with the current idea of every man being his own savior, or at least partly so, they put such an idea away from them, and rejoice to know that they can receive God as their Savior. Now their will is swallowed up in God's will.

Now, brethren, in conclusion, let me say to you, by way of putting you in remembrance, Be strong in the Lord, fight the good fight of faith, and watch and pray. May God enable you, brethren editors, to so conduct your business that each number of the SIGNS may be filled with that which will comfort the mourners, strengthen the believer, and finally redound to our good and to the glory of our God.

U. J. BELL.

OCTOBER 5, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Near the bottom of the last column, on page 220 of SIGNS, present volume, "fully" should have read fitly. No figure in nature can fully represent the thing referred to in grace. Yet I have been much impressed with the advantage of his figurative illustrations in opening to our understanding spiritual truth.

The Savior, and in fact all the holy men of God in both eras, made free use thereof, and the earnest, honest Bible student is greatly aided thereby. For example, the error prevails with some of attributing the fruit of the Spirit to the influence of God's holy Spirit upon the natural life or soul of the man. A close attention to the language of the Savior will dispel such delusion. "A good tree

cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."—Matt. vii. 18.

Now, in nature, this is evident. No amount of influence can cause a thorn tree to bear grapes, nor a thistle to bear figs. Hence here we have, without any mystifying, the doctrine of the two headships; for the fruit of the Spirit and the works of the flesh are manifest in every christian. And so again, the Savior taught with equal force and clearness the doctrine of the eternal vital unity, by the familiar figure of the vine. "I am the vine, ye are the branches."—John xv. 5. For all know that the first vine created embodied all the branches which should ever after be developed therefrom. How much better to be guided by these simple teachings, (for Christ and his inspired servants made no misapplications,) than to suffer our minds to be darkened by the perversions of men.

Christians, in recognizing your high relationship, your noble birth, on the one hand, could you have a stronger incentive to discriminate in your daily walk between the fruit of the Spirit and the works of the flesh? O! do you not desire to be manifest children of that God who is love? As brother of that Jesus who is holy, harmless, undefiled, neither was guile found in his mouth. When you are exhibiting these graces under temptation, you feel a calm, sweet consciousness of the holy relationship; but, if the works of the flesh, "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." "There is a time for all things;" and God's appointed time to make the corrupt tree, in the antitype, bring forth good fruit, is in the resurrection, by virtue of the atonement, when "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall [then, not till then,] be changed."

Excuse this intrusion again so soon into your columns; but I am unwilling to say that any natural figure can fully represent the sublimity and glory of the spiritual substance. In the same communication, "hardships" should read headships.

Yours in love,

CHAS. E. STUART.

MACOMB, ILL., Oct. 4, 1884.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I have received and read the SIGNS for October 1st, and am gratified that Elder Beebe has written on the different passages I desired him to, on the subject of baptism, and I feel to be edified and instructed. So far as I think I understand him on this deeply interesting subject, involving the different uses and applications of baptism, I indorse the views of the editorial; but if I were with brother William, I would like to have a talk, and ask for further light on one or two points involved in the passage cited and written on. I, and you also, hold views very different from the views entertained by certain scientific men in my part of the world, bearing the name of gospel ministers, but not of our order. They and I widely differ

on being "baptized by one Spirit into one body," and "baptized into Jesus Christ."

There appear to be several kinds of baptism spoken of in the Scriptures, viz: the baptism of the "Holy Ghost;" (Acts ii. 16) and "with fire;" (Matt. iii. 11) and "with suffering;" (Matt. xx. 22) and by "one Spirit into one body," experimentally, and by water, literally.

There is something deep, sublime and glorious in the baptism of the whole body of Christ with him in his sufferings, death and resurrection, virtually, legally and representatively, in and through their surety; and each member of the body will in due time be personally and experimentally baptized into the one body, by the one Spirit, and each should then be baptized in water in obedience to the law of Christ.

But I intended to write to express only my approbation of, and my thanks for the editorial upon the subject.

I remain, I hope, a brother to all who have a hope of immortality through Jesus Christ.

I. N. VANMETER.

P. S.—I have of late attended Mt. Gilead, Morgan, Spoon River, Concord and Salem Associations, and all were in peace, and the preaching was a unit, and that was, "Salvation is of the Lord." I. N. V.

OCCOQUAN, Va., October, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—We have the Baltimore *Sun* as authority for the following:

"Among the Baltimoreans just back from Europe is the Rev. Dr. J. W. M. Williams. Speaking of his tour in Ireland, he said to a reporter: 'We went to Cork and visited the famous Blarney Castle. I was determined to kiss the Blarney Stone. It is attached to the end of an iron rod extending some distance below the gallery. I had two stout fellows hold me by the heels and lower me over the gallery, head downward, to the stone. In that posture I found my nose very much in the way, but I finally succeeded in kissing it.'"

I notice this paragraph as an illustration of what has long been my opinion of popular theology, that it is but a composition of buffoonery and blarney. Quite a dignified position, this, for the "Rev. Dr." of Baltimore—"head downward, two stout fellows holding his heels, *his nose very much in the way*," kissing a blarney stone. Imagine the apostle Paul engaged in such work. I am reminded, however, that these modern "divines" do not claim to be the followers of such old fossil relics of "Old School Baptist exclusivism" as Paul and the apostles, and of the old fashioned religion which they preached. It is well for the "reverend gentleman" that the blarney stone can be kissed in this country with less difficulty. There is a sense in which every antichristian organization is but a Blarney Castle, and each theological seminary a blarney stone, while those who worship in such unholy courts are taught to

pander to popular opinion, to turn with the wind and wave, guided by the voice of the rabble, as they know nothing whatever about the voice of God. From such unholy work, may the Lord deliver us.

Yours in love and fellowship,
WM. M. SMOOT.

LEAD HILL, Ark., April 23, 1884.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I desire to write a few lines for your consideration, if it meets the approbation of the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. While in company with three brethren, one of them being a preacher, the question was asked whether the infant that dies in infancy must be born again. I answered that it must; but they were all against me. We had some little argument upon the subject, and it has since caused me to study a great deal upon it. A certain brother has said that the Old Baptists believe that the infant is born again in the hour of death; and that is what I believe. David says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalm li. 5. Christ came to save sinners, and the little infant is a sinner; therefore he is their Savior. And he says, "On the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified them for myself."—Numbers viii. 17. Therefore if he sanctified them on the day he smote them, they are sanctified in the same time and way yet; for God is still God, and changes not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. And we read that Christ having taken a little child in his arms, blessed it; and I believe that every infant is in the arms of Jesus with a blessing resting upon it. Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." But says one, "If the kingdom of heaven were of such, there would be no need of a spiritual birth." But Jesus also says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 6. And the context shows that it was the helpless condition of the child under consideration; for it says, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."—Luke xvii. 17. Then how does a little child receive anything? Just as a gift, and because it cannot live without it has some one to give it food. Then I conclude that every one who is born of the Spirit has become as helpless and dependent upon God as the little infant is upon its natural parents for food and sustenance. If I know anything about the matter, the people of God have to lose all confidence in the flesh, and all their self-righteousness; for all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Then it is that they receive the spiritual kingdom; and then it is that they desire to be united with the church, in love and fellowship, and enjoy all the privileges of the church and keep the commandments of their Lord and Master.

Yours in hope of a better resurrection,

WM. J. CASEY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

SUFFERINGS AND CONSOLATION.

"FOR as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5.

In the sight of natural reason the sufferings of our Lord were all fulfilled when he gave up the ghost on the cross of Calvary; and this is true so far as his obedience under the law was concerned, for by that one offering of himself he finished the work of satisfying every demand of infinite justice and made an end of sins, as was written in prophecy.—See Daniel ix. 24. He is in his own body as the Son of man no more to endure the pains and sorrows which oppressed him in his manifestation in the flesh, for he has triumphed over sin and all its effects; and in that newness of life which is his own immortality, he has ascended the throne of his glory, being exalted with the right hand of God a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins.—Acts v. 31. In this sense, "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."—Romans vi. 9. This conquest over death is also the victory over sin, with all its direful consequences of suffering. But there is given to his followers the high privilege of partaking of the sufferings of their Lord as the earnest, or assuring testimony, that they shall be partakers of his immortal glory. "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."—2 Tim. ii. 11-13. There can be no mistake in the witness borne by these sufferings. Bright seasons of rejoicing may be questioned when the saints are again assailed by doubts. It may be feared that such seasons were only imaginary. But the sufferings which the saints endure are not easily forgotten; their remembrance is a living reality. In severe trial they may say with Jeremiah, "My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord: remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope."—Lam. iii. 18-21. It is worthy of special observation that the prophet does not say that he has hope in his hour of darkness because of the memory of the bright evidences of divine favor experienced in former days. It was not the remembrance of the strong assurance of the supporting power of God which gave him hope in his deep distress. He might have doubted the reality of such recollection; but his hope was sustained by the evidence graven in his very existence by the bitter afflic-

tions which he had suffered. He knew that these were real, and their testimony could not be doubted. So, in the experience of all the afflicted and poor people of God, while they are often tempted to fear that they have been deceived in their pleasant and cheering thoughts and feelings, their trials and sorrows are not so easily doubted. Therefore in the infinite love of God he has laid the foundation of the hope of his saints deep in the fellowship of their suffering Lord.

While enjoying the sunshine of the manifest presence of Jesus the saints cannot feel that they must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. In the light of his face they see so clearly the glorious provisions of his love and grace that it seems impossible that darkness ever should hide the ecstatic vision. Then they feel to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." But when he hides his face they are troubled. Then all their evidence seems to be lost, and as the tempter cruelly asks, "Where is thy God?" they only moan, "O that I knew where I might find him!" In this time of darkness they do not feel that the love of God is teaching them, and that even in their severest trials he is instructing and his eye is guiding them.—Psalm xxxii. 8. If they could realize that his love gives all their trial, they could not know any suffering under them. Therefore he leads them in paths unknown to them, that they may learn the power of his grace to sustain under every trial. Under their sufferings they are cut off from all self-confidence, and are ready to perish in the floods of unbelieving fears; "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses."—Psalm cvii. 28. Here is the important lesson which is learned only in tribulation. The saints may read or hear of the wondrous display of divine faithfulness and love in delivering his people out of distresses; but this does not qualify them to bear witness of his goodness and of his wonderful works to the children of men. It is only when they have passed through the painful experience they are competent witnesses, and can testify to the truth that "The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me."—Psalm cxvi. 6. Thus through suffering is developed their growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In this way it is appointed unto the subjects of his grace to have fellowship with the Lord, who is their example and leader in enduring afflictions. Their partaking of his sufferings is the assurance of their interest in his glorious triumph in eternal day. Seeing this truth, they may well say with Paul, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—Rom. viii. 18. If this bright assurance could always be seen by the sufferers, they would have no use for faith; and then the provision of this fruit of the Spirit would be useless to

them. They would not need to be saved by hope, for both faith and hope would be superseded by sight. But that they may be partakers of the sufferings of Christ, they must by faith trust in his saving grace; and hoping for that which is not seen, they must with patience wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. As tribulation in the world is promised to the followers of Jesus, so their sufferings are the sufferings of Christ; and thus the abounding of their sufferings confirms their fellowship with him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Then, it would be a serious loss to them if they were deprived of the privilege of enduring afflictions.—2 Timothy iv. 5. Since Jesus was made perfect through sufferings as the Captain of their salvation, it can be only through the fellowship of his sufferings they have the witness within of their being sanctified by him as his brethren.—Heb. ii. 10, 11.

These sufferings of Christ are peculiar to his members, who are included with Paul in the text. The sinful race of Adam inherit from him the sufferings consequent to their sin in him; but these are not the sufferings of Christ. They alone are partakers of his sufferings who are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. Others might endure the same forms of pain and sorrow, yet in them they would be only the effects of sin. But all the afflictions of the saints are included in the sufferings of Christ, as it is written, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them."—Isa. lxiii. 9. His love is immutable, therefore his care for his afflicted and poor people now is the same as it has been from the beginning; nor shall life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, ever be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. If it was in themselves that they were loved, then their unworthiness and vileness might alienate that love; but in Christ Jesus they have all his perfection, and God is ever well pleased in him.

Looking at their temporal afflictions, the suffering saints seem indeed to be of all men most miserable; but by faith they are comforted with that strong consolation which aboundeth by Christ. The tempter is ever suggesting to them that they must find the ground of their hope in themselves, and thus directing them away from the true source of their confidence. In themselves they can never be more successful than Paul in seeking evidences of justification; but here in their extreme distress that consolation which is by Christ is abundantly revealed in his assuring word, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." This would not console one who felt strong in himself; but to those who have found nothing but weakness in their own resources this consolation is exactly

Signs of the Times.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

LITTLE CHILDREN---OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

It was Jesus' disciples who rebuked them when they brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands upon them and pray.—Matt. xix. 12-15. How ready they always were with their suggestions and offers of help, as though he were in some way dependent upon them. They wished him to send away the woman who asked mercy for her afflicted daughter, for, said they, "she crieth after us." They asked that they be allowed to command fire from heaven upon the village of the Samaritans who did not receive him. They urged him to send away the hungry multitudes that they might go and buy themselves bread. They forbade one to cast out devils in Jesus' name because he did not follow with them. A great multitude of his followers rebuked the two blind men who cried unto him for mercy. Peter evidently spoke for the others when he suggested the building of three tabernacles in the mount; and he undoubtedly acted as all felt when he drew his sword in Jesus' defense. In all such cases how tenderly, and yet with what divine authority he reproveth their ignorant zeal, and gave them instruction. They were to learn that he did not call them in order that they might be of any help or advantage to him; that he "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," (Matt. xx. 28); that they were called to be his followers that they might be witnesses of his perfect works, and be prepared to testify of them throughout all nations.

The great multitude of Jesus' professed disciples at this time have no doubt of their ability to help him, and regard with great complacency their works in his behalf, sure of being richly paid for them. But even his true disciples whom he has called and chosen, how often do they try to help him now, as they did of old. How often do they put forth their strength to prevent things which in their judgment would be prejudicial to his cause, without even consulting him; and how often do they "rise up early, and sit up late," striving to bring about that which they think will be for the advancement of his cause here on earth. Again and again do they have to be reprov'd, and to be taught that they have no part to do in the work of salvation, nor in the building of the house of God; that the whole work, from foundation to top stone, is of

the Lord, and that they are only witnesses of his glorious work. It is not for them to say who shall approach unto him and receive of his infinite goodness, nor for them to denounce his wrath upon any. No man, nor even the angels in heaven, can cause one to approach unto him, nor advance one a hair's breadth in that direction; nor can any man, nor even all the powers of darkness, prevent one of the redeemed from coming unto him at the appointed time to cry for mercy and experience his salvation.

But Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xix. 14. "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them and blessed them."—Mark x. 15, 16.

In the wonderfully touching scene here presented our dear Savior appears in his attitude of loving kindness, and tender compassion, and saving grace, which he bears towards his people. And what infinite love and tenderness are manifested in what he said and did.

They were brought. In this their weak and helpless condition is shown. They were not merely children, able, some of them, to run alone; but "young children," "little children," "infants," babes in arms. Just so weak and helpless, like the infant of days, do all his people find themselves when they come into his presence. Not one step can they take. They cannot even creep. And even if they could move, they have no wisdom or knowledge to direct them. They would as soon move in the direction of danger as in that of safety; as an infant lying on the verge of a precipice would, if it had strength to turn its little body, as readily turn towards the precipice as from it. Its safety is in its very helplessness. These little children were brought by parents or others who desired blessings for them. But those whom these little children represent cannot be brought to him by any earthly relative or friend, for in this respect they are all infants together. A love infinitely tenderer than a mother's love, and a power infinitely greater than that of an earthly father, are necessary in bringing the Lord's people unto Jesus. These are the babes unto whom those heavenly things are revealed which are hid from the wise and prudent.—Matt. xi. 25.

I cannot deny what may appear to

be a more literal application of this subject. If any are given faith to bear the little babe in prayer to the dear Savior for his blessing, no disciple of Jesus will be allowed to rebuke them. That faith which is the gift of God can only exercise one according to his eternal purpose. This is a very different thing from the natural desire for the welfare of one's children. Many a parent mourning the loss of a dear little one has been soothed and comforted by these precious words of Jesus, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me." It is not the province of any disciple of Christ to say to one whose sorrow-stricken heart has received such consolation, "Your comfort is not well founded. The faith that Jesus gives can receive the same assurance now that David had when he said of his child that had died, "I shall go to him."—1 Samuel xii. 23. That faith can receive the assurance that salvation through Jesus' blood has been experienced by the little child, and that it has gone to glory, as well as in the case of one who has been enabled to make confession of that salvation with his mouth, and exhibit its power in his life.

But these precious, loving things that Jesus did and said were not for the comfort of the natural heart merely, whose sorrows of the world, and whose joys and comforts do not reach beyond this mortal life. The teaching we are contemplating had a far higher object than to quiet the grief of parents mourning for their children. The comfort just spoken of, which may come to the heart of mourning parents through the power of Jesus' words, is not merely in the thought that it is their child which is in heaven. It is higher and holier than that. It is unselfish in its nature, and heavenly. The distinction between the natural feeling and the experience of spiritual consolation we may not always be able to see. The one may seem to blend with the other. Yet they are distinct. One is of the earth, and like all natural relationships, with the joys and griefs attending them, shall end with time. The other belongs to a spiritual relation, and therefore is "everlasting consolation." It does not belong to time, and while experienced here, it rises superior to the things of time, linking the soul that feels it with the realm of eternal blessedness. If you have been given the sweet assurance of faith that your dear child is in glory, I do not question that the grief of your poor heart is quieted, and you feel a sweet rest in that be-

lief; but the holy sweetness of that consolation and rest is because of its spiritual nature. It arises from the wonderful and mysterious feeling of fellowship and love in Jesus that has come into your heart for that little child. Your mother love, your affection as a father, is swallowed up in the higher and holier love belonging to this new spiritual relationship, as the beautiful light of stars that fill the sky at night is swallowed up in the more glorious light of the sun when morning comes. It is not merely as your babe that your faith sees it in heaven. That feeling is from your natural heart. But it is as one of the dear family of God. It has not grown up to your stature in this wonderful fellowship that you feel, but you have come down to the stature of the babe. As it lay helpless in its mother's arms, so you have lain, and still lie helpless in the arms of Jesus' love and mercy. As it had no language but a cry in which to tell its wants, so the full wants of your soul you can make known unto God only by a cry, and "with groanings that cannot be uttered." As the tender, watchful mother always heard and understood the cry of her darling babe, so, and much more fully, has the dear Savior ever heard and understood your cry, and even the unspoken longings and sorrows of your heart; and "as one whom his mother comforteth," so has he comforted you, and you have been comforted in Jerusalem.—Isa. lxvi. 13. Yes, you must acknowledge with grateful praise that Jesus has taken you upon his arms, and laid his hands upon you, and blessed you.

In the helplessness of your little child you see what you have felt in your own soul. You can do no more than it can do to secure the favor of God. Both alike entirely dependent upon him, you receive the kingdom of God alike, and have the same reason to praise his name for the precious blood that has cleansed you alike from sin, and for the grace that "reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." You do not enter that kingdom bearing to each other the relationship that existed here. None stand to each other as parents and children, where flesh and blood cannot enter. All then are little children in their helplessness and dependence; while all have the fullness of strength in Jesus. "Of such is the kingdom of God."

What can so well represent the condition of the Lord's people? It is not a child that can run about and do many things for itself, but a little

church over thirty-six years, he finds that he has not improved his fleshly passions and lusts any during that long period of time; and he still finds himself in distress and discontented, at times, fearing that he must be mistaken in the great matter of salvation; and he is often made to say, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesekh, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar."

During the forty years he has had a hope that Jesus died for him, one great, important and fearful lesson has been taught him, and that is, *not to trifle* with what the inspired apostles have written, nor to seek to evade any of their positive declarations; for he has found measurably, at least, what a short-sighted, ignorant, erring mortal he is; and the awfully momentous truth, recorded by Paul, when he said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but (how) to perform that which is good I find not," he finds true. How trifling those words of the apostle appeared to the man when he was a wild, giddy and foolish boy; but since he was brought "down into the cave Adullam," he has found that the apostle penned the truth; for forty years has not removed out of his flesh, covetousness, wrath, malice, revenge, jealousy and evil surmisings. Those "vile serpents" are all alive, but sometimes more quiet than at other times, but not any of them are dead; and at times, when disturbed, their "hissing" is frightful; but reigning and abounding grace can and does chain them down. The closest and most profound examination shows to this man the certain truth of what the apostle recorded concerning his flesh; and if they were quiet there would not be such a strife, but they are active; hence the same apostle says, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Upon another occasion the same apostle said, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." These principles are not only in the flesh, but are active ones; and since this man has seen himself in such distress, involved in such a debt, and so discontented, and found himself with such a class in the cave Adullam, he has had no desire to shun the company of Paul, by improving what he said concerning the warfare. During the time this man has had a hope, he has heard thousands of sermons, and sometimes he felt elated, and at other times depressed, cast down and gloomy, feeling that he lived undesired and should die unlamented. It has seemed generally to be more interesting preaching to him, when the trials, sorrows and afflictions of God's dear children have been dwelt upon; and the full, complete and finished salvation, in Christ Jesus,

for just such poor, helpless, wandering creatures, has been clearly set forth, than simply to be dwelling on the duties of obedience and "right living" of God's children while here in the flesh, especially when it has been urged that their blessings depend upon those deeds, as such, for that position is antisciptural because it puts effect for cause. The church, in all her members, is *already* blessed, according to the following divine declarations: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." These declarations positively show that the members of the body of Christ are already blessed; therefore instead of creature obedience being the means of the obtaining of the blessings bestowed by the Father of mercies and God of all grace and consolation, cause the true obedience. How often has this man listened to preaching and his mind has been like the "fool's eyes," rambling far and wide; yet he was present, filling his place, among the members of the church, but had a "lean time;" therefore he has learned the just meaning of the following declarations: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure;" and this man is so childish as to receive these important declarations just exactly as the apostle has penned them; and the reason his beloved brethren had always obeyed was because God gave them the will and the power; then was their obeying the cause of the will and the power? or was it the evidence and result? The thought has often been given this old man, concerning the spiritual blessings, about as follows: If great and precious blessings were given a child of God in Jesus Christ before time began, and those blessings were to be given or bestowed according to the obedience of that child, while here in the flesh, and such child should be so disobedient as not to merit one of the blessings, what confusion there must arise in the divine arrangement; for there are surplus blessings given in Christ, according to the carnal theory, you do and then you will be blessed; but how any one who has been in the cave Adullam, and had a view of the great, the wise, the glorious, the infinite and righteous Captain of our salvation, can advance the carnal view that our blessings depend on personal obedience, when the record made by inspired penmen teaches exactly the reverse; but our God, in his infinite love, boundless mercy and endless compassion, has seen fit to give "credit," as it were,

to his dear children, in some places recorded in the Bible, for that which they are absolutely debtors; but this "ignorant" man so understands the matter; and, according to what the apostle James has written, everything for the good of God's people comes from him; for he says, "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" therefore all the children of men ever have done, are now doing, or will ever do, has not even caused the shadow of turning with Jehovah, if the testimony of the apostle James is to be received and believed; but if it is to be "improved and changed," woe be unto them of his children who countenance such a thing.

In the New Testament it reads, "We are fools for Christ's sake;" and this man, who has been in the cave Adullam, as he hopes, is so foolish in the eyes of the "wise and learned" of the present day, that he is willing to take the New Testament just as it reads concerning the choosing of the members of Christ's body in him, before the foundation of the world, the vital unity between Christ and his people, the efficacy of the atonement for the sheep, the spiritual birth, the ordinance of baptism, the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, the office work of the ministry, the deep mystery of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, the description given of the invisible God, the final glorification of all the elect in the world of immortal glory, and the everlasting punishment of all the non-elect; all of which matters are as fixed and sure as the eternal throne of God, and can no more be changed than God can cease to exist. He closes these remarks, wishing Zion well, and that our God, if it be his will, will keep his dear people from carnal theorizing and vain speculations, and cause all to be childlike and simple, being willing to take forms of expression that inspired apostles have left on record, and not attempt to suit them to "the favor of the learned world of mankind," by modernizing them, thereby attempting to accommodate matters with worldly religionists. May God apply the following declarations with sweetness and power: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

SIMPLICITY.

CLINTON, Ky., August, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Today, while meditating, the query was presented to my mind, Why am I a Baptist, and why do I try to preach? And as I have a desire that my children, and all others who may feel concerned, may know the reason why I am identified as I am, I can think of no better way than to write some of the causes, and send them to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and if published, file the same for future perusal.

I can say that by nature I was not a Baptist. There was a principle about me which revolted at the idea of being a Baptist, even after, as I trust, I had been translated into the liberty of God's dear Son. The doctrine of unconditional election was unpopular. It exalted and gave all power to God, and debased man, which is contrary to our sinful nature. Paul says, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die;" that is, die to the enjoyment of a peaceful mind. I lived after the flesh, tried to bring to bear my carnal reason, and produced a volume of suppositions. In that volume I supposed the Bible to be a novelty, and christianity an imaginary whim. Then I would look at the planetary world, and see them placed in the firmament, and then would look at nature's garden, and think, Is all this by chance? Certainly not. Then I would remember the rock from whence I was hewn, as I hope, and would think of my experience, and a hope would spring up, which was an anchor I could not entirely abandon. Thus I traveled, often trying to banish these thoughts from my mind. In the year 1861 an impression was made upon my mind, it seems, with indelible letters, and that was, that I should go and preach the Old Baptist doctrine. My response was, Not so, Lord. I thought if I was worthy to preach, I would never preach that despised doctrine, but would preach the Methodist or the Cumberland Presbyterian doctrine. I was plowing at the time, and my system was in a tremor. My first thought was, What does this mean? My next thought was, It is superstition. I went on with my work, but that impression followed me. Political excitement was high at that time, and I enlisted in the army, and my mind was confused. Up to this time I was not identified with any religious order; but I had joined the Masonic fraternity, and delighted in the work. I passed through many hardships, my fellow-soldiers falling day after day, until the ranks were thin. I often thought of the danger, but about this time my duty to my Creator bore heavily upon my mind. I felt it my duty to be baptized, but did not want to be baptized away from my home, but desired to be at home among my friends. So I began trying to hire the Lord. O how weak I was! and I have not got rid of that weakness yet. I promised the Lord that if he would spare my life and let me return to my family, then I would join some branch of the church and be baptized. The Lord permitted me to return to my family, and soon afterward my vows presented themselves to my mind. I felt that there was something for me to do, but I had no idea of ever trying to preach. I thought I would try to do all other duties, so I joined the "Methodist Episcopal Church South," and was immersed. I felt some remorse, but at the same time I felt that I had paid my vow, at least in part. Still that impression of the year 1861 often came to my mind, but I would try to put it off as best I could. As time rolled on,

I was sometimes elated, in times of exciting meetings. Then I began to reflect and read the Bible and thought I could see a clash in the doctrine of the Methodists and the doctrine of the Bible. This caused me trouble. I thought I could see the doctrine of the Baptists in the Bible, and I also found portions which I thought would sustain me in my church relation, until I rightly divided the word of truth, and then my stakes would fall. I would ask my preacher and class-leader about certain portions of Scripture, and they would explain them in their way, which looked reasonable, from a human standpoint, and so I would conclude that I was deceived in the whole matter. Time passed on, and finally I went to hear the Old Baptists, and I found that they could tell my feelings, my doubts and fears, and I loved to hear them sing, "Amazing grace," &c. Often I would see them get down at each other's feet, and I felt that I would love to be with them. I would get troubled, and would think that I would stay away from those people. My companion would accuse me of being mad or dissatisfied with her, but I was neither. I would try to reconcile her, but I did not want her nor any one else to know that I was troubled. I often tried to drive away my gloom, and would take my gun and dogs to have a chase, a thing that I delighted in. I would go again to hear those "old fogies," as they were called, and sometimes they would expose my system. I knew they were telling the truth, but I thought that was none of their business. Finally I sold my little farm in Tennessee, and came to western Kentucky. But before I would buy, I made inquiry if there were any Old Baptists in that country. I was informed that there was a church of the Baptist order about ten miles distant. Being that far distant, I concluded that I would buy. (Strange to say, I now try to act as moderator of that church.) Notwithstanding I thought I was out of reach of those people, their doctrine followed me, and after three years I was made willing to search for them; not to join them, but to hear them tell how poor sinners are saved. By this time the Methodist doctrine was no comfort to me. The Masonic hall became a terror to me, so I paid my dues and demitted. Still there was an aching void. I liked the Methodists as a people, but their doctrine would not harmonize with my experience and the Bible. There was a people who could tell my feelings, but I had said that I never would be an Old Baptist. Yet, O my soul, I was not worthy to be with them. My imperfections seemed like mountains before me. Finally I went to one of the officials among the Methodists, (a preacher), and told him of my feelings. He bade me good-by, and remarked that I would get to drinking and would be ruined; yet no man ever saw me drunk. I told them to erase my name from their book, for I could not believe their doctrine. They gave me a letter of dismissal

in fellowship, and I then thought I was free from them. I felt that I was not worthy to be identified with the Lord's people, so I concluded to do the best I could. I tried to be a fatalist, and to believe that if I was to be saved I would be saved. By this time there was a church organized at Little Flock, about five miles distant, and I would go and get a crumb. I often had a desire to be with them, but felt that I was not fit. Often after their conference I felt like I certainly would talk to the church if I had opportunity, but would be too late. Then I would think that I would go the next time; but when the time came I would not go, and sometimes I would think that I should never go. But in the year 1874, by some means I went, and tried to tell them of the reason of my hope. I was received, and baptized the next day into the kingdom of Christ, the church, as I believe. I then felt satisfied for a short time, till the impression to preach came. I felt my inability to do so, and felt deficient in every point. Often while at my work my mind was engaged, and I would say, What must I do? I sometimes felt like it would ease my mind to speak of the wonderful works of God, and would think that I would name it to the brethren; and then again, I would think that I would never do it. I have often thought that if the brethren had not liberated me until I had made it known, I should have remained silent till this day. I began to exercise my gift in public, in a stammering manner, and sometimes felt an ease of mind; but at other times darkness overshadowed my mind, and I would have no liberty, and I would be pressed down with trouble. Often I tried to pray that God would remove the impression to preach, and I sometimes felt that my petition was accepted; but O what anguish of soul I would then have! I would feel that I was surely deceived in the whole matter. But after a time the impression would return, and I was made willing to go, and to be the Lord's anything. After I was ordained, I was so pressed in mind that I resolved never to try again to preach. I put my Bible out of sight, and thought I would abandon all worship, and not even at my table return thanks to God for his blessings. Sometimes I was so overwhelmed that I could take no food. About six weeks after I had made this vow, I was made willing to forsake all that was dear by the ties of nature, and try to discharge my duty, regardless of what man might think or say of me. My desire is to go forth in the strength of Elisha's God, proclaiming Jesus as the way, the truth and the life; the only name under heaven given among men whereby poor, lost and ruined sinners can be saved. I desire to tell poor sinners that Jesus is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. May God sustain his people.

Yours in bonds.

K. M. MYATT.

OUR AFFLICTIONS.

DURING the brief period of time between the creation of man and his downfall, by the entering in of sin into the world, all was peace and joy and gladness. There was an absence of suffering, toil and sorrow. The earth was then a paradise, all nature was pure and undefiled, and everything that had been created in that first six days of time yielded obedience to the command of the Creator. The lamb could lie down in perfect safety with the lion. Not a breath of life which God had given to any living creature was destroyed. We find in Gen. i. 30, that every green herb was given for meat to every beast of the earth, to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there was life. No weeds or thorns or thistles contaminated or choked the luxuriant growth of the green herbs of the field. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good."—Gen. i. 31. He being a perfect God, all the work of his hands was perfect, fulfilling his great design and manifesting his infinite wisdom. The finite mind of man cannot comprehend why the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was placed in the garden, or why our first parents were permitted to yield to the temptation and partake of the fruit; nor is it necessary that we should be enlightened, until God in his own appointed time sees fit to reveal unto us all things pertaining to his kingdom. Immediately upon the first act of disobedience, God cursed the ground for man's sake, and he was cast out from the presence of the Lord, which presence constituted the garden of Eden. We have no evidence (that I am aware) that there was a literal garden, because the whole earth at that time was pure and undefiled. Then was man made to toil in sorrow all the days of his life, to suffer afflictions of all sorts, to forever live under the just condemnation of an outraged and righteous God. Thorns and thistles grew in his pathway, and by the sweat of his brow he was made to eat of the work of his hands, to sustain life in his body, which had then become subject to decay and death. The fruit of every crop at this day is hindered in its perfect yield by tares, weeds and abnormal growths, so that upon all sides we have the evidence of that curse which was pronounced more than six thousand years ago. Therefore, by the sin of one man, every child that is born into the world is a sinner in the sight of God. None are righteous; no, not one. All are full of putrefying sores, and are desperately wicked, prone to run into all manner of evil, following after the lust of the flesh, doing deeds of darkness and of evil, which is the natural element of unregenerate man. But God, who knoweth the end from the beginning, who is rich in mercy and abounding in grace, in his unerring wisdom provided for the eternal welfare and salvation of such as should be saved. In his great and matchless love for the world, he sent his

only begotten and dearly beloved Son into the world, to suffer and die, that through his sufferings and death we might be redeemed and brought out from under the law of sin and death. There was no other source through which our salvation could come. Although he was clothed in mortal flesh, and was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, yet in himself he was spotless and without sin; but he bore the sins of his people in his own body, washing them all away in his own precious blood. What a glorious thought! we who are unable to raise a finger without his sanction, utterly depraved and helpless, incapable of ourselves to do anything for our salvation, can rejoice in a Savior who through his great affliction, his death and resurrection, completed the work he was sent to perform, lifting our feet out of the miry clay, and setting them upon a rock, the Rock of our salvation; making the Sun of Righteousness to illumine our hearts, causing us to sing forth praises unto his great and holy name, and to bow in humility and thanksgiving for his many rich and gracious blessings.

The afflictions of the saints in Christ Jesus are twofold in their character—those pertaining to our natural life, and those which are essential to our spiritual life. In the fleshly relation, we are afflicted with the many ills to which the flesh is heir; for example, pain, sorrow from natural causes, weariness of mind and body, business cares and anxieties, &c. These are common to all the human family, to all of Adam's race and posterity. On the other hand, the child of God is daily bowed down with affliction of a different nature. He becomes cognizant of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. He looks upon his sinful career of life, and as his mind is carried back he is appalled, his sins multiplying in his mind's eye so rapidly, rising to mountain height, crushing him beneath their enormous weight, seemingly far beyond the hope and help of that outstretched arm, his only sure support. He is afflicted with sorrow and remorse because the things he would do he cannot, and the things he would not do he does. As Jeremiah lamented over the wickedness and disobedience in consequence of which was the subsequent captivity of the children of Israel, so the children of the kingdom lament over the wickedness of their sinful flesh, and long for the time when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, that they may dwell in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. So we observe that while the two afflictions emanate from the same source, (the sins of the flesh), they are felt, one by the fleshly, and the other by the spiritual nature. The Spirit within us (which is Christ) causes us to recognize the continual warfare going on between the flesh and the Spirit. God having built within each one a temple for the indwelling of his holy Spirit, we suffer because we cannot subdue the old man and his sins.

to that law, and therefore they were astonished when Peter had gone to the house of Cornelius, who was a Gentile; and even Peter needed special instruction before he could understand the glorious truth that God had "also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."—See Acts x. and xi. In this application of the subject Mary represents the church in the enjoyment of rest in the liberty of the gospel, sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing his word alone, entirely free from the galling bondage of legal servitude. This "good part" shall not be taken away from the church made free by her strong Redeemer, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."—Rom. x. 4.

In the personal experience of individual saints there are times when they appear as represented by each of these sisters. Often they are "cumbered about much serving" in their efforts to produce some good works of their own wherein to find assurance, and comfort; in this toil they are necessarily absent from the feet of Jesus, and sometimes they feel a complaining spirit rather petulantly appealing to the Lord with Martha, saying, "Dost thou not care" that my toil is so burdensome? In this laboring condition they are "careful and troubled about many things." But all their care and trouble can bring no rest or comfort; their labor is all in vain. Then, when Jesus speaks to them, like Mary, they sit at his feet and hear his word; for he never speaks without power. His words are spirit and they are life. And this "good part" is never taken away from them while they are sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing his words. It is only when they are beguiled by self-confidence to endeavor to render themselves worthy of the favor of God that they become entangled again with the yoke of bondage; and then, like Martha, they are cumbered about much serving, from which they are only relieved by the gentle reproof of their Lord. Those who have been long on their pilgrimage in this land of the shadow of death will find both these conditions exemplified in their own experience; and they will readily confess that the part chosen and enjoyed by Mary is indeed "that good part." Here they find rest unto their souls in taking the yoke of Jesus and learning of him. No legal works can give such rest, "for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10. When they who are redeemed from that law by the blood of Christ Jesus attempt to fulfill its demands by their own works, they are involved in hopeless bondage and find no rest in that service; for perpetual obedience is required for justification by the works of the law, and a lifetime of approved duties strictly rendered could afford no palliation of a single failure. Hence our Lord does not say that Mary had chosen a *better part*, as if there might

be some good in another portion; but "*that good part*," by which expression he signifies that there is no good part in any other choice.

From this commendation of the part chosen by Mary the deceitfulness of sin may draw the conclusion that idleness is that good part, and the suggestion may be presented as a temptation to indulge in selfish ease as emulating her example. This cannot be the correct understanding of the subject, because it is in direct conflict with the injunction of the Lord as recorded by his inspired apostle.—See 2 Thess. iii. 6-15. No understanding of any passage of Scripture can be the true meaning when it fails to harmonize with all the record which God has given; for the whole testimony is the word of eternal truth, which cannot conflict with itself. While the disciple of Jesus sits at the feet and hears the word of the Lord, he may be engaged in honest labor for the things which are necessary to the sustenance of natural life; and, on the other hand, he may be presumptuously tempting God while neglecting all worldly duties. Selfishness may suggest indulgence in laziness as that good part the choice of which was commended by our Lord; but it is not more consistent with the law of Christ for the saints to indulge that sin than any other transgression of the perfect law of our King. It may be needful at times to suspend ordinary labor for the enjoyment of the privileges of the organized church; and in that case the saints need suffer no anxiety as to what they shall eat, or drink, or wherewithal they shall be clothed. In obedience to the command of the Lord they are authorized to look to God as the giver of every good and perfect gift, "casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."—1 Peter v. 7.

The one thing which is needful to the followers of Jesus is to sit at his feet in humble submission to his direction in all things, and to hear with ready obedience his gracious words. In this course they walk in the way of peace. They are not promised the friendship and comforts of this world in obedience to their Lord; on the contrary, tribulation is their portion here. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. iii. 12. Yet by faith they are made to choose this as "that good part" in which they are partakers of the sufferings of Christ; and therefore they have the assurance of the consolation which aboundeth by Christ. There is nothing in this good part by which the natural man can be attracted. The highest aspiration of the carnal mind seeks only selfish advantage; hence all earthly religion looks for a reward in eternity for every sacrifice endured in this life. On this basis every system of false religion is built. But the grace of God enables those who have the Spirit of Christ to rejoice in being counted worthy to suffer affliction for the name of their Lord; and so they are made to gladly glory in their own infirmities, that the power of Christ

may rest upon them. Nature could never do this; therefore it is unmistakable evidence that one is led by the Spirit of God when this is to him "that good part" which he desires. So David says, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."—Psa. xxvii. 4. And Paul counted all things loss, that he might know Christ in the fellowship of his sufferings.—Phil. iii. 10.

There is comforting assurance to the tried saint in the consideration that the feeling of destitution and ignorance is one peculiar mark of those who have "chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away" from them. The realizing sense of their poverty and need is inseparable from the choice of hearing and learning of Jesus. When any subject of grace becomes so strong in his own estimation as to be able to stand in his own merit, he does not choose that good part, but feels to have need of nothing. Were it not that this was the condition of the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, when the rebuke of the Lord comes to us in this state we might well faint under it. But for the comfort of such that message is recorded. It was after this reproof of Martha that it was written that Jesus loved her the same as he did her sister and Lazarus; so he still loves his people even though they may have grown so indifferent that the cares of the world or their own self-confidence may have drawn them away from his feet. That love may be manifest in severe chastening to recall them from their backslidings; but even that painful visitation is a manifestation of his care for them. Yet they must feel that it is not "that good part" which is experienced when in obedience they sit at Jesus' feet and hear his word. None of them whom Jesus has redeemed can ever be finally lost; but there is not the answer of a good conscience toward God experienced by any of them in departing from the feet of Jesus and refusing to hear his word in obedience.

In these remarks we do not presume to claim that everything has been presented which is taught by our Lord in the text, but it seems clear that he spoke of the one thing which is needful for his saints in their individual obedience to his word; not that their interest in his salvation depended upon their choice, but that they find in keeping his judgments that great reward of which David speaks in the nineteenth Psalm. This is indeed needful for their experience of the approval of the Lord, and it is found nowhere else but in sitting at his feet and hearing his word. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."—Heb. xii. 28, 29. To every saint this "One thing is needful." Walking in the Spirit and crucifying the

flesh with the affections and lusts, they are followers of God as dear children, which is "that good part" which is the most earnest desire of all those who love the Lord.

CHURCH ORDER.

"LET all things be done decently and in order."—1 Cor. xiv. 40.

For the instruction and direction of his church our Lord has given his law, which is recorded and expounded by his chosen and inspired apostles in the New Testament. No authority has ever been given to any man or council to alter or amend this law, nor has any provision been made for modifying it to suit the varying conditions of men, as must necessarily be done in the case of all laws of human devising. The law of Christ is perfect, and therefore it can never need revision or amendment. When any case is found in the church which seems to be unprovided for in this law, it is because of a failure to understand correctly the law as established by the King of saints; for the law of the Lord is perfect, his statutes are right, and his commandment is pure, enlightening the eyes.—Psalm xix. No mortal is qualified to determine the proper course to be pursued by the church in any case, further than it is decided by the rule established by this divine authority; and it involves an implied charge of imperfection in the inspired law when it is thought that any case has arisen which that law does not decide. It is therefore very important for the saints to understand the law which their Lord has established in his church; and for that wisdom, which is so essential, they are not dependent upon the schools of men, nor even upon highly esteemed ministers of the gospel. It is revealed in the experience of every one who is led by the Spirit of God, and is embodied in the new commandment of our Lord to his disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."—John xiii. 34. This injunction cannot be obeyed by any except those to whom it is given; hence this law is confined to the children of God, who alone have the Spirit of which love is the fruit.—Gal. v. 22. The very simplicity of this law conceals its perfection from the natural man, who cannot know the things of the Spirit of God; yet no trouble has ever disturbed the peace of the church of Christ but that would immediately be removed by the observance of this law.

It may be that the churches are at times unable to see the proper application of this perfect law to the particular cases which involve their peace; and then natural reason suggests the propriety of seeking counsel from esteemed brethren. But the divine direction is their safe guide under such circumstances, and it is accompanied with the assurance of success. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."—James i. 5. The advice of well-meaning brethren often

Signs of the Times.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

GHEAT, Ky., Sept. 21, 1884.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Our glorious Lord said when on earth, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."—Matt. xxiv. 30, 31.

While attending the Salem Association recently, Elder J. Taylor Moore, of Georgetown, Ky., asked me to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some of my feeble thoughts upon the momentous subject presented in this quotation. I but poorly express my feelings when I say that it is with the greatest temerity that I attempt to comply with that request, fearing that I may darken counsel by words without wisdom. God has left upon record all that is needful for the comfort, edification and building up of his saints here below; and when they by the Spirit's power are enabled to behold some of the sublime beauties thus recorded, they are enabled to rejoice with a joy as far above the transient pleasures of earth, as heaven is above sublunary things. Paul said to Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed." That admonition applies to all who attempt to comfort God's dear people, either in this or in the ages that are past, as much as it applied to Timothy. Then, dear saints, if I, in attempting to unfold to you some of the sublime beauties and glories contained in that quotation, should fail to comfort and edify you, it will be because of my extreme ignorance, which I now with an aching heart freely confess, and with a prayer, I hope, indited by the Spirit, that I may learn wisdom and be enabled this morning to talk to you of knowledge. O how delightful to you it is to have some blessed assurance that your glorious Lord is made unto you wisdom, and that you know him, whom to know is life eternal. Without that knowledge we cannot love him, cannot speak of his glorious works and ways, neither contemplate the great truths revealed in his word to his saints. But let us with anxious thought approach the subject revealed by our Lord to his disciples when he said, "And then

shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven." These questions appropriately suggest themselves, What was that sign? and, In what heaven did it appear? We answer, that he came with power and great glory, a manifestation of his power in the execution of his firm decrees concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. He said unto that city, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." The fulfillment of that prophetic declaration and that power was the sign of the Son of man in heaven. And he appeared in heaven, in the gospel heaven. In that heaven nothing that pertained to the old or legal heaven could enter. All things pertaining to the old heavens were accomplished when he appeared with power and great glory in the gospel heaven. He appeared there for the destruction of that Jerusalem which was in bondage with her children. Those children did not belong to nor constitute a part of spiritual Israel, but were their enemies. To them the prophet refers when he says, "Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places." They were found liars when they denied the Lord of glory. They denied him because they knew him not. "He came to his own, and his own received him not." They refused to receive him as the long looked for Messiah, and cried out, "Away with him." "His blood be upon us and upon our children. At the period of which we are writing, they were about to receive the just demerits of that unbelief which led to his crucifixion. They looked to the law and to the offerings under the law, and they were their high places. Spiritual Israel trod them under their feet. John says: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." That woman was the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. She was clothed with the sun, with all things that pertained to that gospel heaven in which her glorious Lord appeared with power and great glory. And the moon, or legal dispensation, was under her feet. Thus she was fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. She was terrible to all false teachers, for she had on her head a crown of twelve stars, the twelve apostles of the Lamb. These stars shone brightly in that gospel heaven, and their light is so bright that all error and every false way is made manifest, and hence the tribes of the earth shall mourn. All are

not Israel that are of Israel. All the natural descendants of Abraham were not the children of the promise; and those that were not the children of the promise were the tribes of the earth that mourned. Their house was now left unto them desolate. Then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven; yea, coming with power and great glory. The apostle says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." But here is mentioned another cloud, and they are the witnesses of Jesus, the true ministers of the everlasting gospel; and they are in the gospel heaven, bearing testimony to all in those heavens, even to all who have ears to hear and hearts to understand. They know that their testimony is true. They testify of Jesus, who is the way, the truth and the life. They know him. He says, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father. And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Being revealed by the Son, they by that revelation are brought into that gospel heaven, for he is in them the hope of glory. His glory is made theirs, and theirs is his. "They [those tribes of the earth] shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven." Those tribes that mourned were not the Roman soldiers who destroyed Jerusalem, for they rejoiced at their conquest; but the tribes that mourned were the natural descendants of Abraham. And the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; hence they mourned when they saw the destruction of their great city and the temple razed to its lowest foundation, with not one stone left upon another. To that temple they had looked with feelings of deep idolatry, for they believed that their eternal salvation depended on the temple worship. Being natural, they did not see in the types and shadows of the temple service, the great anti-type prefigured by the offerings and shedding of blood under that dispensation. They did not see the Messenger of the covenant coming to his temple. Their unbelief in our glorious Lord led to his crucifixion and to the fulfillment of the prophecies, which foretold his sufferings and the glory that should follow. They did not know that they were fulfilling the purpose of God and in their mad unbelief they crucified the Lord of glory. Peter said to the vast multitude by which he was surrounded on the day of pentecost, "Him being

delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death." But those tribes saw him in the clouds of heaven. They saw him by the powers of their natural minds, when the everlasting gospel was preached. When those great events that had transpired at Jerusalem were told to them, they had a history of his coming and the mighty works that our Lord had done while in the flesh. They knew of his resurrection and ascension to glory. None of those things were kept from the Jews. But they did not believe on him, but looked for another. They hated him for the reason that "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Not subject to the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, for the reason that the carnally minded are not made free from the law of sin and death. But the saints rejoice when they by faith behold their glorious Lord as their redemption from under the law of sin and death; yet they day by day realize that in their mortal bodies they have carnal minds, which are leading them into captivity under that law. Hence their cry is, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Ah, dear saint, the thought is sweet to you when you remember that this mortal shall put on immortality. Then in the sweet exercise of faith you behold your glorious Lord as your deliverer from the body of this death, knowing that he hath said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

But if brother Moore should ever read these rambling thoughts he will certainly come to the conclusion that I have wandered far from the subject; still I hope he will pardon me, when I tell him that the perfect and complete redemption and triumph of God's dear people through the finished work of their dear Redeemer is a subject so full of interest that I cannot think or write without wandering into it and gazing upon some of its sublime beauties.

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet." He that liveth and was dead, but is alive for evermore, said to John, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." An angel is a messenger, and a messenger is one who has a message to bear. These angels were the ministers of the seven churches. But mark you, they were in the right

that brotherly love cannot continue, nor even exist, when we take our seat at the table, to commemorate the love of our dying Lord, with those who have trespassed against us, and we have proceeded no farther than to rebuke them, while enmity is harbored against them in our breasts. And not only so, but "If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." And now, brethren, in doing this we not only prove our own unworthiness in the shameful act of contempt, and malice and hatred toward our brother, but we positively become violaters or transgressors of the holy commandments to "let brotherly love continue," and "with such an one no not to eat."—1 Corinthians v. 11. The apostle says we are all one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread. And is not this a glorious union, yea, a vital union, which was given us in Christ before the world began? And in the visible church, in all the commands, exhortations and admonitions concerning its order, that brotherly love and unity of the Spirit existing between the several members is to be kept in view, and its maintenance is enjoined upon each of them. To do this, we must acquaint ourselves with the word and be governed by the Spirit; "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And being sons, they are of that one whole family in heaven, whose name is of God, and are heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently are embraced in that everlasting love which God declares he has loved them with. So then, dearly beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. And hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. And herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. But we love God, not through fear of banishment, nor carnal desires, but because he first loved us, and gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Therefore Paul could say, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Then, dear brethren, may our love and good works prove our faith and our heirship to that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

And now, dear brethren, in conclusion we exhort you once more, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, to forbear one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. And may the very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And we pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. "Let brotherly love continue." And the God of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

W. M. PERKINS, Mod.
I. S. MEADOURS, Clerk.

The Elders and brethren composing the Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, to the churches whose messengers we are, and to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ; even all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We write unto you because ye know the truth, and love the peace of the kingdom of our God and our Savior Jesus Christ, and desire to walk in love, and to do those things that are right in the sight of our gracious Lord. For of our God we may truly say, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness." And his praises shew his greatness, declare the wonders of his hand, and reveal the glories of his holy presence.

We trust he has prepared us for these things according to the riches of his grace, because we feel that we "delight in the law of God after the inward man," and would worship only him, desiring to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified, which we have the blessed assurance is "the power of God and the wisdom of God." But we wish above all to "mention the loving kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses." And although we would talk according to his loving kindnesses and wonderful works, which he hath bestowed on us, yet we cannot talk of all of them, or even mention them, because "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

But we would speak of some of those gracious and most wondrous things, even that abounding grace which has brought salvation to such poor, helpless creatures as we, "who, being dead in our sins and the uncircumcision of our flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having

forgiven us all trespasses." That grace which we believe has given us the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and has made us new creatures in it, and has given us a place in it, and has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Of these things whereof we speak we are admonished by an apostle, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, (so) walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

But as we have a daily trial, that when we would do good evil is present with us, and the good we would we do not, and the evil we would not that we do; so that we have to confess that "in us, that is in our flesh, dwells no good thing. To will is present with us, but (how) to perform that which is good we find not." We are ready to inquire, How can we walk in him? or how shall we know that we are walking in him? If it is to be by finding some good thing dwelling in the flesh, or by performing that which is good, or by having no worldly loves, or earthly desires, or fleshly passions, or evil thoughts, then we freely confess not only are we not doing it, but that we cannot do it. But if to walk in Christ Jesus is to be as those unto whom the light has revealed our law-condemned state by nature, with all its vileness and pollution, and has shown the fullness of salvation by grace, and our complete deliverance from the law of sin and death, by the law of life in Christ Jesus, in whom is every thing good and pure, heavenly and spiritual, then may we indulge in a hope, we trust a good hope through grace, that we know a little something about it.

To trust the grace of our God, and not depend upon the law of works; to confide in the sufficiency of Jesus, and have no trust in ourselves; to worship God in spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh; to be governed by the law of the Lord, and not to follow after the traditions and commandments of men; yea, to desire and endeavor to do everything to the glory of our God and the good and comfort of his dear people, and to do nothing to the glorying and boasting of the fleshly man is, in our estimation, walking in him. And when we consider the great and glorious things in our Father's house, where there are many mansions, and where Jesus has prepared a place for all that the Father hath given him, we see how great a thing it is to walk in him. According to his word he has builded his church, and "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." In building his church, he has given the ordinances thereof; in creating his people he has caused his and their glory to shine forth, that they might

praise and honor his great name. "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of them that published it." It behooves his people then to walk in his ordinances and keep his commandments, to come to his solemn feasts in his Zion, to keep up the administration of his word, "To sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary." In this sanctuary there is rest and peace and knowledge. An apostle admonishes, saying, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith, without wavering; for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

Our Lord has built up Zion, wherein he appears in his glory, for a refuge and comfort to his afflicted and poor people, who trust in him alone. He has appointed the assemblies of the saints for their peace, edification and encouragement. He has ordained the preaching of the word for their order, safety and instruction. Surely, then, it is well for us to highly prize such priceless privileges and heavenly blessings. What a sad and fearful thing it is to become lukewarm, or to grow careless and indifferent, or to feel it to be irksome and burdensome to take our time and use our means in keeping up the order of worship in the house of our God, or to complain of the doctrine, find fault with those who preach and those who believe it, or to rail against some of the principles and practices of the church of God, and make such things a pretext for neglecting our duty, staying away from our meetings, and sometimes of stirring up strife and discord, and causing dissensions and divisions among brethren and sisters. "But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor."

May we ever walk in Jesus,
Have our conversation there;
Feel him from our woes release us,
Keep us safely from all care.

Dearly beloved, in conclusion we will say we believe it is walking in Christ Jesus to obey the commandments of our Lord; to abstain from every appearance of evil; to "follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another;" to refrain from those things that produce discord, or cause confusion among brethren; to walk according to the law of our divine Master, having love to one another, and letting brotherly love continue, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another in love.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1884.

Our subscribers are especially requested to address all letters for us, to the firm name of

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

CLOSE OF VOLUME FIFTY-TWO.

WITH this number the fifty-second year of the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is completed, and its semi-monthly visits to our readers for 1884 are fulfilled. Since the commencement of this volume what changes have been wrought in the temporal circumstances of the thousands who have been receiving the paper. Some who were in full vigor at the opening of the year have been called away from time, and others have been prostrated by affliction. Yet it has pleased the Lord to afford to many a measure of health and prosperity. Of these how few properly appreciate their deep obligation to the goodness and mercy of the Lord for the temporal blessings so lavishly bestowed upon them. In consideration of our unworthiness and ingratitude to God we may well say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."—Lam. iii. 22.

But while time and words would fail to recount the unnumbered mercies of God in his providential dealings with the children of men, it is of the infinitely greater and more wonderful displays of his favor toward his chosen people that we would now write to his saints. Within the past year how often have each of us been constrained to cry unto him out of the depths of conscious vileness and the prevailing snares of sin, and he has never failed to hear our groaning. We have ever found it true that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Psalm xlvi. 1. While in looking at the things which are seen nothing but tribulation appears to the followers of Jesus, by living faith in Christ they are enabled to overcome the sorrows and afflictions which surround them, and in the strength of the victorious Captain of their salvation they are made to triumphantly rest in that sweet peace which Jesus gives even in the midst of enemies and opposing sin. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." In the trials encountered within the year now closing, the saints can doubtless recount many manifestations of the amazing mercy of the Lord in saving them from despair, and in giving them in the night seasons of their experience songs of deliverance where their own frail reason could discern no way in which their feet might go. "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."—Psalm cvii. 6, 7. These are the peculiar lessons of instruction by which the chosen witnesses of our God are qualified to testify to the truth that "Salvation is of the Lord."

Although each one of them is made to wander in the wilderness in a solitary way, yet "God setteth the solitary in families." This fellowship of solitary experience is mutually comforting and strengthening to the afflicted and poor people who trust in the Lord. When some desponding little one, who doubts the genuineness of his own experience, is permitted to hear or read his own sorrows and distresses in the exercises of another who may be an entire stranger in the flesh, not only does fellowship and fraternal love involuntarily go out to that one, but unconsciously his own hope is revived and his strength is renewed. So, the dear saints are fellow-helpers to the truth, sustaining each other by the witness of the power of divine grace in the personal sorrows and joys which mark the individual exercises of each one, while they learn that the same afflictions are accomplished in their brethren that are in the world. By this perfect unity of experience they are builded together as members one of another. For the comfort of this peculiar people the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was first issued as a medium of correspondence, when there was no other periodical in the world whose columns were open for the publication of the truth of the gospel. The violent opposition of will-worshippers and carnal religionists was overruled by the power of God to inform many who mourned apart, that there was a paper published devoted to their service, and contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. Scarcely daring to believe that such was really the case, hundreds subscribed for it on trial; and these being satisfied, continued their patronage, while others were still found loving sound doctrine, until thousands scattered from Canada to Florida, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast, now rejoice together in the gospel proclaimed through its columns. Very few of the original subscribers remain on earth; but as the older saints have been called home, others have been brought in to the knowledge of the truth, and many of these have freely sustained the old SIGNS OF THE TIMES which their fathers loved so well. Therefore it may well be said of this publication that having obtained help of God, it continues, "unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." To publishing this glorious gospel truth the original editor, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, devoted his lifelong labor; and the many hearts which still throb with grief at the reflection that they shall see his face no more, attest that his labor was not in vain. "He being dead yet speaketh;" for his earnest contending for the faith still bears fruit in the sound doctrine which he held and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for nearly half a century.

Since the present editors tremblingly undertook the work of continuing the publication, they have had strong assurance of the same divine blessing abiding upon their labors which sustained and directed the original editor. Numbers of beloved brethren have cheered us with expressions of approval and of sympathy, and many able and spiritually minded writers have contributed edifying and comforting articles for our columns. For all these expressions of love and fellowship we are deeply grateful to the writers; and no words can express our humble adoration and thankfulness to the Giver of all good for the loving forbearance with which his saints have judged our efforts to serve them. May they ever experience the sweet comfort of that heavenly charity which they have so freely exhibited toward us; and may abounding grace ever enable them to keep themselves "in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" Acknowledging our indebtedness for their valuable assistance in the past, we earnestly solicit a continuance of their esteemed correspondence. Experimental communications and expositions of scriptural doctrine will always be especially acceptable, and as far as practicable such articles will be inserted in our columns; but it is very desirable that all references to local or personal dissensions, should be carefully avoided, as no good result can be attained by publishing such matters. While enemies of the church would rejoice to hear of such discord, it could only bring pain to the hearts of those who love the Lord to know that strife and contention prevail where all should be love and harmony. Therefore it is our design in the future to adhere to the purpose by which we have heretofore been governed, in rigidly refusing to annoy our readers with discussions of quarrels which can only be settled by the spirit of meekness and mutual forbearance in the parties at variance.

Encouraged by the liberal patronage extended by lovers of gospel truth in the past, it is our purpose, if the Lord will, to continue the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the coming year in the same form and on the same terms as at present.—See advertisement on page 287. Agents and patrons will greatly oblige us by remitting as early as practicable their orders and money for the next volume, which will begin with the year 1885. The first number, for January first, 1885, will be sent to all subscribers whose names are now on our list. Any who wish to discontinue their patronage will please immediately give us notice of their purpose, being careful to specify the post-office and state where they have been receiving their papers, and remitting whatever balance may be due us on their subscriptions. See "Instructions to Subscribers," on page 287.

Wishing the blessings of health and prosperity to all our patrons, and thanking them for their past support, we bid them an affectionate farewell for the year 1884.

ORDERLY COMMUNION.

FREQUENT inquiries are addressed to us relative to various points of order in connection with the administration of the ordinance of the Lord's supper. To all of these we can only reply that there is no authority in the church of Christ to prescribe any order in that observance, nor in any appointment in the house of God, since the inspired apostles finished the work which they were specially commissioned by our Lord to do, in teaching baptized believers to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. Being under the direct guidance of the Holy Ghost, who should bring all things to their remembrance, it was not possible that they should fail to fulfill the important duty enjoined upon them in leaving on record the perfect rule for all followers of Christ to the end of time. Whatsoever they have bound on earth is bound in heaven; and whatsoever they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. They have bound all that the saints are at liberty to observe. While they were with their Lord under the law of Moses they were under obligation to do what that law required; but after that hand-writing of ordinances was taken out of the way, being nailed to the cross of Christ, the saints were loosed by apostolic authority from all its obligations. Since the exaltation of our risen Lord he sits upon the throne of his glory, and is the only lawgiver in his kingdom. His law is not engraved upon tables of stone, but he puts it in the inward parts of his saints, and writes it in their hearts. This law is recorded in the New Testament by his inspired apostles, and he is with them in its administration "always, even unto the end of the world." Therefore, there can be no case for which his law has failed to provide; and when his saints cannot see such provision it is because of their own blindness, and not because of any defect in the law of the Lord, which is perfect. It is never safe for the servants of God to add to or amend his statutes, which are right, rejoicing the heart. All efforts to improve upon them must ever result in confusion and discord.

In regard to the ordinance of the communion in remembrance of our Lord Jesus, Paul has left definite direction in 1 Corinthians xi. 17-34. The practices therein condemned are disorderly now, and the example described in verses 23-25 is the orderly pattern for observing this memorial of the death of our Lord. If a fully organized church, with bishops and deacons formally set apart to their respective offices, should partake of the bread and wine in a contentious spirit, each seeking pre-eminence, such observance "is not to eat the Lord's supper." Nor can it be done in remembrance of Jesus when there is no discernment of the Lord's body; that is, when the participants are not recognized as professed members of the church of Christ, which is his body. It is not required that the saints should examine the hearts of those with whom they commune.

