

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

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CORRESPONDENCE.

STATE ROAD, Del., Dec. 8, 1897.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—I cannot know that a subject will interest and profit others, because at the time it is interesting to me. But as that is all the guide I have, I allow myself to be guided by it. I will to-day submit some reflections on the character and calling of Joseph of old, and his relation to the people of Israel. As the best introduction to what I have in mind, I will name some reasons for objecting to an idea that has prevailed quite extensively, that Joseph was a type of Christ. It might be enough to say about this, that the inspired writers have not so referred to him in a single instance that I can recall; but there are difficulties that appear to me to be barriers in the way of using Joseph as typical of Christ to such an extent as to invalue us in much confusion. Unless he was really intended as a type, we shall gain nothing by efforts to make one of him. Not only was he one of the people of Israel, but one of the twelve tribes; and he was prominent among them; so much so as in a number of instances the name Joseph is used for the whole nation of Israel.

After the separation from Judah and Benjamin, the name of a son of Joseph is applied to the whole ten tribes nearly as often as the name Israel. While Joseph was one of the people of Israel, still he had an experience that they did not have; and he also had a mission that he fulfilled that they did not have, and could not have fulfilled. This experience and its fruit is what I propose to speak of. Some expressions with regard to him seem like holding him forth as representing all the God-fearing people in that nation. I will name some of those Scriptures where Joseph is named as representing the whole people of Israel. The prophet Amos, speaking of the idolatries of the people of his time, says, “It may be that the Lord God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.” Again, speaking of the distress of many of the people, and the hard-heartedness of the idolaters, he says, “They are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.” The psalmist says of the God of Israel, “Thou that leddest Joseph like a flock.” And again, when Joseph is alluded to as representing the ten tribes, he says, “Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Eph-

rain, but chose the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion which he loved." These Scriptures are sufficient to show that Christ is not typified in them. The different tribes of Israel received blessing from Israel their father, and also from Moses, when they were about to enter the promised land. In both of these there is a recognition of the prominent place Joseph fills among the tribes, and also I think of what he typifies throughout all the generations to come. There is in both these announcements of blessings to be developed in Joseph, a special mention of his having been separated from his brethren. These vast and abundant blessings seem to be traceable to not so much any other of his afflictions, as to his long separation from his brethren. This separation was not only from those whose unfeeling and cruel treatment he had suffered, but also from his own brother Benjamin, who had not been with the others, either to share, or even to know, of their murderous designs. He is also separated from his father, and his father's love, possibly conscious of the anguish that his father must be suffering without its being possible to afford him relief. If his own half brothers had no feeling of pity for him, can any be expected of prejudiced heathen foreigners? Can there be any reasonable hope that he will ever see the face, or hear the voice of friends or kindred again while he lives? It was perhaps a mercy to his father, that he had been led to believe that his son was dead, and that he had not even a suspicion that he was languishing in a gloomy dungeon in a heathen land. Twice in the narrative the prison is called a dungeon, and once it is said, "Where the king's prisoners were bound." David in one of his Psalms, says of this imprisonment, "Whose feet they hurt with

fetters he was laid in iron." This loathsome, intolerable imprisonment must have gone on for years. Even when a glimmering hope dawned upon him through the release and enlargement of the chief butler, by whom he sent forth a pathetic appeal to the authorities, even this fails. He is forgotten and lost sight of, to pine in his dungeon for two more of these sorrowful, desolate years. After the light shone upon all this, it was easy enough to see that good could come out of it. But the psalmist says that "the word of the Lord tried him." Although he remembered the covenant made with Abraham, and had himself had intimations of future advancement, he must at times at least have felt that God had forgotten to be gracious, and that his promise must fail for evermore. He has not left us any record of the despair that must have settled upon him; but the psalmist could not have sunk deeper in the horrible pit and mire, nor Jonah, when out of the belly of hell he cried unto the Lord, and when he said to the Lord, "I am cast out of thy sight," than did Joseph in his gloomy prison. It cannot be supposed that Joseph during his affliction had the remotest idea of what all this experience was to do for him. It seems to me that in this experience and its results, I see a kind of outline of the schooling that qualifies men for the ministry, and that Joseph is among his brethren as a gospel minister among the saints. He has been learning by the things that he has suffered; but he could not possibly know for what purpose these lessons have been taught him. He does not now entertain a hard thought or feeling for any human being. His brethren, through all their prosperity had not learned to pity him; but he, notwithstanding their cruelty, had learned to

pity them. He did not know that he was laying up food for his father's house. It was for any and every one who was starving from the famine. There was no depth of sorrow or of suffering where he had not been; no cold and cruel neglect that he had not suffered; no pangs of hunger and thirst that he had not felt. His heart is full of love and pity and sympathy for the suffering and oppressed everywhere. No matter what the famine amounts to, or how long it lasts, Joseph's corn will not fail. His resources will satisfy every longing soul. Israel did not know for some time that the corn that they were living upon belonged to the family, and had been stored on purpose for them. They expected to have to pay for all that they got. Egyptians paid for theirs, but they paid it all with Egyptian money. I will not say that all this experience is necessary to fit and qualify any and every gospel minister for his work. They do not all have so many to feed and to provide for as Joseph had. He not only had the stores, but he had the heart to use them; and he had the experience to apply them where they rightfully belonged. I think Jonah was a better preacher after he had to cry to the Lord from the depths of the sea. Indeed, I think he went to Ninevah just as soon as he was qualified to go. But he had learned lessons that were never taught at the feet of Gamaliel. If we trace all the blessings that showed themselves upon the head of Joseph, to those years of bitter experience, we will not contend that he suffered anything in vain. No money goes from the land of Canaan, or from the family of Israel, for this bread. It is without money and without price. There was a time when the order went forth from the house of Joseph, that the whole family are to dine with

him at his table. So Joseph prepares a great feast. They all partake of the feast, but do not yet know the kindred that gives them right to this table. It is a feast to which no Egyptian can be admitted. Christ was made known to the disciples in the breaking of bread. So Joseph will be made known at this feast. This tender and pathetic scene has been reenacted many times from Joseph's day until the present. Though they were seated as guests at the table, and though Joseph was present; while they knew not that it was Joseph, and knew not by what right they could be admitted, they must have partaken with much fear and trembling. When a man's resources in the ministry are limited, and he lacks variety, and does not wear well, and is not outside of the stand a living illustration of the gospel of the grace of God, it would seem that he had not been through the depths that Joseph went through, because Joseph's resources never failed. We may not know how long Joseph was separated from his brethren, but we know that it was a separation far beyond ordinary cases. There was little reason for hope that he should see them any more, or that they should ever even know of his condition, so as that he might enjoy their pity and sympathy. It may be a question as to which tends most to strengthen and intensify the love of brethren to each other, to be separated entirely from them, or to be permitted to mingle with them without any restraint. A condition of sorrow and distress for which there appears no relief, calls necessarily for sympathy and pity; and the suffering are drawn to those who are traveling in the same path. A sense of guilt and of just condemnation is as cruel a jailor as Joseph ever found in Egypt, and there is quite as little prospect of the

doors ever being opened. Not only separated from their brethren, but also from the world and everything else. I have had kindred in the flesh, but I shall not offend them by saying that the tie that binds kindred in spirit, is a stronger and more cherished tie. I know also what the tie is when it becomes twofold. I have had some opportunity in the way of observation, and have not been without some of the lessons of experience, and am free to say that the pent up love to the brethren, and longing for indulgence for weary years, will grow continually stronger; and it will attain a magnitude and a fruitfulness that will seem like full compensation for past privations, and a more abundant entrance into the Redeemer's everlasting kingdom. If all who are called to this blessed work of dealing out food to famishing, could care as faithfully for them, and feed them as well as did Joseph, I do not think they would incline to wander away, as we sometimes see people doing, voluntarily separating themselves from their brethren, and bartering away their privileges for some fancied worldly gain. Joseph's brethren never wandered away from the home that he found for them, nor from the bread with which he fed them. It seemed to be always for their well being while sojourning in Egypt, to keep close within their own borders, as they were shepherds, and shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians.

The above reflections are respectfully submitted.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

BELLVILLE, Miss., August 26, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It has been a long time since I have attempted to write anything for the good old family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which I

esteem next to my Bible. The cause of my not writing is not that I do not like the contents of the paper, but it is owing to my inability and weakness, being so illiterate and ignorant. I have been a constant reader of it for fourteen or fifteen years, though I have never subscribed for it, as I am very poor in this world's goods, and have not been well able to pay for it. But I do feel thankful to you for your kindness to my poor sister, Phoebe Strickland, to whom you have been sending your paper for several years. She lets me have it to read. I read many other periodicals, and I have been comforted in reading some of them, but I have never found any that I appreciate as I do the SIGNS. The editorials and the correspondence all speak the unvarnished truth, if I know what truth is. Some other Baptist papers cannot have the predestination of all things, and we have some preachers in this country, who will not have it, and who ridicule those who believe it. I have had to endure some severe rebukes for believing and preaching that doctrine, by those who do not believe it. Yet they say that they do not believe in a chance system. I do not fall out with them, or think of making it a test of fellowship, but I do think that those who oppose it, should be willing to allow us who do believe it, the right to our opinions, as they claim the right to theirs, and as we think that they are entitled to theirs also. I know that I am very limited in comprehension of spiritual things, but I hope and believe that I have some spiritual knowledge which has been imparted to me through the Spirit's teachings. And if so be that I have been taught by that Spirit, it has taught me that if the good Lord has predestinated or predetermined one thing, he did all things that come to pass, and

is able to, and does cause all things to work together for good to them who love God, and to his own honor and glory. I believe in what is called the foreknowledge of God, but at the same time I believe he is omniscient and omnipresent, and that he is in every place, and that as he has said, he has declared the end from the beginning; and that he made all things, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, and who has declared that the wrath of man shall praise him.

I could not have any confidence in, or fellowship for any man called a brother, who would take shelter behind predestination to excuse his sins. I have never seen but one yet who did that. I think some try to measure the ways of God by their ways, and as far as this holds good, or harmonizes, they will have it, and no further, and say that it is dangerous doctrine to believe and preach predestination of all things. But I cannot see how to ascribe all power and honor and glory to God in any other way. I am fearful the time is near at hand when there will be another division among Old School Baptists. I fear that many have come out from among Arminians who have brought some taint with them, although I was myself once entrapped by the Arminians. But if I knew that I had any of that Arminian spirit in me, and that it was or could be in my blood, and in a certain part of my body, I surely would bleed it all out, if it took all the blood in my body. Brethren, I do hope and believe that God by his Spirit drove all Arminianism out of me, and instead, I hope that he placed a fear and a love in me that is too great to allow me to dare to soften, trim or sugarcoat his doctrine, which I trust he has revealed to me, to suit the carnal mind of the carnally-minded people. I know it is my duty to be

gentle to all men, but that does not imply that I must waver in the doctrine to suit any one. No, I cannot even please the dearest of brethren. For if I am a servant of God, I must not shun to declare the whole truth as it is in Christ. When I hear a man called a preacher, who seems to want to please the brethren and sisters, by shunning some portion of the doctrine that he thinks they are tender upon, I think there is a tender spot in him, or a man-pleasing spirit has got hold of him. A Baptist preacher told me once that he believed in the predestination of all things; but, said he, It will not do to preach it when the brethren do not receive it; for, said he, Paul said, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." I told him that Paul had no reference to any part of the doctrine, for we are taught not to shun it. I hope that I love the doctrine of my Master too well to try to please any one. No, I do not try to please myself. If I have the evidence that I have pleased him who I hope has called me to that solemn work, why need I care who is displeased? I hope that I love my brethren, and I also hope that I am zealous for my Master, and his cause, and also for what are called good works. Yet I know that he is the Author of all good works. I can do nothing good, or that would be acceptable to him, unless he works in me to will and to do of his own good pleasure. In me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing. I can only work out what he works in me. Every good and perfect gift comes from him. Then he is the author not only of our eternal salvation, but of what is commonly called our temporal or our present salvation. I see no need of any caviling over these things. I believe in duty as strongly as any man, yet I know

that I cannot please him in anything, unless he gives me the spirit of obedience. I know that I cannot work the works of righteousness without spiritual implements, and it is with him to give or to withhold them. Have not you, my dear brethren in the ministry, been called upon to preach, and it has pleased the Lord to shut you up in darkness, and withhold light and liberty? Then could you work? If not, why could you not? Was it not because he did not then work in you? Then if this be true of you, is it not also true of all his regenerated children? Are they not all his ministers, and all just as dependent upon him as new born babes? If this is not so, I admit that I know nothing of his dealings with his children, and have been deceived these twenty odd years.

In conclusion I will say, may the Lord ever be with us all, and unite us all in the same love, that we may all seek the same things, to the honor and glory of God, and to the edifying of the body of Christ. Remember me, a poor old sinner, when it goes well with you.

I remain your brother,

S. BUSBY.

COVINGTON, Ga., Dec. 6, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I notice in the last issue of the SIGNS, an editorial from you in answer to some questions propounded by some one who seems to question the doctrine of God's predestination of all things, and I wish to say that I was well pleased with your replies. As you remark, I am sorry to know that there are some among the Old School Baptists who are opposed to this fundamental point of doctrine. I have for some time known that this germ of dissension was being sown, and had hoped that it would quietly pass away, without

any growth or development; but I fear this is not the case; that the time may come when those who teach and profess to believe that God only predestinated some things, and not all, will call in question the fellowship of those who believe in the overruling predestination of God in all things, both great and small. While we would not intentionally wound these brethren in any way, for we must believe they are honest and sincere in their opinions, yet as far as I am concerned, I must say, if you take from under me this fundamental doctrine, I have no abiding foundation upon which to stand, for I trust I have learned by experience, if there is not an overruling God who has all power in heaven and upon earth, and who is able to save a poor, lost and wretched sinner, as I know I am, then my only hope of salvation is gone. Yet I hope that God for Christ's sake has enabled me to see myself as I really am; to see my many imperfections; to see my lost and helpless condition; and seeing these things, I can have no hope for salvation in anything short of God's predestinated love, mercy and grace. If there is any created thing in this universe that our God did not create—if there is anything that transpires that our God did not foreknow, did not predestinate, and does not control and direct, then we would inquire, Who did create these things, who did foreknow them, who did predestinate them, and by whom are they controlled and directed? If we presume to limit the mighty God, the everlasting Father, in his knowledge in predestination, in his power and ability to execute his purposes, then this is not the God who in the beginning spake this world into existence, created time, and said, Let there be light, and there was light. This is not the God who said, "I am the

Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." This is not the God who sees the end from the beginning, declaring my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This is not the God by whose determinate counsel and foreknowledge Jesus was taken, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain. This is not the God "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." While we do not expect the Arminian world to believe and love this doctrine of God's predestination, yet how those dear ones who have been called from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan, unto God, and made to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, can fail to find God's predestination all along through their experience, as they sojourn here in time, I do not understand. Does not these questionings and doubts often arise from our trying to arraign an infinite and perfect God before our imperfect and finite minds? Trying by study and research to find out God; forgetting, it would seem, the language of our Savior, when Peter told him in reply to the question, "Whom say ye that I the Son of man am?" Peter answers that, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then he tells Peter that he is blessed; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Again, "Neither knowest any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Hence we see it is by revelation, and revelation only, that this knowledge is acquired. Then let us rest in the sure promises of God, for he is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness, and it is not his will that any of

those who have obtained like precious faith with Peter, and the other apostles, should perish, but all should come to repentance.

Dear brother, in looking over what I have written, I fear that it may not be to much profit, but my object in writing is not so much to edify, as it is to let you know that I love, and fully indorse the doctrine so ably advocated by the SIGNS.

Trusting that the Lord will guide and direct you in the way of all truth, and that you may ever contend earnestly for that faith which was once delivered to his saints, to the comfort and edification of his dear children, is the desire and prayer of your brother in hope,

EDWARD HEARD.

PALESTINE, Texas, August 8, 1897.

DEAR BROTHERS EDITORS:—I have said that all of the chosen people of God, who live to be old enough to have their natural senses exercised, must know something of the dealings of the Lord with them. Is this saying too much? I am ignorant, and therefore cannot tell whether or not I am justified in this saying by the Scriptures. Now as for my own past, I do not know that I can say that I know that I have experienced the dealings of the Lord, but we are informed that where the Lord begins a good work, he will perform it; and all the work of God is good, and from what I did learn in 1872, I hope that it was and is the dealings of the Lord with me. Before I saw and felt myself to be a sinner, one who is near and dear to me said, What is the matter with you? I could not tell, for I did not know. But soon after this it seemed as though I could have told, for all of a sudden I saw that I was a sinner before a just and holy God; a lost sinner; a condemned sinner; the greatest

and the worst sinner that ever walked the face of the earth. I felt that there was no chance for me. I would have exchanged chances with the brute creation. All along after this time, my sins as a burden were growing heavier, and I often would think that I must sink beneath this burden; and I did sink. I went down beneath this burden without hope and without God in this world. The next I knew this burden was gone. This burden, as I have said, was my sins. Now they were gone, and from then until now I have not been troubled in this way. So he shall save his people from their sins.

Dear brethren, when I took up my pen I did not intend to write this. I thought I would write you a few lines, and send with them a letter which I have from my sister, asking you to give it a place in the SIGNS, our old and well tried medium of correspondence. Please do this, if it will not crowd out better matter, when it is convenient. Again it is written, And they shall all know me. But how? Before they can know him there is something wonderful to be done: a work that we cannot do. They must be quickened, because they are dead. Brethren, you can understand me, and I am glad of it; but let this be said to the most learned Arminian to-day, that the people of God are in the first place dead in trespasses and sins, and he will say, "It is nonsense; all that men need is to be stirred up." Thus he will start a protracted meeting, and will run it one or two weeks, singing loud, and praying long, and telling graveyard and deathbed stories. These are the fans by which they are trying, as they say, to kindle the little sparks. But never once have they learned whence originated these little sparks. They fan, and they fan too soon. There

are no sparks there, and never were, because the people are yet dead in trespasses and in sins, and while in that state and condition there is no spark there; and all that their fanning can do is to create some kind of a wildfire or foxfire. I will say in conclusion, that I hope that I glory in God, for he is able to carry on his work, and men cannot hinder it. He sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. This one is no longer dead. God has quickened him; and sometimes I think he ought to shout glory and honor to God. I have a little hope that I have been overtaken and arrested by the power of God.

Your brother,

U. J. BELL.

Rusk, Texas, July 11, 1897.

ELDER U. J. BELL—DEAR BROTHER:—
You ask me to write you some of the dealings of God with me. Truly this is the hardest thing for me to try to do at this time, that I ever did try to do, because I feel to be so far away from my dear Savior this morning, if indeed I can call him my Savior, which I often feel that I cannot. In years past I hope that I felt nearer to God, but as years pass on, I get farther away, and sometimes I think I have a desire to go back where I hope the Lord first made an impression upon my mind, to seek him again, and I feel as though I could grasp it and cling to him more and more. In those days I felt like serving my Maker. The first prayer that I ever tried to offer was in 1862. I knew that I was a sinner. I thought that I had something to do, but what I did was not what I thought I had to do. I did mourn and weep, which was not bidden by me. I wanted to love the Lord. I wanted to seek after him. I

hungered and thirsted after him. There was no one else to turn to. I thought if he would let me love him, how happy I would be. I went on in this condition for years. Sometimes I went into worldly amusements, but often was groping in darkness, trying to plead with the Lord to have mercy upon me, a sinner. It seemed as though the more I tried, the worse I felt. It seemed to me that I had done all that I could, and had come to the end. I would go to church thinking that I would get some relief, but there was no relief there for me. So I would return home just as I felt before, still weeping and mourning. One night in 1874, my family and self were sitting together talking about preaching that was going on in the neighborhood, and I was trying to talk, but could not for weeping. I heard some one singing an old tune, and I thought it was the sweetest singing that I had ever heard. I spoke and said that I was tired of sin. This was the last that I knew for some time, I do not know for how long. I got up and walked around the house. The first thing I knew I was laughing, and felt relieved of all my troubles. But doubts and fears soon came in the way, saying that it was all imagination. I went on in this way for several years before I went to the church. Finally I went, and was received and baptized, although I felt my unworthiness, and do yet. If I am one of the saints, I am the least of all. Sometimes I feel thankful that I was at last enabled to take up my cross and follow the Savior. But O, the backslidings, and the doubts and fears. When I would do good, evil is present with me. I cannot pray at all, only from the lips. Still I am often trying to ask the Lord to teach me how to pray, and what to pray for. I get very low down in the valley of the

shadow of death, but all my hope is in the Savior of sinners. He knows them that are his, and none can pluck them out of his hands. Very truly does his holy word say, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed."

Now, brother, what I have written is a little of what I understand has been the dealings of the Lord with me. I know it is like myself, imperfect, and poorly done. Perhaps at some future time, with the help of the good Lord I can do better. May the Lord direct our steps, and bring us in the right way. Remember me in your prayers.

Your unworthy sister,

S. C. NORTON.

CLAYTON, Del., Oct. 18, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I inclose two letters from sisters Jennie and Arabella Grafton, which I would like to see in the SIGNS. As they have been a great comfort to me, I do not feel that I can withhold them from others, knowing as I do, that so many others will be glad to see them in print. I do not feel worthy of such letters as these, because I know too well that I cannot answer them as I would like to do. I am too great a sinner to write anything good, but I do know that none of us can write, do, or think, any good thing of ourselves. It is all of the Lord. Without him we can do nothing.

With regard to my health, I will say, that I have been very ill since the Association. I was confined to my room for seven weeks, and to my bed for four weeks. But the blessed Lord has raised me up again, and given me strength, so that I can mingle with my family. I would like to answer the sisters' letters, but do not feel that I could answer such

good letters. I am very weak and feeble. I should like to be with you all at the meeting at Salisbury, but the Lord has ordained it otherwise. I feel that I must say, His will be done. I would be glad to have a good letter from you, if you have a few moments to spare.

From your poor, afflicted sister,
LETITIA B. HEARN.

JUNE 3, 1897.

DEAR SISTER HEARN:—Since our return from the association I have thought of you many times, and of the kind welcome which we received at your hands. My sister and I fell very much in love with you all, and I feel as if I want to tell you how much we appreciated your kindness. I think I can truthfully say that such treatment does not puff me up, but on the contrary, it brings to my mind so forcibly how unworthy I am, and that it is far better than I deserve. You cannot have an idea how many times your face has been before me, and in my mind I can see it plainly, just as I really saw it, wearing that calm and peaceful expression which becometh the afflicted saints. When I see such a shining mark of the grace of God, then my own sinful self rises to my view, and with my waywardness and shortcomings, I almost sink beneath the load. All that I can say is, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." Why do I look to him for mercy? Have I ever done anything to merit his esteem? No! a thousand times no. He says, "He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy," and I have a little hope therefore. Yes, I may say a little hope (for it is sometimes scarcely felt) that I am one of the favored few. The desire of my heart is to live in obedience to his commandments, and to honor him to whom all honor is due. But how far

short of this do I come. I am made to say with the poet,

"My soul hath gone too far astray,
My feet too often slip;
But since I've not forgot thy way,
Restore thy wandering sheep."

Surely if I am one of his children he will restore me, and bring me again into the joys of his presence, though the chastisement may be severe. I know that he doeth all things well, yet I find myself murmuring and complaining over my lot, which has thus far been comparatively free from care and suffering. There are seasons however, when I find myself singing praise and thanksgiving, and feel that the smiles of his love are upon me. Then I do feel that this is a foretaste of heaven, and think what must it be when we shall see him as he is, and not as we now see, through a glass darkly. We are told that no man can see his face and live. Is it not enough now to know that he loves us, and with loving-kindness leads us along life's rugged road? When we can feel that he is leading us, how safely we rest. But how different when we trust in an arm of flesh. This is where by nature our trust is always placed. How great is the warfare of the christian. It never ceases, and we know that it never will while we are robed with flesh. O that we could at all times be enabled to look beyond this life and its changing scenes, to that land where there will be no more night. But I must close this mixed up letter, lest I weary your patience. I always do the best I can, but the best is very poor.

Your sister, I hope,

ARABELLA GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md., June 4, 1897.

DEAR SISTER HEARN:—Since my return from the associations (I attended the

Baltimore also) I have not thought of much but the good meetings, and the many kind friends whom I met, many of whom I had never seen before, who came from widely separated parts of the country, but who yet did not seem like strangers. When we meet them, and hear them tell of Jesus and his love, at once our hearts go out toward them in sweet fellowship. Thus it was with you, my dear sister, that first evening at your house. You talked to me so beautifully about your experience, and about (what seemed to me) that wonderful manifestation of God's love to you, while listening to Elder Chick, while he was preaching, that I at once felt a peculiar nearness and love to you, for the truth's sake. Yet, at the same time, it set me to searching my own heart, and I felt that I looked in vain for such tokens of God's love to me. But what am I but a poor, miserable worm of the dust, who merits nothing but banishment from the presence of God forever? Indeed, I have felt of late, if possible more than ever before, that I am truly the very chief of sinners. If the Lord has ever been merciful to me at all, if he has ever bestowed upon me even the smallest token of his favor, how infinitely above what I deserve it has been. I often think that the natural blessings which I have received, in the way of health, a comfortable home, and kind friends, should be sufficient to call forth a constant song of thanksgiving, but instead of this, much of the time I have to lament a hard, deceitful heart, and a mind that inclines more to run after the things of the world than the things of the Lord, and which is devoid of every feeling of thankfulness or praise to him who is the great Giver of all good.

I thought of these things while with you. You are so afflicted, yet seem

to manifest such great patience and resignation, and by your very manner show forth the praises of God. Why should I recognize the image of Christ in you, and feel so drawn toward you on account of it, unless it be that the light of God has also shined in my heart? This thought has occurred to me while writing, and has afforded me some strength and comfort. I have not often had the privilege of attending associations, as I am usually confined in the school-room at this season of the year, and it did seem to me a very great privilege indeed. During some of the time I was dull and lifeless, and unable to hear to much profit, but there were other times, when the preaching came to me very sweetly indeed, and I felt to rejoice, and to say in my heart, What a glorious gospel is this! How it is suited to the case of lost and ruined sinners!

If I could, I should like to express to you our appreciation of your kindness. We surely did enjoy our visit among you. And we thank you all most sincerely for your kindness and hospitality. We should be more than glad to have any of you visit us at any time. If you feel like writing, I should be glad to receive a letter from you. But if writing is a tax on your strength, then do not write.

From your sister, I hope,

JENNIE GRAFTON.

MT. ROSE, N. J., June 27, 1897.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I thought I would write you a few lines, as I could not seem to say anything the day that you and brother Cook called to see me. I will try to tell you how I was made to see and know that I was a sinner. I was reading the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, where Christ was foretelling the destruction of

the temple. I thought how dreadful that would be. For I knew that I was a sinner. Now the Lord made me see and feel my sins like mountains rising, and I was made to cry for help, and the forgiveness of my sins. I was made to mourn on account of my sins. I tried to pray for God to have mercy upon me. I read the Bible. I thought perhaps I would find something there that would give me some comfort. I found where Christ said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Again, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." These, and many more portions of the Scripture, have been very precious to me since the Lord, as I hope, pardoned my sins. I went on in this way for weeks and months, on account of my sins. One night I went to my room and sat and read for a time, and tried to pray to the Lord to have mercy upon me, and forgive my sins. I knew that I could do nothing to save myself. I felt that I must put all my trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, for he could save me, and he alone. I went to sleep, and when I awoke in the morning, how strange everything seemed to me. My burden was gone, and I felt so light, and everything appeared to be praising the Lord. The trees, and the sky, and everything looked different. The birds sang so sweetly. I never heard them sing so sweetly before. Even the family seemed to look differently to me. My trouble was turned to joy. I could put all my trust in the Lord. He had become all my hope. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Dear brother, sometimes I feel that the Savior is near. It seems that I can almost feel his presence. But sometimes I am in darkness. But

now I must close this letter. I am afraid you cannot read it. I do not like to send you such a letter. When I was a child, they did not send children to school as they do now.

From your sister in Christ,
EUNICE VLEREBOME.

[THIS dear aged sister has been a faithful member of the First Baptist Church of Hopewell, for over sixty years. She was baptized by the late Elder John Boggs, who was pastor of the church for more than forty years. By this experience, we learn that the dealings of the Lord with his people, have not changed. A conviction of sin, and a hope of salvation through Christ, were the two things taught to every heaven-born soul then, and these are the two things that they must learn now. A sinner saved by grace, sums it all up. The testimony of such aged ones, to the grace of God, is invaluable to us, who are younger. May God keep us as he has kept them.—ED.]

OPELIKA, Alabama, Nov. 2, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have read with profit, I trust, the last issue of the SIGNS. I am encouraged and built up, and feel willing to contribute a mite in that direction. In reading some of the articles, I was made to know that the sword was needed as well as the trowel. After and while reading the article from Elder Wagner, with whom I am acquainted, and whom I love in the truth of our God, I felt that his whole theme was for the edification of the saints, and the defense of the truth, which we all hold sacred as the word of God. He is growing old, but he is also growing strong in the faith of God's elect. It has occurred to me that the effect of true faith brings us to see the hand of God, and to recognize that our

times are in his hands. Faith continues on to see his face, and to note his gracious dealings with us; and whether according to our views in the flesh, it be weal or woe, it is all well in the spirit. And when we really pray, Thy will be done, we but confess his wisdom in all his dealings with us. He is a gracious merciful Father, and his ways are just and right. When Paul wrote those blessed words, "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," his spirit was stirred, and his hand was moved by the gracious and divine Spirit of an all-wise God. And so there stands in unmistakable language the goodness and wisdom of God. To be able to see and realize the truth of it, is the result of deep experience, and of a revelation from God. Our God does many things that some question, and that some seem ready to deny, but the testimony of the word leaves it all in unquestionable light. We then can truly say that "his ways are past finding out." "How unsearchable are his judgments." "He giveth no account of his matters." "He is in one mind, and none can turn him." "Whatsoever his soul desireth, that he doeth." "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways, * * * but the thunder of his power who can understand?" I am glad it is so. It proves that he is God. I fall before him, and worship and adore him who is high and lifted up; who rides upon the clouds, and in his excellency upon the sky. I love to reverence his great name, for he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. His name alone is Jehovah. He is the "I am that I am." He is the mighty God. I desire to learn

of him, and to know more and more of the exceeding riches of his grace, that brought me into existence, and, as I hope, saved me from my lost estate. "His loving kindness O how great." Words fail to express the majesty of his divine power, and the glory of his grace. Praise him forever and ever. Praise ye the Lord.

Yours in hope,

WILLIAM LIVELY.

LAGRANDE, Oregon, July 4, 1897.

SURELY no one ever sat down to write to the saints that felt more destitute or unable to write one profitable sentence. Yet knowing that the Lord can guide the pen, and give knowledge to those who feel their weakness, I desire to make the attempt to write to the dear readers of the SIGNS. My mind has been much with the eastern associations. It was a great privilege in the past to meet many loved ones at those annual meetings. This year I felt far away, cast down and sad. Sorrowful were the days, and dreary the nights, appointed unto me. But God who is able to make the darkness light, and crooked things straight, opened the way for me to attend the three days meeting at Elgin, Oregon. If at the eastern associations, but one preacher came beside the pastor, we would have been distressed, so accustomed were we to see them come from the north, east, south and west, meeting in glad, loving fellowship. But here we are not so favored. We had one, Elder Barton, of Weiser, Idaho, beside our pastor, Elder Mayfield. A host for God was with them. The Baptists are mostly poor in this world's goods, but they travel many weary miles over mountains, through heat and storm, often sleeping in the valleys, or on the hills, the heavens shin-

ing above them, or the wind and storm reminding them that they are pilgrims and strangers. Their zeal to hear the gospel, and to meet the saints, enabling frail mortals to bear great fatigue. What wonderful preaching we had. Surely the hungry were fed, the weak and trembling were strengthened, and great love and fellowship manifested. Many dear Lambs are at the door, just without. If all who manifest a love for the truth were within; the Big Spring Church would be large. They do not know how good it is to be at home.

I have listened with absorbed interest to the preaching of able ministers in the east. It is the same glorious doctrine here. It is the doctrine of God our Savior. No other will feed the trembling, fearful child of God. It is written in the hearts of the Lord's people, enabling them to rest in a finished salvation. There have been times when I could say with the psalmist, O how I love thy law. If I doubt this, I know that I love no other, and may I not say, while feeling weak and sinful, I hate every false way? Elder Barton thinks that he is distantly related to Elder Thomas Barton, former pastor of Welch, and London Tract, and Rock Spring churches. There is no resemblance in personal appearance, but they are alike in doctrine, and in a more enduring kinship than that of flesh and blood. Elder Mayfield is the only Primitive Baptist preacher in eastern Oregon. The only church is the Big Spring. The members are so widely scattered that there are three places of meeting. Even then the members cannot all meet. My sister, M. E. Carter, is five hundred miles from here. But God knoweth them that are his. There is plenty of room in this big country for more Baptists. The Lord's people are the same. His church

is one. They are all taught of the Lord. A glorious teacher! And what a school! Each pupil is the least, and they are all little children. There are no graduates from the school of Christ. "Leave us not to ourselves," is ever their prayer. The heavenly Instructor assures them, "I will never leave nor forsake you." May it be ours to realize that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. This is written by the request of dear brethren.

Unworthily,

E. H. ECCLES.

[MANY will be glad to hear once more from the sister whom they used to know as sister Edith Hanna, of the church at Rock Springs, Pa.—ED.]

WEISER, Idaho, Sept. 18, 1897.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—As I propose to write to you and renew my subscription for the SIGNS, I thought I would write a short letter for publication, if you think that it will not crowd out other matter of more interest. I thought that I would write that the Baptists in the Middle States, with whom I was reared, might hear that I am still in the land of the living. I came to Idaho, from Missouri, twelve years ago, and settled on Mounds Creek, which is a small valley near Weiser city. The settlers were almost all emigrants who had come to the west to secure homes. I had meeting once a month at the school-house, and after two or three years we constituted a church. There were nine members in the constitution, and we now have twenty-one, who are all in peace and harmony, and love seems to abound among us, with no discord in doctrine. All are established in the doctrine of predestination, and election, and salvation by grace. The nearest church to us is

the Grandround Valley, Oregon. We have three days meeting once a year at each one of the churches, and they are pleasant meetings. Elder G. E. Mayfield, the pastor at Grandround Valley, is an able minister, and sound in doctrine and practice. I visited them in June, and met with some Baptists from Washington, and I do think that I never saw more love and harmony among Baptists. I shall never forget the kind treatment which I received while I was among them, and when I returned home, I found my family well. I desire to thank God for his goodness to me and mine. Surely the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble. When I call to mind the glorious change which I hope that I received of the Lord forty years ago, and the many trials and temptations that I have passed through, and that I am still spared to have a name and a place among the people whom I esteem, I can but wonder. I do not feel worthy to be among them, but cannot be satisfied unless I am with them. I have just returned home from a trip on Sammon River, where we had a pleasant meeting in Round Valley. This valley is among the high mountains, and there are but few people living there. But the Lord has a people there who love to meet together and talk of his power to save poor sinners. There were several at the meeting who will, I believe, take up their cross and follow their Lord in his commandments. This was a pleasant meeting to me. Myself and wife and brother Stephens went in a light wagon. We camped out on the way, and had a pleasant trip. The weather was fine, and we saw many beautiful mountain scenes; and when we returned we found all well. I will close this poorly composed letter.

Your brother in hope,

G. B. BARTON.

ROSENBERG, Texas, July 5, 1897.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—The inclosed epistle of christian love, written by our highly esteemed brother, Preston Staggs, has been a source of great comfort and consolation to me in this strange region. I think that he has in a few words expressed what is the way, and the truth, and the life, for the christian. He has presented that which would persecute, and speak all manner of evil against the church, and which blasphemes that worthy name by which they are called. No wonder the apostle Paul, when he was writing about these things, cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But the following verse seems to define and bring out the whole matter. "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." Brother Staggs is honest and sincere in his convictions of Bible truth, and is a devoted and exemplary member of the church. He has no confidence in the flesh, and is ready and willing to endure hardness as a good soldier.

Brethren please publish his sweet letter in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. His communication has been so refreshing to me, here on the coast of Texas, that I desire that it may go abroad, and comfort others as it has me. I trust that it may redound to the glory of God, who doeth all things well, and who keepeth the feet of his saints, who feeds them with knowledge and leads them by the right way, that they may go to a city of habitation. And he will finally receive his people in heaven, to sing redeeming love, and triumphant grace, to the worthy name of Jesus, and to our God, throughout a

never ending eternity. May this be our happy lot.

Yours in the bonds of a most precious hope,

ASA HOWARD.

PARSONS, Texas, June 29, 1897.

ELDER ASA HOWARD—MY DEAR BROTHER:—Your welcome and comforting letter of June 25th, was received yesterday. I never take up my pencil to reply to you that I do not find myself asking, what an I that I should be the recipient of such precious letters as yours are to me, and what have I wherewith to answer them? What knowledge or qualification have I that I should attempt to write anything with the hope or expectation that it will be in any way comforting or edifying to the children of God? But I feel confident that the God whom we worship, possesses all power in heaven and upon earth, and that he can indite matter and form, and enable even the weakest of all, to write or speak to his glory, and to the comfort of his dear saints.

My heart rejoices at the good meetings of which you have written, and, my dear brother, may his glorious presence be with you while in that strange land, and give you strength to declare his truth, and to proclaim the finished work of Jesus Christ, who is the way, and the truth, and the life, the end of the law and the fullness of the gospel. I now feel like destroying what I have written, and not sending it, but will try to continue. Surely we are a selfish, stubborn and contrary set, and of ourselves we can do nothing or claim nothing only the promise of the Master, "My peace I leave with you." Brother Thompson stayed with me last night. He said that he wished to write to you, but that he felt so ignorant and weak, that he had never felt that he could write

anything that would be read by any of the brethren with any satisfaction, but that he had found some comfort in the reflection, that the letters of other brethren were a comfort to him, and yet they expressed the same feeling of weakness that he felt. And when their letters were so interesting to him, why should not his be the same to them? Dear brother Howard, this thought has been of some comfort to me in writing this letter to you. We hope to hear from you soon. Our prayer is that you may enjoy the love and presence of your divine Master, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours with imperfections,

PRESTON STAGGS.

KANSAS, Ill., Dec, 4, 1897.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I lay down the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to take my pen at once, to write to you for the purpose of indorsing your editorial upon predestination, in the number for the first of December. It is encouraging to read the same gospel truths, written in this editorial that I was accustomed to read and believe as published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES fifty years ago. When I read this article, and thought it over, it brought very vividly to my mind, the words recorded in 1 Kings xix. 18, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."

I remember the time when I had never met nor heard of one among Predestinarian Baptists, who did not believe the doctrine of God's sovereignty and predestination of all things. It was an understood fact, that the denial of this Bible doctrine was alone by professed Arminians. But, O! how is it to-day? So many that claim the name of predestinar-

ian Baptists say, that God has not all power, but that there is another power, and some also, who say that God only predestinated the things which they call good. And that he suffers such things to come to pass as they in their human judgment call evil. I for one, am so glad to say with you, that God is the sovereign arbiter of all, and that all things must bow to his sway. As you have justly cited the case of Judas, to prove the predestination of all things by our God, I will add, how dare any of the people of God say, that he only suffers these things to come to pass? Was Judas only suffered to betray his Master? What said the Savior upon that subject? "Have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil?" Was not the fact that this was so then, in accordance with the purpose of God? "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled." Again he said, "I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." David said, "Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."—Psalm xli. 9. Election in a personal sense, and predestination, as well as final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory, are all taught together, and are all equally necessary to the establishment of God's sovereignty. All are equally taught in the Scriptures, and all stand together. If all things do not work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, then Paul was mistaken, and Judas need not have been a devil, and Pharaoh's heart need not have been hardened, and Joseph need not have

been sold into Egypt. But I am glad that the Scriptures teach that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and that Joseph said to his brethren, "Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good." So let us Old School Baptists never say that only that which seems to be good is good, and that God "only permits" the things that seems evil to us, to come to pass. But let us bow before his throne, and say from the heart, he is God, and beside him there is none else.

I only thought, when I began writing, to assure you of my hearty approbation of your editorial. I am in harmony of feeling with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Others may cast reflections as to heresies being published in its columns, but if it be so, I can say that after the way that they call heresy so worship I the God of my fathers, and so am I a heretic.

Your brother in the hope of Christ
Jesus our Lord,

JAMES M. TRUE.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Dec. 14, 1897.

DEAR SISTER HARDING:—As you know, I was baptized the Sunday after mamma came home, and certainly it was a most beautiful day for the occasion. All during the week I had been awfully troubled in my mind as to the correctness of the church's judgment. I was tormented by great doubts and fears as to my belief. At times I thought that I did not know anything about the gospel at all; I felt that I had deceived the church, and I was all the time wishing that something would happen to prevent the baptism from taking place. I even felt that I must write and tell brother McConnell to stop all preparations. When Sunday morning came I felt no better; I was stone cold. Mother and I went over to

meeting in the morning, and Elder Francis preached from the second chapter of Luke, and I enjoyed it very much; it gave me some encouragement. After which we went to the river, and it cleared off to be a most beautiful, warm, sunny day. When I came up out of the water, I felt as though I had not a care in the world. The old doubts and fears came back to me, however, and I was greatly troubled again; it seemed that I had deceived them all. Mrs. Hobbs came down the Tuesday evening following, and I told her how I felt, and she comforted me greatly; for she told me that Christ was led into the wilderness to be tempted after his baptism. I have had troubles, but God has lifted me up out of them, and I feel that "underneath are the everlasting arms."

Elder Beebe was here last Sunday, and preached from the thirty-third chapter of Deuteronomy, "As thy days so shall thy strength be."

It has been my desire to join the church for a long time, and I felt that it would be a great privilege to journey in the companionship of the saints; but at times it seemed as though I would be asking too much for them to accept such an unworthy wretch as myself, and then I thought probably the time had not come to speak. I hoped I would become more worthy, for I was fond of worldly pleasures. It seemed to me that it would not be in keeping with my profession if I had those worldly desires after I had become a member. I prayed that these desires would be taken away from me; but they continued. To be sure I did not enjoy them as I had formerly, but still I wanted to participate. I spoke to Elder Vail about my feelings, and he advised me to go before the church the next day we had preaching, for they had fellowship

for me. I told him that I did not feel that it was time yet. The next Sunday, mother was up to your home, and we had no preaching. The following Sunday, while mamma was still away, I went over to meeting alone. Elder Beebe spoke to me before meeting, and said that if I wished to speak to the church that I would have the privilege. I was so nervous that I turned stone cold, I did not hear hardly a word of the sermon, but the feeling came over me, and I felt that the time had come to speak. After meeting I spoke to the church, but cannot remember anything I said that could tell them my feelings, for my tongue clung to the roof of my mouth, and I could scarcely hear my own voice. But I was accepted, and I trust that they have judged wisely. I have those worldly desires no more at present, and I hope they will not appear again.

Your sister in tribulation,

MARTHA H. BENDER.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions to give us the same name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur. It is a good plan to inclose in the letter one of the little pink slips containing the name, taken either from the margin of the paper, or from the wrapper in which the paper comes.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

AT the beginning of this new volume of the SIGNS, we feel like addressing our readers more personally than is our wont, concerning some of the things that seem appropriate at this time. And first, we cannot but recall with gratitude to God, who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift, the mercies of the past year toward us. Our mind also goes back over the years of the past, and we feel that the mercy of the Lord has abounded toward those who have had the conduct of the SIGNS. Hitherto the Lord, we believe, has helped us; and the words of the inspired apostle have been resting upon our mind with force as we have recalled the past, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." The testimony of Paul, and of those with him, was that Christ had come into the world, and had been crucified, and had been raised up again, and had ascended to his Father, and was now at his right hand to intercede for his people for whom he had died. This, Paul said, was nothing else than what Moses and the prophets did say should come. These

are also the things which have been continually uttered in the SIGNS. These things the editors and the correspondents have delighted to speak of and contend for; and we can but believe that in this the Lord has helped us. Without his help to sustain against opposition, both from the world without, and from our own evil heart within, none of us would be found bearing this testimony. That the gospel of the Son of God is preached at all, is a full witness that the Lord lives and reigns, and that the offering of our great High Priest and his person is acceptable to God. The golden bells upon the garment of the high priest, when he ministered in the inner sanctuary, into which no eye might gaze, by their tinkling as he moved about performing his office, would convey to those without the evidence that their priest still lived, and so they would have the assurance that in his acceptance they were accepted also. The sound of the golden gospel bells to-day, conveys to the heart of the true worshiper the joyful assurance that Jesus his great High Priest, lives and intercedes for him, and has received for him the gift of the ministry of the word, and of the Spirit which applies that word to his heart with power. We believe that the testimony borne in the SIGNS during the past sixty-five years, has been the same that has fallen from the lips of all the servants of God in their ministry, from the days of the apostles down to the present time. For the added strength which has been given from day to day to continue the defense of the gospel, for the comfort which has been vouchsafed to those who have had the conduct of the SIGNS, in the assurance from time to time that their labor has not been in vain in the Lord; for the support of correspondents and subscribers,

for whatever of strength and hope and comfort and assurance has been ministered to our readers through its columns, we desire to render unfeigned thanks to God, from whom these and all needed blessings have come down.

The publication of the SIGNS was begun under discouraging circumstances. The first editor and proprietor, Elder Gilbert Beebe, moved by a love of the truth, and a desire that the people of God might become acquainted with each other, and so be enabled to help and strengthen each other, issued a prospectus for the publication of a paper devoted to the Old School Baptist cause. At this time the way looked dark, for there were but few of whom he had any knowledge who maintained their steadfastness in the faith, and these were scattered widely apart. But the Lord gave to this servant of his the same assurance that thousands of years before he had given to his prophet, that amidst all the idolatry of the times, there yet remained in Israel as many as seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. He was enabled to believe that the election of grace still remained. The result justified the faith that was in him, and during all the many years of the long life that the Lord vouchsafed unto his servant, the SIGNS continued under his charge to advocate the same things that were advocated in its first issue. To many thousands who read the SIGNS today, we need bear no witness as to how steadfastly, and kindly, and patiently, and with what boldness, Elder Gilbert Beebe preached and wrote the truth of the gospel until the day came when his beloved Master bade him come up higher.

As Elder William Beebe, who became editor at the death of his father, is still among us, we cannot say what it is in

our heart to say concerning his labor of love in the cause of his divine Master, in conducting the editorial department of the SIGNS for many years. But he will be willing that we should say this at least, that there was no failure to present the great truths which had always been advocated by his father, as editor of the SIGNS. Our readers do not need to be told how lovingly and faithfully and gently Elder William Beebe has written and preached the gospel of the Son of God. And now in old age he is blessed with the assurance that all his brethren hold him in their hearts, and that the thoughts of very many dear children of God often go out to him, and their prayers arise for him, that his last days may be so blessed of the Lord that he shall be able to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

Within the last year the death of Elder Benton Jenkins came as a terrible blow to the surviving editors of the SIGNS. We perhaps better than most others, knew his kind disposition, his firmness in the truth, his forbearance and readiness to forgive, his wise counsel, which was seldom if ever mistaken, and his anxiety that the SIGNS should in all things be kept up to the standard which it had always maintained. When he was called home, we could but feel that we were left desolate indeed. We have missed him every day. Yet the Lord has been with us, and we have been helped thus far. O how keenly we feel that we must obtain help of God, or that we shall fail in all things! We trust that we have been taught again the truth that vain is the help of man. But we have gone on during the past year with fear and trembling. Both remaining editors feel that they have great cause of gratitude to God for all his mercy to them. Our subscribers,

too, have been most kind and forbearing in our weakness and many failures.

Now, as we turn to the future, we ask that the same God who has helped us, will continue to help us. We are sure that we shall need his help every day and hour. By his help we purpose to maintain the same faith that we have hitherto loved and tried to proclaim. We have not been ashamed of the doctrine of God our Savior, but we have often been ashamed of the faulty way in which we have presented it. But with such ability as we have, we desire to be found during this coming year, as in the past, contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. We believe in one God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We believe that he is the Maker and Former of all that does exist, and that he alone reigns in the armies of heaven above, and among the inhabitants of earth beneath. We believe in his complete and universal dominion, so that there is no power that can stay his hand, or bring to naught his purposes. We believe that even devils, and all the powers of evil, are subject to him, and to his disciples through his name. We believe that the doctrine of personal election of sinners of the race of Adam is a Bible doctrine, and that it is most God-honoring and creature-abasing; testifying as it does to the just condemnation of all men, and to the right of the sovereign God to do with sinners as shall please him; either condemning them to destruction, or choosing some of them to be vessels of mercy, and to be brought to glory at last. We believe in the doctrine of a complete atonement, accomplished upon Calvary, when the blessed Son of God expired there upon the cross. We believe in the effectual calling by grace through the Spirit of all for whom Christ

has died, and of none others. We believe that all who are thus redeemed and called, shall be kept by the power of God through faith to final glory. We believe in the resurrection of the bodies of all men, the redeemed to life and glory, and the unredeemed to shame and everlasting contempt. We do not believe that the Holy Spirit makes use of any human means whatever in the quickening and salvation of sinners. Salvation is all of the Lord; and no human means shall ever be praised for the redemption of one of the sons of men. We believe that all gospel preaching is for those who live unto God, and that it is not in any sense for the dead. The doctrine of means is but the hidden fountain out of which all Arminianism flows. Believing these things, we desire to be found contending for them earnestly. Whatever failures we shall make will not arise out of the weakness of the doctrine, but out of our own weakness. We desire that we may have the prayers of the brethren, that we may be kept in the spirit of humble dependence upon God, and that we may never falter in holding forth the word of life. Of one thing we have felt convinced for many years, viz: that whatever of the truth of God we ever come to know, must be known by experience. All is by revelation, and this revelation is not from without, as though some one at a distance should call to us and inform us of some event, but it is a revelation within, and comes to us by the spirit within us searching all things, even the deep things of God. Therefore the people of God have always testified to a revealed religion, and to a personal experience of the grace of God. But when we are called to judge that experience which we have had, as to what kind it is, we must always bring it to the test of the written

word of the Scriptures. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." While nothing can be known of divine things, except by the experience of these things, yet unless we bring that which we experience to the test of the word, the vain imaginations of men would multiply, and we should have a thousand diverse testimonies all claiming to be of God; and one would possess as much right to claim this as another. But the testimony of the word settles all, and from this word there can be no appeal. The volume of divine inspiration is sealed up. Nothing in this state of existence shall ever be added to it. Nothing shall ever be revealed to any man, more than is already written in the Scriptures. What is written in the Scriptures must also be made experimentally known to each of the children of God. Therefore there is a constant revelation to the hearts of believers, but it is the same truth that has already been written in the Scriptures. All that men ever claim as a revelation, which lies outside of the testimony of the Scriptures, is a delusion and a snare. It is not of God. In this experience of the truth there is a diversity of operations, but the same spirit. This is the testimony of the apostle. It is true that he spoke of different gifts in the church, but it is also true of the various conflicts of mind, and the various forms under which the soul comes to know the truth. The substance of the experience is the same, but the exercises of the soul in learning that truth are very diverse. This is not only the direct testimony of Paul, but we see it exemplified in the Scriptures. None of the eleven who were with our Lord all through his public ministry, ever had, so far as we are told, any such manner of experience

as had Paul; and yet they all learned the same things concerning Jesus. The testimony which they have borne concerning him is the same. How many who may read this have said, "O, if I only had such an experience as Paul!" And yet they cannot read the testimony of Paul without feeling that he comes to their own experience, and says that which they also have seen and heard. Each have been divinely taught the same truth, but the outward manner of that teaching has been different. The same one spirit works in different men. This accounts for it all—the unity and the diversity. One spirit, but diverse men. May we not say that each christian experience has a kernel and a husk? The kernel must always be the same, but the husk may be of a different form. The substance of all experience, or the kernel must always be that the soul has come to know the great facts of sin, indwelling sin, of total depravity, and creature helplessness, and of the justice of his condemnation on the one hand, and that salvation is of the Lord on the other. In being taught these essential things; one may have had a sudden conviction, as had Paul, while another has found a continued revelation of guilt and condemnation lasting over years, so that he cannot tell when he first felt himself a sinner. The same is true of that revelation in which Christ is shown to the soul as a full and perfect Savior. All this is outward, and not essential; but it is essential that sin should be felt upon the conscience, and that to that same conscience the blood of Christ should be applied as that which can alone heal and save. Many hear what is but the outward form of another's experience narrated, and because they have no such wonderful things to tell, write bitter things against themselves, and doubt

whether they have any experience of grace at all. But the things which compose the kernel of experience are these: to know the plague of one's own heart, and to know the grace of God which saves. Let each doubting soul ask of itself the question, Do I confess myself a sinner, and do I confess that Jesus is the only Savior? It is pleasant to recall the various ways in which this experience has come to us; but do not let us mistake the manner for the substance; the shell for the kernel. Those to whom such an experience is once given cannot lightly make a profession. They will feel that they stand in the presence of God, and that they have had to do with the most solemn realities. This experience of the deep things of God will not let a man rush forward hastily, as the unthinking horse rushes into battle. It will become a solemn question to him, What ought I to do? He will desire to obey his Lord, but he will at the same time have the most solemn questionings as to what the Lord requires at his hands. Between the fear of disobedience, and the fear of running before he is sent, he will have great fear and trembling. These are some of the things that the apostle had in mind when he said to his brethren, 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 own good pleasure. But we would remind all who may read, that solemn as is the profession of this hope, to disobey, and not to walk in the path of obedience, is still more solemn. There ought to be more fear of disobedience than of anything else. The Spirit of God in the heart is the spirit of obedience. We know of nothing that more appropriately expresses the feeling which every heaven-born soul will have all the way in which he shall

be called to obey, than is expressed in the words, "How great and solemn is the work which we attend to-day." Ungodly men, and unregenerate professors, may make a religious profession with no more solemnity than they would experience in uniting with some worldly society, banded together for the accomplishment of some worldly end; but the soul that has to do with these eternal things, can but come to the confession of what he has felt, with awe, and fear, and trembling, and deep solemnity.

These things, and things such as these, are the things of which we desire to speak through the SIGNS during the coming year, if God shall spare us and sustain us in the work. We sometimes feel tired in the work, but we are not tired of the work. We ask that our brethren will show forbearance in the future, as they have in the past, toward us, and hope that they may have hearts to pray that we may be sustained. We would not fill the columns of the SIGNS with mere theories, and the letter of the doctrine of God our Savior, but we would present these things not as theories, but as living, personal truths, which every day are seen and felt in our hearts, and which are our help and comfort in every trying hour. To feel the sun's light and heat is beyond all measure better than any theory of that light and heat, or the sun itself, can ever be. We do not despise the form of sound words. On the contrary we would hold fast to every sound word. But we want these sound words to become our daily bread; we want to feel the light and warmth of them.

Finally, brethren, be perfect, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 CORINTHIANS II. 15, 16.

"FOR we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"

The term "savor," signifies literally, anything that affects the organs of taste or smell; a sweet savor, is that which has a pleasant odor or taste. The incense and perfumed offerings which were made under the law, were to signify such offerings as are acceptable to God, and things with which God is well pleased; and in this sense we understand it is used by the apostle in our text. In the preceding verse Paul says, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place: for we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ," &c. As the members of Christ, as his apostles, standing in him, by whom the savor of his knowledge is made known in every place, the apostles, their gifts and labors in the gospel, are well pleasing to God, not only in the effect produced on them that are saved, but also on them that perish. In drawing the line between the living and the dead, in feeding, comforting and building up the saints, and in exposing the hidden things of dishonesty, they draw down on themselves the wrath and persecution of the enemies of God and truth. So that in every place where they were called to labor, whether men would hear or forbear to hear, whether sinners were converted to God, or enraged by the testimony, in all cases God caused them to triumph, or made their ministry effectual, either by bringing to light those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the

churches, or in exposing those who were of the opposite character; in no cases were their labors in vain in the Lord. "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ." There was nothing in even the apostles, which was well pleasing unto God but what was of Christ. They, in themselves, were by nature children of wrath even as others, hence all that they possessed as the children of God, disciples of Christ, or apostles of the Lamb, was of Christ, and the savor of that treasure which was committed to them, as unto earthen vessels, was a savor of Christ unto God. Their election, their calling, their qualifications for the ministry, and their administrations, were acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ.

"To the one we are the savor of death unto death." That is to the one class, for they are presented in our subject as two classes, them that are saved, and them that perish. To the latter class, the apostle says we are the savor of life unto life. But how are we to understand this declaration? Does he mean that the preaching of the gospel is to them who perish the cause of their damnation, or of their perishing? That the gospel proposes to them terms, conditions, and proffers, and their rejection of them, or failure to comply with them, is the cause of their eternal death? Certainly not, for such is not the truth. Neither the gospel itself, nor the preaching of the gospel, can possibly injure any one. The gospel has no more power to damn, than the law has to justify and save. Condemnation and wrath is by the law, justification and immortality is by the gospel. The law is the administration of death, but the gospel administers life only to them that are saved, for those unto whom this life is administered cannot perish. Christ has said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall

never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. How then, are these apostles the savor of death unto death in them that perish? We understand the matter thus. To them that are dead in trespasses and sins, the preaching of the gospel only comes in the letter, or external sound of it; it falls upon their deaf ears as a dead letter; it has no life in it to them, inasmuch as they being dead, cannot receive it in its spirit and life. Take a bird from the open air, and confine it in water, as its nature is not adapted to the water, this element is death to the bird, but it is life to the fish. But the water, although adapted to the nature of the living fish, can administer no life to the dead fish. So the preaching of the apostles was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. The word can only come to the dead, in the oldness of the letter, and not in the newness of the Spirit. To them it comes in word only, not in power, or in the Holy Ghost, or in much assurance, as it comes to quickened sinners; to them, Christ who is the substance of the gospel, is as a root out of dry ground, having no form or comeliness, and they have no desire for a knowledge of his ways, and the preaching of the cross is to them foolishness. It being spiritual, and they being carnal, they cannot comprehend it, they cannot feast upon it, nor can they derive vitality from it until they are quickened by the Spirit, and born of God; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.

But to the other, that is to the living children of God, who possess life, the gospel is the power of God and the wisdom of God, it has life and comfort in it

to cheer, sustain and animate that life that is in them. It is death to their carnal nature, to their outward man which perishes it has no life; but the inward man is by it renewed day by day. Every christian must know in his own experience, that the gospel is full of life, joy and consolation to them; it is marrow and fatness; it is a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees and well refined. It is life to that life which is in them, for they live upon it; it is Christ, and him crucified, and it is therefore the bread of heaven unto them. When the apostles and primitive ministers of the word were preaching, in all the examples recorded in the New Testament, there were some who gladly received the word, who fed upon it, and there were others who had no relish for it, who could not receive it, and who resisted and blasphemed. They preached Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, it was Christ, (and therefore life, for Christ is the Life) the power of God, and the wisdom of God. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Not them which do not believe, it is death to them, but it is life to them that believe, because they have life; they are the sheep of Christ, and they hear his voice, and they know his voice; but a stranger they will not

follow, for they know not the voice of strangers.

"And who is sufficient for these things?" Who is sufficient to discriminate between the living and the dead, between them that are saved, and them that perish? Who is sufficient to pour forth into the hearts of God's living children the streams of that river that makes glad the city of our God, to warm, revive, comfort and refresh them, while in their pilgrimage, and to bear the reproach, persecution, rage and violence of those unto whom the preaching of the word is foolishness? Those, and those only, whom God sustains, whom he causeth to triumph in Christ, as he did the apostles, are sufficient for the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them. They can do all things, through Christ who strengthens them. Through him they can feed the flock of God, over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, and through their God they can rush through a troop, and leap over a wall. But no part of the excellency of the power of the gospel is of them; it is of God, it is not a sweet savor of themselves unto God. But they are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved. The very fact that the gospel as preached by them does not feed, comfort or build up the unregenerate, that it is death unto death unto them that perish, is as irrefragable testimony that they are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, as when they are the messengers of joy and comfort to them that are saved. For the preaching of the cross, if preached in its purity, is just as sure to be foolishness to the ungodly, as it is to be the wisdom of God to them that are saved.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1855.

NOTES MATURING JANUARY 15, 1898.

IN response to a notice published on page 310, volume 65, under the caption of "A Plain Business Proposition," thirty-two brethren, sisters and friends, very kindly advanced us the necessary means to meet our temporary embarrassment, for which we have issued notes aggregating, with 6 per cent. interest, to \$923.67, all of which are payable at the Merchants' and Manufacturers' National Bank, Middletown, N. Y., January 15th, 1898. We are now prepared to meet these notes, and they can be sent either to the bank at which they are made payable, or direct to us.

Though the payment of these notes discharges our financial obligation, we still owe a debt of gratitude to the little band that came to our rescue in the hour of peril. This, however, greatly differs from the financial obligation, for we shall never be able to pay it in full; but there is a sweetness in this debt, payments of which are made by drafts on the Bank of Love, and our benefactors have a balance to their credit of which they can never exhaust the interest. B.

MISTAKES CORRECTED.

IN the hurry to get to press last number a very bad mistake was made on page 759, by which the obituary notices of Mrs. Katharine M. Shaw, and Mrs. Nan Remington, became confused. We republish both notices this issue, and beg the forgiveness of both the writers and our readers.

THE "FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

WE are rushing the work on this pamphlet, but it will make more pages than we at first anticipated, and we shall have to beg the patience of our friends for at least thirty days more.

RECEIPTS.

TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS"
TO INDIGENT SUBSCRIBERS.

Mrs. James Banister, Ontario, \$8.40; B. F. Flagg, Mass., \$3; H. J. O'Banion, Va., \$1; Eli Clark, Maine, \$1; Name withheld, Ind., \$1.—Total, \$14.40.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. Lively, at the residence of Mrs. Johnson, four miles northwest of Camp Hill, Ala., on the afternoon of Nov. 28th, 1897, Mr. James Ware and Miss Edna Johnson.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. J. C. Thompson, nine miles east of Opelika, Ala., on the afternoon of Dec. 2nd, Mr. Henry Murphy and Miss Sula Thompson.

By the same, at the residence of the bride, four miles northeast of Opelika, Ala., on the afternoon of Dec. 12th, 1897, Mr. Pery Bean and Mrs. Linnie Gorham.

By Elder F. A. Chick, on the evening of Oct. 20th, 1897, at the residence of the bride, Mr. William O. Strycker, of South Branch, N. J., and Miss Emma Grace Moore, of Stoutsburg, N. J.

By the same, on the evening of Oct. 28th, 1897, at Hopewell, N. J., Mr. J. Arthur Burroughs, of Titusville, N. J., and Miss Sadie W. Drake, of Pennington, N. J.

By the same, on the evening of Nov. 18th, 1897, at the residence of the bride, Mr. Fred M. Leight and Miss Emily Hunt, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, on the evening of Nov. 23d, 1897, at the residence of the bride, Mr. Harvey Boice, of Griggstown, N. J., and Miss Sarah S. Blackwell, of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, on the afternoon of Dec. 11th, 1897, at the residence of the bride, Mr. Charles Howell Blackwell and Miss Lizzie Elkridge Cook, both of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, on the evening of Dec. 22d, 1897, at the residence of the bride, Mr. Harry Crone, of Flemington, N. J., and Miss Catharine F. Stout, of Hopewell, N. J.

Dec. 22d, 1897, by Elder W. W. Meredith, at the residence of the bride's parents, near Parsonsburg, Md., Mr. David J. Ward and Miss Edith S. Perdue, both of Maryland.

By the same, on the same day, at the residence of the bride's father, in Delmar, Md., Mr. George H. Bradley and Miss Alpha B. Hastings.

By the same, on the same day, at his residence in Delmar, Del., Mr. Daniel W. Layfield and Miss Flora B. Lecates, both from near Delmar, Del.

Nov. 18th, 1897, at State Road, Del., by Elder E. Ritzenhouse, Mr. Oliver R. Higman and Miss Bessie E. Nabb, both of Cecil Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

H. Cox died at his home in Ghent, Ky., on December 1st, 1897, in his 86th year. He was born, and lived almost his entire life, in the present limit of Carroll Co., Ky. He studied law, and practiced in Carrollton many years, and into his hand were confided these important public offices, viz: the office of Sheriff, member of the State Legislature, Judge of the County Court, and was frequently chosen as special Judge to try important cases in the Circuit, and Criminal court. He served as presidential elector for the sixth district of Kentucky, and also represented his native County as a delegate in the late convention which formed the present constitution of Kentucky. These facts are better evidence of the confidence and esteem in which he was held by the people, than anything that could be written.

He was married in 1841, to Miss Sarah E. Davis, daughter of Captain William Davis, of this County. To them were born two daughters, and they, with his beloved wife, have preceded him to his eternal home, leaving as his only descendants two granddaughters, my sister Marie and myself.

He joined the Baptist church in 1831, and continued until the time of his death a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. He was widely known among the Old School Baptists by reason of his writings, which have been published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, "Zion's Landmark," "Primitive Monitor," and other periodicals. He also contributed to the columns of other papers frequently upon political and various subjects. He was a man of unwavering principles, as is shown by his devotion to the doctrine of the Old School Baptists for between sixty and seventy years. He died as he had lived, firm in the faith. His request to the minister who preached the funeral sermon was, to "preach to the living the true story of Christ, and him crucified; not to talk of him, for with his soul all was well." Peace to his memory, for our irreparable loss is his gain.

It is with a sad heart, but not as one who sorrows without hope, I subscribe myself his granddaughter,
LENORA LINDSAY.

GHEAT, Ky., Dec. 10, 1897.

DIED—At her home in Clarksville, Butler Co., Iowa, Nov. 11th, 1897, **Katharine M. Shaw**, wife of Wm. Shaw. Cause of death was hemorrhage of the brain. She was enjoying good health up to the time of her death. She had done up her morning's work, and came into the sitting-room, and was stricken down, and lived about twenty minutes. Her aged husband and a near neighbor, were all that was present when she passed away. The family physician was sent for, but she had passed away before he arrived. She was born in Iredell Co., N. C., Dec. 16th, 1818; moved to Ohio with her parents when a child, near the city of

Dayton; from there to Henry Co., Ind., near New Castle. She was married to Wm. Shaw, April 5th, 1838; joined the Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1843; baptized by Elder Nathaniel Richmond; moved to Butler Co., Iowa, in 1865; united with the Providence Church, Butler Co., Iowa, by letter, with her husband. She was the mother of nine children, five sons and four daughters, three deceased, the rest were present at the funeral, except one son, who lives in Tennessee. She leaves a great many grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. The writer was telegraphed for, and conducted the services, and spoke from Rev. xiv. 13, to a large congregation at the residence of the deceased, after which she was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery till the resurrection morning. The writer had been acquainted with the family many years, and felt more as a mourner, than the one to speak words of comfort on the occasion. The church meetings are held at her house regular every month. Elder M. L. Jackson is the pastor. He was away on a visit to Ohio at the time of her death, and the writer attended them in his absence, by request. The meeting time was at the time of the obsequies. How sad! Little did the writer think he would be called to preach her funeral. May our God reconcile our aged brother, who is now in his eighty-second year, and very feeble, and the children who are left to mourn. Our old sister lived a christian life, proved her faith by her works, and her home was always made welcome to all her brethren and the household of faith. She was a dear wife and mother, and a kind neighbor and friend, to all. We mourn not as those who have no hope. She will be missed by the church, as she was always at the meetings. Often with her aged companion, she visited other churches at a distance.

E. A. NORTON.

HAMPTON, IOWA.

DIED—At her old home near Marion, Ia., on Thursday morning, Oct. 7th, 1897, Mrs. Nan Remington, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Gott, aged 31 years and 27 days. The deceased was baptized in the fellowship of the Green's Grove Baptist Church, in Aug., 1888, by Elder R. Spiers. June 5th, 1890, by the same minister, she was married to Mr. John Remington, since which time she has lived in Pocatello, Idaho, until last spring, when she came to her father's residence, thinking the change of climate would improve her health, and she would return in the fall. She has endured many pains, and has been a very faithful and patient sufferer for three years. A victim of complicated diseases, mainly sub-acute consumption, with various other ailments. But she is far better off than those left. She tried to live a christian life, but during her last days of suffering said, "It seemed to her to be a failure." Several times she was so ready and willing to go. When she

knew there were no hopes of her recovery, she plead for the dear Lord to take her. She often requested for some member of the family to read to her some favorite chapter, or sing, and when it was being fulfilled she seemed to be so happy, and think she was just ready to go. She is greatly missed by us. She leaves a husband and two children, Hazel, aged five and one-half years, Elton, aged ten months, a father, mother, five sisters, two brothers, one half sister and brother, all of whom were present, except Mrs. Belle Myers, of Great Falls, Montana, and Mrs. Lucy Plott, of Davenport, Nebraska. Her husband was telegraphed, and in a very short time was at her bedside; waited on her day and night, over two months. She was a kind and affectionate daughter, a noble, loving wife, mother and sister, and was blest in her home.

Her remains were taken to Otter Creek for interment. No funeral was held, as the pastor's wife's health was too poorly for him to leave his home. A few words were spoken at the house by a neighbor. The neighbors, relatives and friends, gathered to solemnize the last sad rites of a dear one.

HER MOTHER.

Mrs. Elizabeth Smith was born to James and Sarah Bailey, in Limestone Co., Ala., Dec. 22d, 1810; professed a hope in Christ in her fifteenth year, and was baptized at the first meeting of the church after her profession, by Elder Thompson. She was married to Moses Smith in 1831. He preceded her to the grave many years, leaving her with four children; but she trusted in the Lord, and labored hard, and brought up her children to be truth-loving, law-abiding citizens. She was blessed to see her three daughters brought to a knowledge of the Savior in the pardon of their sins, and baptized in the fellowship of Mt. Fork Church, of which she was a member at her death, and had been all her widowhood. She was one of the firmest Old Baptists that I ever knew, and one of the best women; generous, loving and kind. She esteemed her brethren and sisters in the Lord as better than herself. She lived a life of usefulness and industry, and died lamented by all who knew her. She suffered very much for three weeks, often praying to go, but willing to abide the Lord's time. She clapped her dear old hands just before she died, and cried out in joy, "I am washed, I am washed in the blood of the Lamb." She died at the home of her son-in-law, Billy Hudson, near Elora, Tenn., Feb. 13th, 1897, being nearly 87 years old. Her grandson, Emmons, was so affected at her death. I hope her mantle of "faithfulness in the Lord," will fall upon him, and that he may be made by the grace of God to fill her place in the church.

May God comfort all the hearts that were made sorrowful by her death, is the wish of her unworthy niece,

SUE LAWLER.

Mrs. S. J. Robertson died Sept. 22d, 1897, at her home at West Side, near Evergreen, Ala., aged 50 years. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at the early age of sixteen, and was a most zealous and consistent member till the Master's summons. She was the eldest daughter of the late Mr. Elza Donaldson, who was also a member of the same church. She married Mr. S. J. Robertson, December, 1870, at Sandy Ridge, Lowndes Co., Ala., and was a loving wife, a most devoted, self-sacrificing mother, an affectionate sister, a true friend and good neighbor. She is sadly missed, especially in the little home circle. For four long years she had been an invalid, and at times a great sufferer, but she bore it all with christian fortitude and patience, impressing those around her with her entire submission to the will of the Master. She realized for several months that she could not recover, talked frequently and calmly of her approaching death, and assured the loved ones of her readiness for the summons. Her only regret was the severing of earthly ties, and was even perfectly reconciled to that when death came. She was devoted to her SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and often spoke of the comfort and pleasure she gained from it; said to the writer: "I have my sermons brought to the bed," and laid her hand on a copy. She leaves a husband, two children, two brothers, two sisters, and a host of other relatives and friends, who will miss her in all the years to come. She was a prominent member of the Primitive Baptist Church, in Montgomery, Alabama, and although distant from her church, kept up her duties and affiliation. Her pastor, Elder Wm. Lively, to whom she was devotedly attached, made occasional visits to her, which afforded her unbounded pleasure.

Yours truly,

EMMA ROBERTSON.

EVERGREEN, Ala., Nov. 18, 1897.

MY daughter, **Mrs. Martha E. Smallwood**, the daughter of Deacon W. A. and E. J. Lawrence, was born Sept. 27th, 1864, and was married to J. M. Smallwood in July, 1880. She professed a hope in Christ in 1889, and united with the Cedron Church in June, 1890. She was baptized by our worthy brother, D. Westall, and lived an humble christian life until removed by death, as I hope, to fill a happy place beyond the grave. Her disease was a slow fever, or typhoid malaria. She was confined to her bed three weeks. She never murmured at her sufferings. She had a view of that beautiful land eighteen days before her departure. She talked of death calmly, and said that the most that she hated to leave was her two little girls, aged ten and four years. She left four little boys. God in his wisdom called the youngest one away two weeks later, with the same fever. She said from the beginning that she did not believe that she would get well, as there had been a dread upon her mind for twelve months. No pen can de-

scribe the scene at her death. She was in her right mind till the Lord called her. She called her husband and two older children, and told them what to do, and gave orders about her burial, and then asked if the train had come yet? She wanted us to sing. "I have but the one more river to cross," and "Did Christ o'er sinners weep?" and then passed away calmly. No Primitive Baptist minister being near, a Missionary Baptist read a chapter, and prayed and talked at her grave, by the request of her husband. She leaves husband, children, mother and brothers, together with the church, to mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope.

E. J. HURST.

CLARENDON, Ark., Oct. 26, 1897.

ANOTHER member of Ft. Houston Church, sister **Francis E. Henden**, after a long and painful illness, peacefully and quietly passed away. She was born in Georgia Dec. 11th, 1824, and died Oct. 13th, 1897. With her father she moved from Georgia, to Alabama. There she married Johnatham Hunt. To this union two children were born, one son and one daughter. The daughter died in 1864. She moved from Alabama to Mississippi, then to west Tennessee, near Memphis, in 1859. Mr. Hunt her husband died in the course of two or three years. She was married again, to one Mr. Harris, and in about three months he died. Then with her son she moved to St. Louis; then in 1876 they moved to Palestine, Anderson Co., Texas. In Mississippi she was baptized by Elder Meadows. She obtained a letter from that church, and some eight or ten years ago united with Ft. Houston Church. She proved faithful until death. After she was here some time, she married Mr. Henden, who died ten or twelve years ago. She suffered a great deal in this life, and now we believe it is all over, and she now rests quietly from it all. She will wake at the sound of the trumpet, not to suffer, but to be happy. We sorrow, but not without hope, and we would be reconciled to God, his works and ways.

U. J. BELL.

PALESTINE, Texas.

W. C. Best was born in Paint Lick, Garrard County, Ky., March 3d, 1854. Left Kentucky in 1872; came to Columbus, Texas; was married Dec. 26th, 1876, to Miss Maggie Marot. In 1878 he moved to Hackberry, Texas. In 1885 he joined the Primitive Baptist church at Burnt Camp, Lavaca Co., Texas. Three months later his wife joined Bethlehem Church, in same County. Brother Best was taken sick Oct. 10th, and died Oct. 24th, 1897. Sister Best telegraphed for the writer on Sunday, but I was at our Association at Mt. Olive Church, Lavaca Co., and could not reach her home in time for funeral services. Still I felt impressed to go, reaching his home on Monday eve, and found the dear bereaved sister Best and children

alone without a dear father to comfort them. Brother Best was a much esteemed brother, and a strong believer in God's unlimited love and power. Brother Best seemed to have a presentment of his departure from this world of sin and sorrow. A few hours before closing his eyes in death, he engaged in a perfect prayer to his heavenly Master, for grace to sustain him in his dying hour.

May God in his goodness prepare us all to meet our dear, departed brother, on the other shore. May he comfort the dear family, is the prayer of the unworthy writer,

J. G. GRANT.

PERSONAL.

BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please insert in one corner of the SIGNS a request that if there is any one having in their possession a copy of my father's (Elder I. N. Vanmeter) hymn book entitled, "Pocket hymns," published in 1867, with which they would willingly part, that they would write to me, as I would like to obtain one or more copies?

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

Macomb, Ill.

CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

We of the Primitive Old School or Predestinarian Baptist faith in Christ, having been baptized, met according to previous appointment, at Lampasas, Texas, Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1897.

After divine service by Elder G. W. Pouncy, at which place we met in conference for the purpose of organizing ourselves in a church.

Appointed Elder Pouncy, Moderator, *pro tem.* and S. L. Dupree, Clerk, *pro tem.* Proceeded to business.

First. Called for Articles of Faith. Read and adopted.

Second. Called for church covenant. Read and signed by eight. Rules of Decorum read and received.

Third. Chose church officers. Pastor—Elder G. W. Pouncy. Deacon J. B. Green being a regularly ordained deacon, chose him to fill that office. S. L. Dupree for Clerk.

Fourth. Sang a hymn, and gave the right hand of fellowship to each other, and declared ourselves in church order, under the name of Elizabeth Church. We have adopted the prospectus which is recorded in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in 1832; volume one, number one, for our Articles of Faith; our meeting time third Sunday, and Saturday before, in each month.

We invite all of the same faith and order to visit us, especially ministering brethren, so they can see our order, and hear what we preach. Any questions asked concerning the above will be promptly answered.

G. W. POUNCY, Moderator.

S. L. DUPREE, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1898. NO. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

STATE ROAD, Del., Dec., 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Having written lately on the character and experience of the patriarch Joseph, and the mission fulfilled by him, I now have a mind to speak of the experience of Israel after Joseph's ministry was fulfilled, and the ministrations to that people passed into other hands. “And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham,” &c.—Gen. 1. 24. There is a great deal in that covenant that was announced to Abraham, that is not fulfilled in the ministry of Joseph, and that could not be fulfilled in a ministry of that kind. Joseph must needs die, and his ministry cease; but like as Moses blessed the children of Israel in his death, as well as in his life, so Joseph's death, and the end of his ministry, will in the end result in what he foresees, and predicts; that God will surely visit them, and bring them out of that land. It had been Joseph's ministry to plant them in that land, and they had taken deep root. I have little doubt but Goshen was more fertile and

productive than even Palestine; and at the time of Joseph's death there might have been none living that were not born in Egypt. Egypt is supposed to represent the world, and throughout Joseph's ministration they seem to be continually led more and more into the world, and given more and more of its riches and comforts. So that so far it seemed like Providence itself being arrayed against the people ever possessing the promised Canaan. There seems so far no sign that it will ever be desirable for them. As yet they know nothing of the God of Abraham, or of his worship. They are satisfied with their lot in Egypt. When God visits his people while they are prospering in the world, and increasing in riches, and satisfied with their portion, the visit is far from being desirable. The first evidence of a visit from God is a change in the Egyptian government. There must another king arise that knows not Joseph. The Lord does not present inducements, and make appeals, and offer rewards to induce people to come out from the world and follow him. They would never heed his call. Their prosperity and happiness will all be taken from them. They are turned against the

world, and the world against them. But the lessons must be long and severe. They will stay in Egypt just as long as they can stay. When they leave it is not choice but necessity. Egypt has become a desolation for their sake. When they go it will not be necessary to present glowing pictures of a land flowing with milk and honey. They are ready to go out into "a great and terrible wilderness." Like their father Abraham in Mesopotamia, they will go out, not knowing whither they go, but they are going out anyway. There are two powers to deal with. The people are averse to going out, and the king is averse to letting them go. It will not take so long time, but it will take the same omnipotent power with Pharaoh, but it will be effectual with both. We may never know whether Joseph foresaw what the visit would be, or what kind of a visit would be necessary in order to bring the people out of that land. Even when Joseph made the announcement to them, that God would surely visit them and bring them out, they probably had little idea how unwilling they would be, and what a high hand and stretched out arm it would require to bring them out. The lessons learned under Joseph will not be fully understood until many other lessons are learned. If they had remained in the land of Canaan, and grown gradually up into the possession of that land, they never would have known the lessons that they learned when God did indeed visit them, and redeem them from the hand of their enemies. From the time of Joseph's death we hear no more of the promise for many years. We do not know that for a long time there was a single Israelite that cared whether the promise was ever fulfilled. I do not think that natural men and women ever feel any interest in spirit-

ual promises, until made acquainted with the blessings promised, and in that way an interest is awakened. There was no law over the people of Israel while in Egypt, except the law of the Egyptian government. If there were any among the tribes in whom remained any traces of the faith of their father Abraham, we have no account whatever of it. The Lord did not require any worship of them, nor lay any law upon them, until he first made himself known to them. They were learning lessons, the effect of which they did not know until long afterward. There had not been priest or prophet to say a word to them from the death of Joseph until many years afterward, when Moses visited them, supposing that they would have understood that God by his hand would deliver them; but they understood not; and if they had understood, they are not yet willing. When the Lord speaks to men to be obeyed, the word does not come in word only, but in power and in the Spirit. He had not yet said to Israel, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," &c., and if he had so said, he would not have been obeyed. They did not then know the Lord, and nothing had yet been revealed to them to inspire love or gratitude. He sent his name to Pharaoh, and Pharaoh simply said, "Who is the Lord?" He learned afterward who the Lord was, and then he obeyed. But that command was not to love the Lord. When this law or commandment was given to Israel they were already obeying it, so that it came to them as a witness of the effect of a knowledge of the true God. He had revealed himself to them as a Deliverer when they were in distress; and they could not help loving those oft repeated deliverances that came to them. "It was then that in Judea was God known, and his name was great in Israel."

As fast and as far as he is revealed to them they love him, because everything is lovely that has been revealed. People do not love as a mere volition or persuasion, neither is there any price that will purchase it. In his love and in his pity he has redeemed them, but as yet had laid upon them no commandments. They murmured against Moses, and against God, but no judgments fall upon them. Pharaoh and his pursuing hosts have been overthrown, and the sea divided for the ransomed to pass over. When water failed the rock was smitten, and the waters ran in the dry places like a river. Still there are other important lessons for them yet to learn. The attributes and perfections of Jehovah as a holy being, to be loved and adored as such, are as yet hidden from them, but which they are ere long to learn. They have however learned enough that they are prepared to listen and to give heed to the further lessons that await them. The apostle said he had not known sin but by the law, neither would the people of Israel, and the righteousness of that law must be made to appear, else they will remain as ignorant of sin as Paul did. When the Lord revealed himself in and through his holy law, it was in flames of devouring fire. It was in a voice of words that was so terrible that they entreated that the words should not be spoken to them any more, "Lest we die." The effect of this holy law, when brought home to the understanding and conscience of the people was, "That every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." Nothing had as yet been said to them about sin, or atonement for sin, and no offering of sacrifices for sin had as yet been enjoined upon them. They had not as yet that knowledge of sin that comes by the law, and of

course could have no idea of sacrifice for sin. Nothing had as yet been said to them about mercy, or that God would commune with them from off a mercy-seat. They could know nothing of mercy while as yet they knew nothing of judgment and condemnation. These things come in their order, and the result will be that mercy will rejoice against judgment. Not only a ministry of mercy is revealed, but sacrifices and offerings for sin. They had bread to eat that they knew not of in Egypt, and they probably would not have appreciated it there. They never would have known the need of living bread or living water. They had first to learn the need of it before it came, and they could not have been told so that they would have understood it. They were never told beforehand what they were to do when their stock of supplies from Egypt was exhausted. There was a great deal involved in their being brought out of that land, and being brought into the land that was promised to Abraham. They were brought out effectually from the idolatry of Egypt, and from its worldliness, and into the faith of their father Abraham. It may seem surprising to us that it took them so long to learn. They dwelt about a year in the immediate vicinity of Mt. Sinai. They evidently were there only long enough to learn their lessons. Then forty years in the Arabian desert; all this while being fed and provided for by the immediate hand of God. All the elements of sacred worship are embraced in the lessons that were taught to this people; but they were lessons that are never taught in any other way. Nothing that came to them was ever anticipated.

I will not now go on to speak particularly of the end of Moses' teaching, and the preparation there was in it for the

offerings that would constitute the worship under Joshua. But as these things are written for our learning, I am calling them up for our sakes, hoping that by a further understanding of the Scriptures, we may trace the way that we ourselves have been led. God did surely visit them, but for a long time they knew him not. There was not one single step of the way that they would have chosen. They were brought out themselves, as well as out of Egypt; and the worship unto which they were called had a place first in their own hearts, as it had a place in the experience through which they had passed. They sang a song on the banks of the Red Sea that no other nation or people ever have learned to sing. There is no other way to learn it. No man knoweth the Son, save the Father, and we none of us ever learn Christ as a Savior until that blessed Spirit that guides into all truth, takes of Jesus and shows unto his people. There is then a song of praise in their mouths that embraces that work of redeeming grace of which they are subjects. It is said that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things. I do not know of any other source from whence these good things may be obtained. And there is a kind of satisfaction in feeling the assurance when we speak of these things, that we speak that we do know and testify of things that we ourselves have seen and felt.

Yours to serve in the gospel,
E. RITTENHOUSE.

MACOMB, Ill., Dec. 20, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST:—I feel too unworthy to thus address you, yet I feel like writing a letter again by way of loving remembrance. I read your sweet, precious epistles, in each number of our dear paper, and they cheer

and comfort me along life's uneven way. O, how I prize this blessed medium of correspondence, by which we can hear and hold sweet converse with those of like precious faith. My heart goes out in love to all the dear ones whose names I see, each telling in his or her own language, all the way the Lord has led them; how he has brought them out of the mire and clay, and hath set their feet upon a rock, and hath put a new song in their mouth, even praise to his holy name. It is written that, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another," and when we cannot meet face to face, it is a great comfort to read of how the Lord is leading his people along, not always in the light, but more often in the night season, through trials, troubles, doubts and fears, temptations and afflictions, which are for the trial of their faith. While traveling along in the darkness, as well as the light, it is a comfort to know that we are not alone; but there are others who feel as we do, and we find company who cheer us, and help bear the burdens of the way. And were it not for speaking often one to another by tongue or pen, how selfish and cold-hearted we would become! how unmindful of others' sorrows! We would miss the joy we experience in hearing of others' joys and deliverances. I love to read articles on any scriptural subject, but most especially the experiences. I do not think the experience of a christian ends with baptism, but he has an experience of joys and sorrows, trials and deliverances, all along the journey of life. When a dear child of God is enabled by grace divine to go, though with fear and trembling, to their friends, (the church) and tell them what great things the Lord has done for them, we are made to rejoice, and love to hear and read of it. Perhaps no two are led

in the same way, yet they are all brought out by the same hand, saved by grace, and all ascribe all the glory to God, to whom all praise belongs. Nearly all that write tell a bright experience, or have had a clear manifestation of the forgiveness of their sins; have seen a bright light, or heard a voice speak unto them, and can point to a particular time or place when they realized a sudden transition from deep mourning to gladness and rejoicing. But, my dear friends, I have never been so highly favored, or so graciously blessed of the Lord, as most of my dear kindred in Christ have been, and there is also a feeling of sadness accompanying these bright experiences, and much of my time is passed in doubts and fears, for I often fear that I have been deceived, and have deceived those I love best on earth. This passage, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear," has caused me many trials and heart-searchings, for I cannot point to any particular time of my life when I felt a sudden relief from sin and condemnation. I heard no voice, saw no light. But if I ever met with a change of heart, if I have now a love for God and his people, it has been a gradual dawning in that way since I was a child. This has always been, and is now, a cause of many doubts, and it is with trembling and many misgivings that I write or speak of the reason of my hope in Christ. Elder Chick, you and Elder Speirs, of Iowa, have written very comfortably on this subject. When I was a little girl I would often listen to my dear father, (Elder I. N. Vanmeter) reading in the SIGNS, and I would wish I could be good like those who wrote their experience; but I felt to be such a sinner, and so unworthy, I should never think of such a thing as joining the church; yet many times while I was real young, I could scarcely keep back the tears, or come home from meeting without speaking, I was so drawn out in love to the people of God, and never had a love for any save the Old School Baptists. I believed that all must have a bright experience, and waited, hoping that if the Lord had commenced a good work in my heart, he would manifest himself to me. Thus I went on until I was thirty-three years old, sometimes mourning on account of my sins, at other times rejoicing, always loving to go to meeting, and enjoying the preaching. At this time I became so troubled about baptism I could see no peace. I felt I must talk to the church, though I had nothing to tell. After many sore conflicts the Lord gave me strength to go to the church. I only remember telling them I had no bright evidence of my acceptance with Christ, but I loved them and would love to be baptized, though I was most unworthy, and was a great sinner, and if saved it was by grace. I did not know I had told an experience, but was received without a question, and was baptized the next day; and right here I felt such a sweet peace that my doubts were all gone, and I was made to rejoice in God my Savior. I felt the Lord had blessed me, or I felt I had received a blessing in doing my duty; not for performing it, for all the acts of my life, were they ever so many, or good, could not in any way bring me into favor with God, or bring him under any obligation to think with love or compassion upon me. If I am one of that number of afflicted and poor people whose trust is in the Lord, it is by his grace, and not for anything I have or can bring as an offering.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." So I believe now that if we are enabled to come into the church with a feeling sense of unworthiness, a hatred for sin, and a love for holiness, having no confidence in ourselves, but realizing that all our help must come from God, and have a love for him and his people, I believe the promise is to all such. Why tarry without? come into the church, be baptized, and you will experience a rest and peace you will never feel in disobedience. No, dear halting one, you will never see yourself any better, but the longer you live, and the more you grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth, the plainer you will see your sins and imperfections. So glorify your Lord who hath done so much for you. I have never regretted uniting with the church, but feel to thank my Savior that he gave me strength to discharge my duty, and though I still have many doubts of my personal interest in the blood of Christ, and am made to daily mourn on account of my sins and shortcomings, and cannot see of what use I am to the church, and am unworthy of their love and fellowship, yet I could not be persuaded to leave them, or return from following after them, for their God is my God, and their people are my people. We cannot all have Paul's experience, but there must be a doubting Thomas. We cannot all be strong in the faith, as many of those away ahead, but some are weak in the faith; some have weak hands and feeble knees; some must be the "hindmost ones." But the promise is to all such. Doubting Thomas was made to believe, the "weak in the faith" were to be received, the feeble

knees strengthened, and such that are of a fearful heart be strong. So, dear one, if any such there be who like myself go doubting and stumbling along, I think we have cause to be thankful, for to have the love and fellowship of my dear kindred in Christ, is of more price to me than to have the applause of the whole world. To be a meek and humble follower of Christ, and live worthy of his cause, is my greatest desire. To see peace and harmony in the churches, and see brethren dwelling together in unity, is a cause of rejoicing with me, and it is also a cause of deep sorrow to see or hear of discord or strife among the people of God. O that God would visit Zion with his presence, causing all strife and dissensions to cease, and may all his children love him as he first loved them, and gave himself for them. When troubles, difficulties, and striving about words to no profit, and all things which cause distress and mourning in Zion, shall cease, and the people of God return unto him and worship him in the beauty of holiness, "Then shall the ransomed of the Lord return unto Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." May the Lord hasten that time, and give to his ministering servants strength to proclaim the truth, and to contend earnestly for the faith. Let us strive for the things that make for peace. Let us live in peace, and attend our church meetings as often as possible. "I was glad when they said unto me, Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord." "One thing have I desired, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." O that I may ever love these things, and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called, in meek-

ness and fear. May God keep his people humble, and not be carried away with the vanities of the world, or the institutions of men. May God keep his children from error in these times of great spiritual darkness, and put their whole trust in him. I fear I have written much more than is interesting or comforting. Forgive me if I have.

Dear Elder Chick, your editorials are always very comforting to me. May God give you every needed grace, and long spare you to the comfort of his people.

With much love to all the household of faith, I remain your unworthy sister in love,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

“JESUS WEPT.”

DEAR BRETHREN:—This verse (John xi. 35), is the shortest and most expressive in the Bible. There is a volume of meaning in it. That the bereaved sisters of Lazarus wept, is not remarkable, nor that the Jews wept in sympathy, for it is human to weep when death severs loving kindred and friends; but the touching words, “Jesus wept,” fill us with solemn wonder, for he says, “I came down from heaven.” He is Jehovah, Lord of heaven and earth, the God of the holy prophets, the Almighty. Yet this Holy One wept! “He groaned in the Spirit, and was troubled.” How strangely awe-inspiring is this! For this weeper was separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. Isaiah said of him, “He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.” But the prophet again beheld him stricken with grief, as at the tomb of Lazarus, and in the garden, when he prayed with strong crying and tears, and says of him, “His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” The Son of God in tears! Let

us bow low our heads in sorrow and surprise. Well might the prophet 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?” The answer is, “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” This is Jesus, who wept. His mighty power to save was beheld when he said, “Lazarus, come forth,” and in every word of his saving power. For in his word there was and is all power, both to make alive and heal. Why, then, should this Holy One weep? The answer is found in these words, “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” So, then, God’s “holy child Jesus,” is a man, and the Son of man, as truly as he is “the Son of the Highest.” Therefore John says, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, * * * full of grace and truth.” It was this God-man that wept. As a man, and as our Brother, Jesus wept. For us he wept. Our sins made him weep. He came to save his people from their sins, and to put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. Therefore he must needs suffer and die for his brethren who were in the world, and so deliver them from this present evil world. “Having loved his own that were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” As the Son of man, Jesus the Son of God, was our Brother in the flesh, as we are his brethren in the Spirit as born of God. Therefore he is not ashamed to call us brethren, and he loved us even as the Father loved him. In this mutual kindredship and oneness in brotherhood, Jesus was the “Brother born for adversity,” and was touched with the feeling of our infirmities; for God anointed his

Son Jesus to be the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. Hence Jesus Christ the righteous suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might put away our sins and bring us to God. So he was and is one with his people and brethren, and their cause is his cause, and in all their afflictions he was afflicted.

Lazarus was dead. Jesus had gone to him. The sisters were in great sorrow. Jesus saw and knew and felt it all. Their sin and suffering, death and sorrow, were his with them. So with them he wept. They were under the law, and he was one with them under the law; they were in the flesh, and he came to them in the flesh; they were sinners, and he was made to be sin for them, that he might take away their sins; the sorrow of death was upon them, and he sorrowed with them unto death. "In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." In this oneness and fellowship with his brethren, Jesus was tempted in all points like as they are, yet without sin, for he knew no sin; yet he bore the sicknesses and sorrows of his people, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. How touchingly was this manifested in the sickness and death of Lazarus, and the consequent sorrow and weeping of Martha and Mary and Jesus; for while he weeps with them as their sympathizing Brother and suffering Redeemer, he banishes sickness and death, and they and Lazarus rejoice with him in his life and glory. Jesus came to them as their sorrowing Brother on the earthly side of the boasting grave, that with them he might weep, and for them die; but anon they rise up out of sickness, sorrow and death,

and go to him on heaven's side of the grave, and lo, Jesus is to them the Resurrection and the Life! Sorrow and weeping flee away, and now, behold, both he and they are glorified together, and their joy is full! Thus shall the prophecy of John be fulfilled which says, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Blessed Jesus, how we love thee! because thou didst first love us.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Dec. 17, 1897.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Dec. 12, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter written by sister Attie Curtis, to the church at Bowdoinham, where her membership is. It was read at the conference meeting, Saturday Dec. 11th, 1897, and we felt we would like to see it in the SIGNS, if you saw fit to publish it. She has such a wonderful gift of writing out the precious things that are in her mind, and this gift is an untold comfort and help to the church. Our conference meeting was a season of rejoicing to the few that were gathered together, for one came to us that we had been looking for quite a while, and we knew that God's work was being carried on in her heart, and now she has come forth without the smell of fire, for the form of the fourth has been with her. Sister Rideout could have taken a place among the most popular societies of the day, but she chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Your sister in hope,

ELLA RAYMOND.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Dec. 5, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—It has been some time since I met with you by letter, yet it has been a pleasant season to me. I did not give up seeing your faces last month until Saturday forenoon. I could not help feeling disappointed. I thought perhaps there was no conference or meeting, but when brother Clough told me there was, I cannot express the gladness I felt in my heart. It does make me rejoice to know the Lord gathers a few in the name of Jesus, and enables them to speak one to another, of the exercises of their minds. You heard the gospel in its purity from one whom the Lord has called and qualified to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. How blessed we are as a church! I hope the Lord will fill our hearts with love one for another, and make us tender-hearted, and give us words to speak which will edify one another, and things which will make for peace. Both the conference and preaching meeting have been of special comfort to me this summer and fall. Peace and prosperity has been in our midst. Each has esteemed others better than self. We have heard that name which is most precious to us exalted above every name that is named. The power of God has been declared in the salvation of his people. I have thought of it very much lately, how blessed I was in not being obliged to go to any of the meetings around me, and have to listen to those who proclaim man's power above the one they call God. I cannot be satisfied with such preaching, no matter if they do say a good many good things. It is no food to me unless the flesh and blood of Jesus is set before me. I am glad I have the privilege of writing to you when I cannot come and see your faces. I can write of this same Jesus, and tell you he is my

hope of salvation, because his precious blood cleanses us from all sin. He did not die to make a way possible for us to be saved, if we would accept, but he did die to save his people from their sins, and he finished the work. His glorious work of redemption is our theme, and will be as long as we dwell here in these sinful bodies. The name of Jesus is more precious than all this world contains. I often find myself singing,

"Jesus I love thy charming name,
'Tis music to my ear;
Pain would I sound it out so loud
That earth and heaven might hear."

How good the Lord has been to us to make us trust in him so we cannot be moved by any wind of doctrine. He has established our hearts in the truth; made us prefer Jerusalem above our chief joy, so "For our brethren and companions' sakes, we say, Peace be within thee." We do love one another for the truth's sake, with that love which he has shed abroad in our hearts. He has revealed Jesus unto us as the Savior of sinners, and we are complete in him. We have found the name of the Lord a strong tower, have run into it and was safe. We have found the darkness and the light are both alike to our God, and we cannot flee from his presence. He knoweth our downsitting and our uprising, and understandest our thoughts afar off. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us. It is high, we cannot attain unto it. How good it is that we can meet together and speak of the wonderful works of our God. How he leads us about and instructs us. How he makes darkness light before us, and puts the new song into our mouths. How he seems to hide himself from our view, and we are filled with fears and great sorrow. We cannot find him whom our soul loveth, and we go bowed down with sin, feeling we must surely perish.

But we cry unto the Lord in our trouble, and he delivers us out of our distresses. He makes the waves still, and we are brought to our desired haven, and are glad. How beautifully the one hundred and seventh Psalm tells our experience. Notice the verse, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men," is repeated a number of times. So after every deliverance we desire to sing praise unto God. I hope you will have liberty in speaking one to another of the precious things of the kingdom. May God bless us all, and make us careful of one another, and cause his face to shine upon us.

Your sister in hope,

ATTIE CURTIS.

RIVERSIDE, California.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you the experience of sister Emily A. Hinshaw, whom I baptized into the fellowship of the North Fork Church of Old School Baptists, in Fayette Co., Ill., in the Little Wabash Association. Sister Hinshaw came from Sonoma County in obedience to the command of Jesus. The distance she traveled is a little over six hundred miles. She wrote me a good letter in August, 1895, expressing her great desire to come here, where she could enjoy the company of the brethren and sisters, and sent me a copy of her experience, which I will forward it to you, and hope that you will see fit to give it a place in the SIGNS.

A. H. HAGANS.

PETALUMA, California.

ELDER A. H. HAGANS—DEAR BROTHER:—I have felt for a long time that I wanted to write and tell you the reason of my little hope, but it has seemed so

little that I have put it off until the present; but now I will try to do so. I think that from a child I wanted to be a christian. I remember when quite small, of trying to pray, but as I grew older I thought less about it until I came to be in bad health, when I thought I would get religion. I tried, but did not get any better. I went to hear preaching, especially the Old School Baptists, but could not understand their preaching; yet I loved them, and would go to their church meetings in hope that some one would go to the church for membership. In 1872 I went to Coes Creek, and Eugene Carter went before the church that day, and how badly I felt! It seemed that there was no chance for me. I went home, and all the way I begged the Lord for mercy, but thought there was no mercy for me. Sometimes I would think that I would quit trying to pray, for it seemed that I only got worse. In 1874 I went to hear Elder Lawson preach. It seemed that his whole sermon was for me, and how it condemned me. I thought that he knew how mean I was, and my troubles were great. I could not enjoy myself at anything, and I would try to beg the Lord to show me what was the matter with me. In September of the same year, the Quakers had a protracted meeting close to where I was staying, and one night I went. That night there was an old lady that got to shouting and shaking hands, and she came to me and took my hand. It seemed that I should fall off my seat. I thought that if she was a christian, I had acted a lie in giving her my hand, and then I thought that I would show them that I was not a christian, and so kneeled down to be prayed for. I thought that I did need the prayers of christians, for I could not pray for myself. This only made me feel worse, for I thought

that I had committed the unpardonable sin in kneeling down there. I went home and never slept any that night. The next day I went back to the meeting, but did not go forward, for I thought it would only make my troubles worse. In October Elders A. Moran, O. Plasters, and dear old uncle John Jones, held a meeting, and I went to hear them for two days. I did not ask them to pray for me, for I thought they could not pray for such as I. My youngest sister had obtained a hope, but I did not know it till then. I was so glad that she had a hope, and yet I hated so badly for her to leave me. I got so that I could not eat nor sleep, and it seemed as though the very breathings of my soul were, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." In December she went to the church. I was there, and I can never tell how I felt. We both stayed at the same place, and Elders Denny and Jones stayed there also. That night they were singing, and I thought they all looked so good and happy. They asked me to help them sing, but I could not, for my heart was too heavy. The next morning, before we started back to the meeting, Elder Denny sang, "See how the wicked kingdom is falling every day." It seemed that he knew just how I felt, and sang for me. I thought they were all christians but me. I was not staying at home, and it seemed that I was all alone in the world. I was staying with a family by the name of Shore, about four miles from home, and when I went back from meeting I thought I could not stay one day longer. That week Mrs. Shore went away, and it seemed that I could not eat, nor sleep, nor talk. One day I went out to get some wood, and I thought I would run away, and get clear away, where I would never see any one again, and this came

to me as plainly as if some one had spoken it, You cannot escape the wrath of a sin-avenging God. I stopped, and after standing awhile I went into the house. I can never tell how I suffered in mind. On Saturday I heard that my nephew was sick. I thought then that this was what I had been troubled about, and that God was going to take him away from me, for my sins. I did not get home until Sunday. I ran all the way that I could, and all the way was begging the Lord for mercy. On Monday I went to East Bend after the doctor, and if ever I tried to pray, it was along the road that day. When I was within about two miles of the Bend, this passage of Scripture came to my mind, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I did not know at this time that this was in the Bible. Then I began saying over to myself, "The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I will not, I will not, desert to his foes." At once my burden was gone, and I felt so light and happy, but I did not take this for a change of heart. I thought it was to show me that my nephew would get well, and I never was troubled about his getting well any more. After I returned to where I was staying, I got to studying about my troubles, and found that they were all gone. I was not satisfied, and I begged the Lord for them back again, so that I would know more about how they had left me. I had my wish, and it seemed that they were worse than they were at first. All I could say was, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Lord, have mercy, Lord, save, or I perish." I wished sometimes that I was deaf and dumb, and then I thought, you can think, and your very thoughts are evil. I felt as though I did not have a friend in

earth nor in heaven. One day after Christmas I was going to the spring, and I felt as though every one had forsaken me, and these words came to me, "When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, then the Lord shall take thee up." I thought this could not be for me, for I had no father nor mother. In February, 1875, I got so that I could not work; I was trying to make a coat, and I could not sew, and at last I thought I was going to die. I wanted to go to my home, for I thought possibly I would get better if I could be with my aunt, and I asked them to send me home, for I could not work. They sent me, and I carried my burden with me. I could not get rid of it, go where I would. I was afraid to go to sleep or to be left alone, but I could not talk, and when the rest were talking, I was begging for mercy. I stayed at home two weeks, and went back to Mr. Shore's on the first Monday in March; and that night after I had tried to pray for mercy, I dropped off to sleep. I had not slept long before I awoke singing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." But the next morning the heavy burden was still upon me. I could do but little all day, and that night I tried again to beg for mercy, and then thought I would give it up, and not beg for mercy any more, for I was one that was to be lost. I thought, O Lord, thy will be done. All at once I felt so easy and calm, and this came into my mind, Jesus talked with the woman at the well of Samaria. It seemed that he was standing by the bed. I felt his presence so plainly that I opened my eyes to see if I could see him. But I could not see him, I only felt his presence. O how happy I was to feel that Jesus was with me. The next morning when I awoke everything was changed, and I thought I would never see any more trouble. That day my work was so easy. I was sewing, and the first thing that I knew I was standing up singing, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" &c. I sang the hymn clear through, and I thought I would go and tell Mrs. Shore what great things the Lord had done for me. I started, and got out on the porch, when it came to me, What have you got to tell her? and I turned back, but I sang all day. I could not keep from singing, still I did not take this for a change. During the day I was singing, "Sometimes a light surprises the christian while he sings." Then I thought, I almost know that I am a christian. I was so happy, but I could not rejoice out loud like some. I was in that happy frame for two weeks. I would read my Bible, and I could claim all the promises as mine. While in so much trouble I could not read the Bible much, for it condemned me. I loved to read it now, and I felt like I loved everybody, and especially the Old School Baptists. I thought them the happiest people in the world. But in about two weeks I began to doubt, and I feared it was all imagination. Then I would try to pray the Lord to show me in some way if I was deceived in this matter, and if I was, to undeceive me. I went up stairs one day and took the Bible, and knelt down and tried to pray with all my soul to be undeceived, and when I got up I opened my Bible to Isaiah liv., and O what a comfort it was to me, and is yet. When I get low down I will get my Bible and read that chapter, and I feel that I can claim it as mine. I had impressions to go to the church, but always felt so unworthy that I could not. I then thought, I will never tell it, for if I am deceived I will deceive no one else. I did not want to deceive so good a people as the Old School Baptists; but

when I went to the meetings, I wanted to be with them so much. I concluded I would not go to meeting any more, and I did not have any way of going very often, as I lived fourteen miles from the meeting. I never did tell this until seven years ago this last fall. I told Elders M. G. Harbor and A. M. Denny a little, but could not feel worthy of being with as good a people as they were. Six years ago last January I was at Round Creek meeting-house, in Surry Co., N. C. There were five preachers there, and it seemed to me that Elder Eli Caine preached the best sermon I ever heard, I could hardly stay away, but I did. On Sunday, after preaching, I felt that I could not let Elder Caine leave without asking him to pray for me. So at last I asked him to stop and let me speak to him, and I told him of my feelings, and I felt so relieved. But that was the last time that I ever had the privilege of going to the church, and I could not then. I have heard but one sermon since, and that was four weeks after this time of which I have just spoken. One week after that I started for California, where I have been ever since, and have never met a single person that even claims to believe the Primitive Baptist doctrine, much less to bear the name, and O, how I do long to see some good Old School Baptist again.

I remain your friend,

EMILY A. HINSHAW.

NEEDMORE, Fulton Co., Pa., August 21, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I herewith send you a letter that I received from sister Lizzie Himes, who has been sorely afflicted for a number of years, which I would like to see published in the SIGNS, if you think proper. I think it might be an encouragement to the servants of God to visit these poor afflicted ones who have

not the privilege of meeting with their brethren. I have long thought that there was too much neglect on the part of ministers visiting destitute places where there is no preaching. There are some churches which are so located that they cannot have regular preaching, and perhaps they are poor also, and not able to bear the expenses of a minister visiting them, and preaching for them. If such is the case, churches which are blessed with preaching, and who are able to assist in bearing the expenses of these ministers to go among the destitute, should do so, and no doubt they would receive the answer of a good conscience in so doing. See how this dear sister was carried above her afflictions for the time being, so that she no doubt could realize what Paul did when he said, I knew a man in Christ, whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth. How such an one was caught up to the third heaven. There is no doubt from the language of our sister, that she was so lifted up in her feelings that she did not realize her afflictions. Who is like to our God, strong to save and mighty to deliver? He has promised to be with his people even unto the end. He is not like the gods of the nations, who say that if we first love him, then he will love us, and if we cease to love him, then he will cease to love us. Our God says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." If my eternal life depends upon my work, then I am lost forever, for there is nothing good in me, that is in my flesh.

Your brother in hope,

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

AUGUST 6, 1897.

ELDER AHIMAAZ MELLOTT—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER:—You requested me

to write to you after the visit of our dearly beloved brother and servant of the Lord, Elder White. Glory be to God for sparing, strengthening, and bringing him safely here. We took the parting hand at 10 a. m. this day. I cannot keep silent. No! Never! The rocks would cry out if I did. Great was the power of God in blessing his visit to my comfort, and rejoicing, in Christ Jesus my Lord. If I only had some one to talk with of the precious things of the kingdom. But I have not, so will commune by the pen with you. My mind is so filled with power and majesty from on high that I cannot read, but must speak of it, if only with the pen. When our dear brother came I could scarcely wait to see him. I could only get to shake hands with, and tell him how glad I was to see him, before he was ushered down to supper. He came back after awhile for a short yet sweet conversation, when he again left to go to preach. My heart was very weak, and it hurt me to talk, but O, how soon was the hurt to be taken away, and I to be carried away on flowery beds of ease. I mention this not to complain of my distress of body, but to tell you of the blessedness of the Lord in bringing comfort, so sweet, so unspeakable, and so full of glory, to my troubled mind, and weakened body. He read from the sixth chapter of Ephesians, beginning at the twenty-fifth verse, and on to the end of the chapter. He had only spoken a few words till,

"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 doubt him again."

It almost seems that it cannot be that one so undeserving of the love of God as I, should be made so strong. I was not sick, No! No! I was made so strong and

felt O, so good. Can you understand me? My words fail to tell it as it is. The dear brother carried us along, telling us of the love of God for his people, binding us so close to the dear Lord, that we are bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. This is the way it reads, for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. O, how consoling it is to hear Jesus preached as he is, and not as man would make him to be. His love knows no beginning nor end. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. O, glorious thought, that his mind changes not. As our precious brother said, If he changed in thought as often as we do, what an awful God he would be. I see here in the twenty-second verse, "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." As our dear brother carried us along, connecting us with our husband, as is declared in this twenty-second verse, do you not see its beauty? Does he not there give us sweet consolation in the thought that we are willing to leave our brothers and sisters, and go with him who hath chosen us? If he be willing to take us, as he hath said he is, how much more willing ought we to be to go to the One who hath chosen us from the foundation of the world, and who saith that he will never leave nor forsake us, even if we are bowed down with the weight of sin, and feel unworthy to be called a child of God. Ought we not to be willing to leave all at the feet of our great Husband? If he hath chosen us, and we can feel his cleansing power, why stay we away because of unworthiness? Come, for he is the Vine, and ye are the branches. Come, for the branch is weak, and hath no root nor substance in itself, but groweth from the great Vine. The reason I mention this verse, is because in reading this chapter from which our

brother spoke, I saw so much beauty and consolation in it that my pen fails to describe it. How my heart yearns for the ripe clusters from the Vine. How the Lord opened my understanding, as our brother carried us along, giving us just as the Lord gave him. O, how I wish that I might sit often under the sound of such sweet music. But as yet we are only privileged once in awhile. My brother came up after services, asking how I felt, and all I could say was, O, so good. He also seemed built up. Then my sister Nellie came rejoicing in the glorious things of Jesus. Yes, they both know that the Lord is gracious. How my heart yearns within me that they may both be made willing to come to their blessed Husband, and leave all to his care, for he loveth them. I must also mention my dear husband naturally. He sat with me, and I could see that he also was being fed. After service he said to me, "When I used to hear Arminian preaching I was glad when they were through, but not so now, I could sit and listen all night.

"And if our comforts here below,
In Jesus be so sweet,
What heights of rapture shall we know
When round his throne we meet!"

But O, how sad to take the parting hand! I tried to keep the tears from filling my eyes, until he had taken his leave, but I could not. O, how joyful would those meetings be were it not that we must take the parting hand. But we know that if we are not favored to meet again on earth, we shall meet on the bright celestial shore, where parting is felt and dreaded no more. This is a great consolation to me. But why am I away from my kindred, where I cannot enjoy their company more frequently, and their words of comfort? I feel just now, O, if I might take the wings of the

morning, for then I would fly away and be at rest. I trust, if it be the will of the Lord, to attend the Association, where I hope to meet you all. I have tried to tell you of our meeting, and being together, yet I cannot tell the half. No, for my pen, all my powers, fail to tell it. But it is sealed in my heart, and given for sweet meditation.

I will close with love to you all who love the Lord. Pray for me. When you can do so, write to me, for I love your letters.

Affectionately your sister,
LIZZIE HIMES.

COTTONWOOD, Texas, August 26, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It is with much pleasure that I take my pen to write to you. I have often thought that I would write to the SIGNS, part of my experience. My father has been taking the SIGNS for quite awhile, and I have read them, and am very much pleased with them. I see so many experiences that I thought that I would write you a few lines with regard to my own. If you think it a christian experience, please publish it. If not, take no notice of it, and all will be well with me. It was in the year 1891 that I professed a hope in Christ, and united with the church in Callahan Co., Saturday before the fourth Sunday in August. I was received and baptized by my dear father. It was a glorious meeting indeed. Why they received me I have never been able to tell. I cannot tell you what I said to them, for I cannot remember. However, I presented myself and was received, with two others. I was only fourteen years of age. It has been a blessed thought to me that the Savior loves the young as well as the old, for he has said, "Suffer little children to come unto

me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." I had been troubled about dying, ever since I was eight years of age. You may think it is foolish, but it is true that I do not think that I am as good now, as I thought I was then. It seems often that I go astray, and wander away. I used to often ask my mother, "If I should die to-day, did she think I would be saved?" I would often repeat, "Have mercy upon me dear Father in heaven." I tried to pray, but I could not. I thought my prayers were not answered because he hears not the prayers of the wicked. I kept trying to pray, and I hope that he heard and answered. One evening we came home from meeting, and I began crying, after we arrived home, for I thought I was going to die. It seemed to me I was choking to death. I asked them to sing a song for me. I had never noticed the song before. But I opened the book, and there appeared to me the sweetest song I had ever seen.

"Suffering Savior with thorns crowned,
Bruised and bleeding, sinking down;
Heavy laden, worn and weary,
Fainting, dying, crushed and torn;
All for me, yes, all for me.

Jesus, Savior, pure and mild,
Let me ever be thy child;
So unworthy though I be,
Thou didst suffer this for me;
All for me, yes, all for me.

Fain would I to thee be brought,
Blessed Lord forbid it not;
In the kingdom of thy grace
Give thy wandering child a place;
O, bless me Lord, yes, even me."

"And when they had plaited a crown of thorns they put it upon his head." That evening I saw a star in the east, that was more than beautiful to me. I had never seen a star that shone like that. Then my mind was called to the Bible which speaks of the star that the wise

men saw when our dear Savior was born. This gave my soul comfort. And just after this I looked again at the star, and it seemed to shine brighter than it did before.

"O Father, may thy holy star,
Grow every year more bright,
And send its glorious beams afar
To fill the world with light."

After this I united with the church, and still am permitted to remain with them.

But I will close, lest I weary you with my illiterate scrawling. I hope to see this in the SIGNS, if you deem it fit to be published. So good bye for the present.

Yours lovingly,
ETTA GRIFFIN.

BOWERSVILLE, Ohio, Dec. 20, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have often felt as though I would enjoy writing you a few lines, and this morning I take the opportunity of doing so; hoping that I may not trespass upon your time. I do not know that I am worthy to be called a brother to you, although you feel very near to me. I do not feel disposed at this time, to go into the details, as to why or what is the cause of this nearness, but will just mention some few things, and leave them with you. I will say that I am a grandson of Elder George Reaves, (although we are not to know any one after the flesh in the family of God). There are some other ties which make manifest this heavenly relationship. You know that David says, in speaking of the people of God, this shall be written for the generation to come; and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord. For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; to hear the groaning of the prisoner, &c.

The doctrine of the SIGNS OF THE

TIMES seems to be much like the doctrine of the Bible, and I rejoiced to read it, believing that the truth is surely declared through its columns. The many testimonies of experience seem to harmonize with my own experience, and my heart seems to say that God can work, and none can hinder, he can open, and none can shut. He is his own Interpreter, and he will make it plain. Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counselor, or who shall first give to him and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and to him, and through him, are all things. Who can say more than this, "For by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God?" I feel like saying to the people who so believe, praise ye the Lord, praise his holy name, for such a living well of water. May the God of Abraham be your God, and Christ his Son, your Savior. Surely such good news and glad tidings will comfort all such as believe in his name. It was said, His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. For of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Then, as Paul says, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Too often we depend upon the wisdom of man, but our faith should not stand in this, but in the power of God. So I hope that it has been with me. He brought me out of a land of heathenism, and from among the heathen, into a land of light, to show unto me the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of me. I submit these remarks to do with as you think best for the welfare of Zion.

Yours in hope,

CHARLES E. MIARS.

HALLWOOD, Va., Nov. 7, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have felt that I would like to pen down some of my reflections upon the subject of love; the love of God, which is the most sublime subject that ever engaged the attention of mortals. Much has been written and said upon the subject, which can never be exhausted. It is higher than the heights above, and deeper than the depths beneath, and extends to the vilest of the vile. I do not propose to say anything new upon this subject, and if guided by the merrring Spirit of truth, I surely will not advance anything but what the people of God, even the very least of them, already know in their own experience. For, if I myself really know anything about the love of God, I know it only as it has been revealed to me, that is, made manifest by being shed abroad in my heart, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto me. We are told that love is one of the fruits of the Spirit. And we are constrained to believe this, knowing, as we do, that it is not produced by nature. For we all are daily taught to know, and made to confess that the very best impulses of our nature are impure and unclean in his sight. And the only way by which his children can ever be engaged in the labor of love, that is, serve him acceptable, with reverence and godly fear, is by being impelled by love. The love of Christ must constrain us in every act of true obedience that we perform. Let any act be performed ever so charitable in and of itself, yet, if the one performing it be not moved by the love of God in his heart, it is nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, and his act is not true obedience. O, how often the child of God is compelled to question the motive which prompts him. Am I doing this or that simply because it is expected of me, or

that I may not be considered odd or different from others, or that I may gain favor, or is it in any way for my own personal aggrandizement? Knowing that his very nature is nothing but selfishness itself, the child of God is often made to fear that really he knows nothing about anything so pure as love, that is divine love. But, dear one, let me say this much for your comfort, the hypocrite never is troubled in this way. All that he does he can view with complacency and satisfaction. He has all that heart can wish. His eyes stand out with fatness, and he is not troubled like other men. As a Pharisee, he pays tithes of all that he possesses, he does not feel himself unjust, nor does he extort, and he does many very wonderful works. Not so with the child of God, who feels that he must go lame and halt all his journey through, and who must continually confess himself a sinner, under the necessity of imploring the mercy of God. What matchless love he feels this to be, that God should in mercy remember so vile, so polluted, so wicked and so rebellious a sinner, as he. Surely there never was love like this. "For, for a good man some might even dare to die." This would seem somewhat within the bounds of reason to us, but for a man to die for his enemies, is beyond the comprehension of the natural mind. Our finite mind cannot grasp such love, any more than it can comprehend Deity. But sometimes when blessed of the Spirit, I am favored with some faint and yet sweet, glimpses of his love. Then are our souls made to adore and wonder. Can it be possible that such an one as I can be a subject of such love as this? Am I really an object of his everlasting love? If so, then with loving-kindness has he drawn me. Sometimes when we are made to take a view

of our past lives, and view all the way in which we have been brought, we are made to have hope. Surely, indeed and in truth, we can say, I have not come in a way of my own choosing, but by some power I have been brought by a way that I knew not, and have been led in paths that I did not know. Darkness has been made light before me, and rough places smooth, and crooked things straight. Surely it must have been the Lord who did such things for me. I was made to realize that no power but his could or would do such things. Then I am made to hope that he will never leave nor forsake me. His love knows no end, and like himself it is immutable. He has all power. And all powers and principalities are made subject unto him. He controls all things and events, from the very least to the very greatest. What then can harm the very least of his saints? As the apostle has said, "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."

But I will now close, by adding this, the year is drawing to an end. It has been my custom at least once a year to send in my little mite of testimony to the things that I dearly love, as I trust. I also hope and trust that it is this divine love that impels me to do so. I would

also offer you a word of encouragement and of approval, of the way in which you conduct our family paper, the SIGNS.

Dispose of these scattering thoughts as your better judgment shall deem best, and all will be right.

I am as ever your brother in humble hope,

MARTIN D. FISHER.

OPELIKA, Ala., Jan. 6, 1893.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Again I feel a desire to write a few words to the readers of the SIGNS, and do feel like I want to bless the Lord for its publication. I believe it gets better, and I feel sure it will grow stronger and stronger while it publishes such plain, sweet, solid doctrine, which tends to comfort, refresh and edify, the saints of God. I can truly say with Elder True, if what is published in the SIGNS or its prospectus is heresy, so worship I the God therein presented. I love strong, bold, good, solid doctrine, and I always expect to get it in the SIGNS. I must commend and indorse Elder Chick's "New Year Greeting," and say to brother Chick, Yes, we will pray our God to sustain you, and give you the needed wisdom to set forth the glorious truth of the gospel to the saints of God. We do earnestly hope that the SIGNS may be increased in circulation, and that its correspondents may be continued, and prepared of the Lord to write to the comfort and instruction of the saints of our God, as they have done in the past. How does God prepare them? By bringing them into darkness, and into light, through hungering and thirsting, doubts and fears, by showing them their own weakness, and his own mighty power.

It may have been I was in better condition to enjoy the SIGNS of the January 1st issue, but it was readable indeed to

me. I enjoyed it very much. Will look forth to the next issue, hoping I may be as well fed and as much comforted. For some time I have been in the dark, and under great fears that I was mistaken, and was deceiving the people of God, but whatever spirit possesses me, and however cold, and lifeless, and indifferent, and of no account, and sin-defiled I feel, I feel as though I must cleave to them. I feel like they are worthy, however worthless I feel myself to be. I have not attended a meeting since the third Sunday night in December; something unusual with me, but I feel like I want to meet the brethren; they will do me good, whether I can do them any or not.

May the Lord be with us this new year, and give us to see and know his great goodness, and take away that which blinds us to our best interests, while we pass our time here in this present world. God bless the editors, correspondents and readers of the SIGNS, and as brother Curry once said to me, as I was coming home from his section, when I asked him what I must say to his brethren and friends in the south, he said, "Tell them I say, God bless all the Old School Baptists."

Yours truly,

W. LIVELY.

HERNDON, Va., Nov. 4, 1897.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I am glad there are many who still contend for the doctrine of the predestination of all things. I have had some sweet meditations of late upon that subject. But when I come to put them down on paper, I am made to feel like a dear old sister that I once heard of, going to her Bible in time of trouble, to see if she could find anything therein to relieve her mind. She opened her Bible, and read a portion, which greatly relieved her mind.

So she marked the place by laying in a string, so that when she got into trouble again, she could go to the same portion and read it, and get comfort again. But when she went again to the same place, where she had placed her string, to be comforted, she found all the comfort that she had seen there at first was gone. "O," said she, "it must be that some one has removed my string." Dear brethren, such has often been my lot in reading the Bible, and in trying to put down on paper things which have appeared most beautiful to me in meditation. Like the dear old sister, I have felt that some one must have removed my string. Thus we see that it is not at our will, or at all times that we can receive comfort from the Scriptures at the hand of the Lord. It is here a little, and there a little. Now, with regard to the absolute predestination of all things, I must say, I believe it with all my heart. I do not think I could believe otherwise, should I try ever so hard. "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 trust you may long be spared to publish the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

JOHN F. OLIVER.

ANDERSONVILLE, Ga., Dec. 15, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER LIVELY:—I have just read your letter in the SIGNS, and it has done me so much good, I want to tell you my experience during the week after our meeting in October. I did not feel so happy on Saturday or Sunday, as some who were there said that they did. You say that you felt like shouting, and my mother said the same. But while I was very glad, O so glad that we had an evidence that the true God was with us, and had showered his love upon us, I was not

happy enough to shout. But after I got home from brother Clark's on Sunday evening, what beauty I saw. How wonderful that I could see so much, and understand so much, as I thought over your text, "In Jesus." Brother Lively, I do wish that I could tell you what a glorious sermon that was to me; but tongue cannot tell it. When I arose the morning after, I felt as though I was in a land far away from this earth. I sung all the week. My heart felt like a harp of a thousand strings all fitly tuned. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name forever, would burst from my very soul, two or three times a day. I would sometimes speak out, for I could not help it to save my life. I was in this happy condition until Friday morning about nine o'clock. I was then sewing, when all at once it seemed that I was carried to a high mountain, and looked all around, and there was nothing but space, and all was white as snow. Away as far as I could see there was a city. I knew that it was Zion, the city of our God. I seemed to be carried from the mountain to a hill, which was flat on the top, and how happy I was when I came to my natural senses. And it seemed that I heard a voice speak and say, "Fear not, little one, for lo, I am with you always. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." I shouted it out aloud. Dear brother, was this a dream? O no, I was sitting at the machine sewing. All the week previous I could not work. After this I was still, and all nature seemed to be standing still. Though that week was the week of weeks in my life, yet I have had so much trouble since, that I sometimes almost think it was all nothing. Still I would not have it blotted out for any amount of gold. I hope

that you will not feel that your time is wasted in reading this.

I remain your sister in hope,
E. J. RIVERS.

CARLISLE, Ohio, Jan. 9, 1898.

MY DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Will you please send my paper to Carlisle, Warren Co., Ohio, instead of Martin, Tenn.? In the providence of God I am removed from Tennessee, to this country. I came at the unanimous call of four churches, to succeed our dear brother Curry. We are so far pleased with the move, and feel that the hand of God is in the matter.

Please state in the SIGNS my change of address, so that my correspondents will know my whereabouts. Our precious brother Curry is now loosed from his churches, and is in Illinois, preaching the gospel of Christ. May God bless him wherever his lot may be cast. I hope to see you again some time this year, but if not, I hope to hear from you often through the SIGNS, and by letter.

Yours forever,
W. I. CARNELL.

THROCKMORTON, Texas, Dec. 2, 1897.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR FRIENDS:—If people had to be saved by the preaching of the gospel, this part of the country would sure be gone, for I have never heard the truth preached here. The country is full of, go to heaven on good works; pay the preacher and hear him tell how easy it is for the leopard to change his spots, &c.

Last year a Presbyterian got after me, and I asked him, "Why God loved Jacob and hated Esau?" He said I was mistaken about the way it read, and I got the Bible and read it for him, and the good man said, "Look here, you better quit reading that book." I said "And pay your preacher to read it for me? No,

no, I will not do that, I expect to read it as long as I can, and I am proud I am not trying to worship a God that cannot save me unless I will let him.

Not wishing to detain you or take up your valuable time, I will close. Pray for me when at the throne of grace, for I believe if I am ever saved it will be because God remembers my sins no more forever.

Your unworthy friend,
W. B. WOOTERS.

CHURCH NOTICES.

THE regular church meeting of Albany & Troy, is held every fourth Saturday in Albany, at the house of brother Schade's, 415 Canal St., and in Troy every fourth Sunday, at 10:30 a. m. in the Hall at Congress and First Sts. All visitors welcome. For they who fear the Lord love to meet together, and with the brethren that are scattered abroad, who can tell what the Lord has done for them. They shall come from the north and south, east and west, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. How good it is to meet here and there a traveler with his face Zionward, who like Noah's dove, can find no rest only in the Ark, Christ Jesus. What a mercy it is that there is a remnant that know they are lepers, and have to mourn and cry, Unclean! Unclean! till the God of all grace cleanses them from all their spots and stains, and says, "Go in peace." It is only these can return to give God glory, and these come with weeping and supplications, for the goodness of God in turning their captivity. We shall be pleased to meet any such characters who may be passing this way.

Your debtors,

F. CURTIS, Clerk.

377 CONGRESS ST., TROY, N. Y., Dec. 30, 1897.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1898.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as
Second-Class Mail Matter.**EDITORS:****F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.****B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.**

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

OLINGA, Va., Oct. 12, 1897.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—Will you be so kind as to give your views upon some portions of the first chapter of Ephesians? The special things that I want to know about are the following. Does the reading down to and including the twelfth verse, have reference to the twelve apostles? It seems to me that the pronouns us, our, ye, have reference to Paul, and those to whom he was writing. In verse twelve, the pronoun we, is not so clearly understood. I heard a perverter of the Scriptures not long ago deny that the saints at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus, were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, as is said in the fourth verse. He said that they were not chosen or elected until they believed, as in the thirteenth verse. He tried to make it appear that the words us, we, our, down to the twelfth verse, had reference only to the apostles. One point that I wish to know is this, who is included in the twelfth verse? "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." I desire that you will show the harmony between it and the preceding verses. Also the words in the thirteenth verse, "In whom ye also trusted." Please comply with my request at the earliest convenient time, and reply through the SIGNS. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for several years. I think that Elder Fred. W. Keene's article upon "Ho, every one that thirsteth," is sublime.

Your brother in gospel bonds,

F. MORRIS, M. D.

R E P L Y .

The portion of the first chapter of Ephesians to which our brother has especially called attention, is embraced in the first thirteen verses. It would be no doubt profitable for each one to carefully read this

wonderful chapter, and carefully consider the deep and sublime truths which it contains. In making a brief reply, however, it is not necessary to call attention to all that is contained in these verses, but to confine ourself to the questions proposed above. From childhood we were accustomed to hear the plain teachings of this chapter concerning election perverted just as our brother has said. There is a natural enmity in the human heart to the doctrine of personal election, and that salvation which is entirely of grace, because this doctrine throws away all human merit, and bases our salvation upon the work and merit of Jesus. It rejects the decision of the human will as having anything to do in this matter of salvation, and places it all upon the will of God. Election simply means that our God has chosen a part of mankind to salvation, and has ordained to pass by or reject the rest. It means that salvation is not because they who are saved are any better than others of the race of mankind, but that it is according to the choice of God, before any man was born, or before ever the earth was made. Election is simply the choice which our God saw fit to make of some of the race of Adam, who were all under sin, as well as others. It means that our God had no reasons for his choice of some rather than others, save that he would have mercy upon whom he would have mercy. If it could be proved that the election of grace was of persons, or existences, or spirits, or anything by which such an idea could be defined, who existed eternally before the throne of God, and that these existences come down to earth, and take up their abode in the hearts of some men, still it would remain to ask, How is it decided as to what bodies these spirits shall occupy, and what bodies they shall not occupy?

There would seem to be need of a two-fold election here, rather than one election. This theory arises out of hatred of the doctrine of election, just as the theory named by our brother Morris, does. One objector says, there is no election of men at all, and the other says that the election is upon the ground of foreseen good works, or else it is an election to some office, or position, or work in the church. All alike hate the simple doctrine that our God chooses some of the race of fallen men to salvation, while he passes by the rest, and leaves them in their sins. Man will boastfully claim that he has some rights which the God of heaven is bound to respect. This grows out of a denial of sin, and of its fearful consequences. Men are not ready to believe themselves sinful, and unworthy of the favor of God. Any right understanding of the position occupied by fallen man, as a transgressor, and as one who is justly condemned, leads inevitably to the doctrine of election. The state of man under transgression is such that an atonement must be made for his sins, and the Bible teaches that Jesus finished the atonement for his people. The sinner is said to be dead to God also, and dead in sin, and so he never would know his need of salvation, nor choose salvation. Therefore the choice must be the Lord's, and not his. No one can believe in predestination without believing in personal election. No one can believe in total depravity without believing in election. No one can believe in effectual calling without also believing this much hated doctrine. These are all cognate truths, and they stand or fall together. Therefore all who have believed in personal election, have also believed in salvation by grace, while all who have not believed in personal election, have rejected also the doctrine of salvation by

grace, and have taught that salvation depended upon some act of the sinner, or upon some decision of his will. They who reject this doctrine, exalt the creature, and say but little about the work of the Lord. They also, by denying this doctrine, declare that the Lord has done just as much for the lost, who are now enduring the pains of the damned, as he has done for those who are now enjoying the peace of the saved. This denial of election asserts that man determines his own destiny, whether for heaven or hell. Those who deny this doctrine have never felt the power of sin within them, nor realized the completeness and justice of their own condemnation. Every true christian experience has the doctrine of personal election involved in it. This will be shown at once if we will ask ourselves the question, Why did not the Lord irresistibly convict all others, just as he has some? The only reason that we can assign is that he did not choose to do so. And this is election carried out into actual experience. With these general remarks we will try to consider more closely the questions proposed by our brother.

His first question is, Does the reading down to the twelfth verse, have reference to the apostles alone? We have not the slightest hesitancy in replying, No. While it is true that the Spirit of the truth is more important than the form in which it is stated, yet we cannot know what the Spirit of the truth is only as it is revealed in the Scriptures. In the Scriptures are words which bear a definite meaning. The grammatical construction of the sentences of the word of God, must be governed by the same rules that would govern any other correct composition. Otherwise we shall be all at sea in reading the Scriptures, to know what they

mean. There is not a man in the land, who has any competent acquaintance with the English language, who, if given these first eleven verses of Ephesians to analyze and define, would fail to say that the words of the two opening verses, "Paul," "the saints at Ephesus," and "the faithful in Christ Jesus," did expressly limit and define all the pronouns "we," "us," "our," down to the twelfth verse. If indeed they do not thus define and limit these pronouns, then we shall look in vain for any antecedent for these pronouns. They stand in the text without, grammatically speaking, having anything to be sponsor for them. They are not defined nor limited at all. If the nouns in the first verses do not carry themselves forward in these succeeding pronouns, then these pronouns might just as well be said to mean angels as men, or the works of creation in some other direction. We are speaking now solely of the construction of these sentences according to the ordinary laws of our language. There is no more reason for supposing that Paul, in what follows from the third verse down to the twelfth verse, means to include himself, than there is for supposing that he meant to take in "the saints at Ephesus," and "the faithful in Christ Jesus." And it is not supposable that Paul would claim any more for these saints, than he would do for all saints everywhere, so far as the matters which he was considering were concerned. The words of the text then clear down to the twelfth verse, do relate to all who may be called saints, and the faithful in Christ Jesus. And what glorious things are here spoken concerning these favored characters. We would that time, and space, and ability, were ours to consider these things at length. One thing will especially arrest the attention of the care-

ful reader of these verses of Scripture. In them all the work of God is declared as being all, and in all, in the work of redemption. Read them all carefully; not an intimation is given that the hand of any man has aught to do in this matter. It is not even said that the man is active in receiving. It is declared here that he hath wrought a work for us, in verses three to eight, and from verses nine to twelve, his work in us is declared. Man does no work for his salvation, and he does no work in his heart preparing it for salvation. At least there is no such testimony in these eleven verses.

Now we will consider for a moment the use of the pronoun "we," in the twelfth verse. "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." The beginning of the thirteenth verse is, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth." There is certainly a contrast implied here between we, and ye, and we need not hesitate to say so, so far as its bearing upon the doctrine of election is concerned. Paul seems to us to teach that the apostles could claim no superiority over the rest of believers, so far as these spiritual blessings are concerned. If we, the early believers, he would seem to say, first trusted in Christ, it is also true that afterwards ye also trusted in him. In all the first eleven verses, he includes those named in the opening address. Now he recalls the experience of those who were the early disciples of the Lord, and then goes immediately on to say that what was true of them, was also true of those who had believed at Ephesus. The only pre-eminence that those who first trusted in Christ had over those who had come to trust in him at a later day, was that of being first in the order of time. The only reason that we can see why Paul

should limit the use of the pronoun we, in the twelfth verse, was that he would emphasize more forcibly the fact that the brethren at Ephesus had also come to trust in Christ. In this common experience consisted their fellowship in the Lord. Thus down to the end of the eleventh verse it is clear that Paul means to include all at Ephesus who were saints, and who were the faithful in Christ Jesus, as well as himself. This would take in all who belonged to these two classes, whether at Ephesus or not. We suppose that no one will be found to question that the saints at Ephesus enjoyed no special blessing above the people of God elsewhere. Then in the twelfth and thirteenth verses the apostle states the end of all this work which God had wrought for them, and in them. It was that those who had been the first to trust in Christ should be to the praise of the glory of his grace, and that those also who afterwards had heard the word, should also be to the praise of the same grace, having also come to trust in him.

We will close with a few words concerning this trust of which the apostle speaks. As Paul has been declaring what the Lord had wrought for and in his people, all along the preceding verses, so now he declares that they had come to trust their all in his hands. The Lord had done all, and they had come to trust in him to do all for them. Having been brought to trust in him, he declares that God should be glorified in them, and his grace magnified. To trust in him, is to honor him, because it is acknowledging him to be all that we desire, and all that we need. There is no higher expression of praise that can be conferred upon any man, than to have it said of him that all men trust him. Even so it is the highest praise to say that we trust in Jesus for

our salvation and our all. Believers trust in him to do the very things of which Paul had been speaking all along in this chapter; and to ascribe any of these things to the work of our own hands, is to detract from the glory that we ought to render to his holy name. It is all summed up in the words, "Salvation is of the Lord." We trust what has been written may be satisfactory to our brother, and to the readers of the SIGNS generally. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE WITCH OF ENDOR.

A BROTHER requests an expression of our opinion in regard to the witch of Endor, and of her bringing up Samuel; and what we write on the subject, we wish our readers to understand, so far as it is not sustained by direct Scripture authority, to be given only as our opinion. All human opinion is fallible; but what God has said in the Scriptures endureth forever. From a very early period in the history of the world we read of witchcrafts, sorceries, divinations and enchantments. That such things existed in the world, and that through them the superstitious were often captivated and led into idolatry, is certain; because we are so informed in the unmerring word of God. But to define the mysteries of iniquity, and explain the nature, power and extent of them, requires more knowledge than we possess. But it is our opinion however, that all the events which transpired in the old world, so far as God has been pleased to give us a record of them, were to some extent figurative of something which was afterward to be developed either in, or in opposition to the kingdom of Immanuel. Saul was king of

Israel, he had been anointed to govern Israel, and administer the laws as given by God himself to that people; and so long as he himself obeyed the instructions given by the Lord, he had the assurance that he and his house should enjoy the protection of the Lord. We are informed that Saul had disobeyed the Lord, and the Lord had withdrawn from him the evidences of his presence and approbation, and further that he had brought him into a very critical collision with the army of the Philistines, and when he surveyed their overwhelming number, he was afraid, and although he had asked counsel of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets, and in his extremity he commanded his servants to seek him a woman that had a familiar spirit, that he might go and inquire of her, and they directed him to the witch of Endor; and when he applied to her, she brought up by her witchcraft what appeared to be the person of Samuel, and the apparition talked with Saul, reproved him for his rebellion against God, and predicted his sudden death, and that David should supersede him as king of Israel.

We would cautiously avoid unwarrantable speculation on what is recorded in the Scriptures, but to our mind it appears that so far as the witch was concerned, all was simply witchcraft, and that God overruled the whole matter, as he does all other matters, for the accomplishment of his own purpose, in rebuking the rebellious king, and in alarming the officiating witch. That God should make the apparition of Samuel speak, is no more strange than that he should make the dumb ass speak with a man's voice, when he rebuked the madness of old Balaam. It is not our opinion, or understanding of the Scriptures, that witches or wizzards

have any power to disturb the silent slumbers of the dead, or that Samuel was in reality under any influence of the witch, or her enchantments, but that the whole scene was directed in the wisdom of God to answer his own wise and righteous purpose, not only in rebuking Saul, but also in furnishing a type of the witchcrafts, sorceries and delusions which should mark and characterize the man of sin in all his anti-christian forms and workings. The inspired writers in the New Testament frequently applied the term witchcraft, or terms equivalent, to the delusions and abominations which prevailed in their day, and in Revelation it is used in reference to the anti-christian beasts, to Mystery Babylon, &c., and the power they should manifest in the sight of men, to bewitch the people which dwell upon the earth. As the magicians of Egypt mimicked by their enchantments the wonders which the God of the Hebrews wrought by Moses and Aaron, so do the magicians of antichrist mock the children of the free woman. Neither Moses nor Aaron pretended that they had any power to perform those wonders only as God wrought by their hands, but the magicians could do all their lying wonders by their enchantments. It is the same in modern times. None of God's children entertain the idea that they can effect either their own, or the salvation of others, but nothing is regarded easier by the religious magicians of the present time, than to produce by their enchantments, (or instrumentality, as they call it,) the salvation of men. Some of them have declared it to be as easy performed as for one to turn his hand over. In the sight of men these wonders are performed, and to those who wonder after the beast, their lying wonders seem to be real, and they verily believe their revivalists have power

to bring fire down from heaven, or to raise not only dead sinners from the dead, and raise up prophets, but also, by their mummeries, to produce, call up, or procure, the presence of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, and wield the power of God, both in mercy and in wrath. They can, as they pretend, send the gospel forth and convert the heathen unto God, or launch the thunder-bolts of heaven on our congress at home. In the sight of the beast, and in the sight of a majority of men, these delusions pass for realities. By their mystic arts, they can supply any quantity of ministers, and bring them up, as the witch did the apparition of Samuel, and qualify them for any kind of service they can desire to be employed in. With them it is rank antinomianism, to acknowledge that men are subject to the high decrees of Jehovah, and that salvation is only of the Lord, that he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. The witch of Endor was remarkably modest in her pretensions, when compared with her sisterhood of the present day. She was alarmed at the result of her use of means, when she saw, or thought she saw, gods ascending out of the earth, but our modern witches pretend to bring gods out of the earth, and instead of being terrified, they exult in their achievements. What we mean by their bringing gods out of the earth is,

First. In producing by earthly power, that which in reality can only be performed by God himself. Jehovah has said, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." But from the flesh, which is of the earth, by the use of their enchantments, (or means as it is now fashionable to call them) they can produce salvation, and each of their earth-born gods in turn can effect the salvation of others, and so become saviors. In this modern witch-

craft they see gods ascending out of the earth.

Second. From the bowels of the earth they bring the precious metal of which their mighty dollar is composed, to which they ascribe the power of saving souls. Indeed we know of nothing that is specially and exclusively ascribed by divine revelation, to the living God, that they do not ascribe to these kind of gods which they see coming out of the earth. Doctor A. Judson, in his day, in plain terms, ascribed the eternal salvation of souls from the quenchless fires of hell, to the jewels of the American ladies, and the Doctor is regarded as an oracle by the whole fraternity of modern missionism. Did not the Doctor see gods coming out of the earth when he exclaimed, "How easy to conceive, from many known events, that the single fact of a lady's divesting herself of a necklace for Christ's sake, may involve consequences which shall be felt in the remotest parts of the earth, and in all future generations to the end of time, yea, stretch away in the boundless eternity, and be a subject of praise millions of ages after this world and all its ornaments are burnt up."—See Dr. Judson's letter to American ladies in 1832.

But there are other applications of the figure of witchcraft. The influence of Judaizing teaching on the saints in the Galatian churches, was regarded as witchcraft, and the saints which were contaminated by it, were interrogated, "Who hath bewitched you?" &c. The prophet Samuel told Saul, that to obey was better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams, but rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft. We have not the time nor space that might be profitably devoted to the consideration of this subject in all its bearings. We rejoice to know that

however the saints may be tried, perplexed, and bewildered by those who seek unto those who have familiar spirits, to witches, and wizzards that peep and mutter, old Balaam was compelled to acknowledge that no enchantment can prevail against God's chosen tribes. While the God-forsaken kings and rulers, and the hardened Egyptians, may seek unto witches, and resort to enchantments and sorcery, instead of looking to God alone for support, it is our duty and our blessed privilege to ask counsel of God, who giveth liberally to all men; and may we remember that it is written and "engraved as in eternal brass," "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed, but abideth forever."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., June 15, 1855.

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ON the last three pages of this number will be found an advertisement of Bibles of every description. All King James' version.

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THERE seems to be a misunderstanding with some in regard to the pamphlet, "Feast of Fat Things." A number have written us ordering one or more of the six articles named in advertisement, and sent twenty-five cents for each article ordered. To prevent further mistakes, we will say, the whole six articles are to be bound in one pamphlet, and the pamphlet sold for twenty-five cents for single copy; five copies for one dollar; twelve copies for two dollars; twenty copies for three dollars. All to be ordered at the same time, and sent to one address.

BACK NUMBERS.

We have run a number of extra copies of Nos. one and two, of this volume, and new subscribers received before the supply is exhausted, will be furnished with back numbers to first of current volume.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER A. B. Francis, having changed his residence from Willard, Va., to Delmar, Del., requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

Elder H. B. Jones, having changed his residence from West Mountain, Texas, to Mount Vernon, Franklin Co., Texas, requests his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

R E C E I P T S .

TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS"
TO INDIGENT SUBSCRIBERS.

Philemon Stout, Ill., \$4; Martin D. Fisher, Va., \$1; Jesse C. Ellis, Ohio, \$1; Lewis B. Ford, Mass., \$2; Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., \$5.25; Richard Waller, Mo., \$5.50; Amy Shadduck, Pa., \$4.40; A. McInturff, Kansas, \$1.—Total, \$15.15.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. S. Corder, at the residence of William Brown, Sept. 5th, 1897, T. B. Henderson and Miss Stella Brown, both of Taylor Co., W. Va.

By the same, at the residence of Henry Cumpton, in Grafton, W. Va., Nov. 11th, 1897, Mr. J. S. C. Henderson, of Marion Co., and Miss Lovena Linn, of Taylor Co., W. Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—Dec. 3d, 1897, at her late residence at Kenton, Del., **Mrs. Rebecca Ann Thomas**, in the 87th year of her age. For some weeks she had been a great sufferer, and for about two years had been unable to get away from the house. She was evidently a sincere lover of the truth, and among the most devoted and faithful attendants at our meetings. She evidently enjoyed the most profound respect and confidence of her many acquaintances, and although having long been retired, a large and solemn concourse of people attended at the funeral. No one ever questioned the sincerity and earnestness of her faith. The end was peaceful. She leaves no family, but leaves one surviving sister.

ALSO,

DIED—Oct. 12th, 1897, at his late residence near Newark, Del., **Mr. Charles Willard**, in the 85th year of his age. Brother Willard was a native of the vicinity of Southampton, and was baptized in the fellowship of Southampton church, by Elder D. L. Harding, who was pastor there at the time, Oct. 19th, 1862. I had then but slight personal acquaintance with him, but I knew him to be a spiritual-minded man, a firm believer in the doctrine and order of the Old School Baptists, and always enjoying the society and fellowship of his brethren. After some few years he moved to this County, about three miles from Wilmington. It did not take him long to find me out, and through me to find out the two churches that I served, that were in reach. After becoming thoroughly acquainted with us, he procured letters of dismissal for himself and wife, and they were both kindly welcomed in Wilmington. It seemed like a providential thing for us, as we were rather destitute at the time of male members. He was soon appointed to the office of deacon, filling the place with fidelity and abundant satisfaction until called to his final reward. For the time and the place he seemed to be just the man, and he used the office of a deacon well, and purchased to himself that good degree in the esteem and confidence of the brethren of which the apostle speaks. I feel warranted in speaking of this excellent man, to copy an extract from a private letter written to me after his decease:

"The church was to him the sanctuary of the Most High, and the love of the brethren was worth more to

him than the gold of Ophir, or the wealth of the seas. The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. But he is gone. The sweet influence of a holy life he has left. His simple childlike faith was stronger than flame or sword, for he would have suffered persecution unto death, did times and conditions demand it."

He has left a widow, (second wife) but no other family. He gradually failed, without any particular disease, under the weight of more than fourscore years. Such men are scarce in the churches, and in the world, and we hardly know the estimate that should be put upon them. They are comparable to fine gold, and their price is above rubies.

I feel to share with all the kindred, this bereavement.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

Sophia R. Reynolds was born April 29th, 1802, in North Bridgewater, now Broomfield, Mass. She was married to Asil Macumber, Dec. 2, 1824. To them were born ten children, five sons and five daughters, all of whom survive her except one daughter, who died in September, 1864. Her husband died May 6th, 1891, since which time she has lived with her son Columbus, and has spent her time mostly in her room by herself, her Bible and hymn book, and the SIGNS, being her chief companions while she could see to read. Her large type Testament was the last that she gave up reading. To the brethren when they would visit her, she would have some portion of the Scripture to suggest for them to read, and she would talk much of the resurrection, and of the oneness of Christ and his people. She experienced a hope in Christ at the early age of thirteen years. As near as we can learn, she united with the church at Jay, Maine, some time in the thirties. In her later years she would often say to her children, as they were about to retire, Sweet peace be with you. She often expressed a desire to depart and be with Christ. Two days before she died, she took her dinner as usual. She was conscious to the last, and passed away without a struggle or a groan.

The above particulars we have from sister M. K. Hubbard, of Wilton, Maine. We would add, that in our early ministry we were well acquainted with this dear, aged sister; and we can bear witness to her clearness and steadfastness in the truth as it is in Jesus. For about two years we were in the habit of conducting services at the home of herself and husband once a month. From thirty to fifty years ago the readers of the SIGNS were familiar with her name, as she was quite a frequent contributor for a time. We have never held any one in higher esteem than we did this aged sister. We can but be sad as those whom we knew in our youth pass away. But they are at rest. We sorrow not for this aged pilgrim, but for those who are left. May God bless and comfort her family. May their mother's hope and faith be theirs also, if it be the will of God.

C.

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Woman with the bloody issue. MARK, 6. *Raising of Jairus' daughter.*

25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment:

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up: and

this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

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Specimen of type.

Joab's artifice is

2 SAMUEL, I:†

bring Absalom home.

man that kept the watch lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came much people by the way of the hill side behind him.

35 And Jonadab said unto the king, Behold, the king's sons come: as thy servant said, so it is.

36 And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of speak-

B.C. 1030.

1 Ge. 27. 13.
1 Sa. 25. 24.

α according to the word of thy servant.

β with a great weeping greatly

8 And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee.

9 And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, the iniquity be on me, and on my father's house; and the king and his throne be guiltless.

10 And the king said, Whoso-

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Specimen of type.

Vision of the holy waters.

EZEKIEL, 48.

Borders of the land.

the ^β bank of the river were very many trees^α on the one side and on the other.

8 Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into^c the ^γ desert, and go into the sea: *which being* brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

9 And it shall come to pass, *that every* thing that lieth,^δ which moveth, whithersoever the ^ε rivers shall come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed;^ε and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.

10 And it shall come to pass, *that the* fishers^ζ shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-galaim: they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds as the fish of the great^η sea, exceeding^η many.

11 But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof ^θ shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.^θ

12 And by the river upon the^ι bank

B. C. 574.

^β lip.

^α verse 12.

^δ chap. 47. 15.

^ε Is. 35. 1, 7.

^γ or, plain.

^δ De. 3. 17.

^ε 4. 49.

^ζ Jos. 3. 16.

^η one.

^θ John 3. 16.

^ι 11. 26.

^κ two rivers.

^λ Ex. 15. 26.

^μ Ps. 103. 3.

^ν Is. 30. 20.

^ξ Mat. 4. 19.

^η Nu. 34. 6.

^θ Ps. 104. 25.

^ι Is. 49. 12, 20.

^κ or, and

that which

shall not.

^λ Je. 17. 6.

CHAPTER 48.

NOW these are the names of the tribes From^α the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus northward, to the coast of Hamath, for these are his sides east and west, ^β a portion for Dan.

2 And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Asher.

3 And by the border of Asher, from the east side even unto the west side, a portion for Naphtali.

4 And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Manasseh.

5 And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side, a portion for Ephraim.

6 And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side even unto the west side, a portion for Reuben.

7 And by the border of Reuben, from the east side even unto the west side, a

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Specimen of type.

Jacob goes down to Egypt.

GENESIS, 46.

The names of his children.

to the ^α commandment of Phā'raoh, and gave them provision for the way.

22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Bēn'ja-min he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.

23 And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden^β with the good things of Ē'gypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out^γ by the way.

25 And they went up out of Ē'gypt, and came into the land of Ca'nāan unto Jā'cob their father,

26 And told him, saying, Jō'seph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Ē'gypt. And Jā'cob's^δ heart fainted, for he believed^δ them not.

27 And they told him all the words of

Jā'cob and his sons: Reu'ben, Jā'cob's firstborn.

9 And the sons of Reu'ben; Hā'noch, and Phāl'lu, and Hēz'ron, and Cār'mi.

10 And the sons of Sim'e-on; ^α Je-mū'el, and Jā'min, and Ō'hād, and ^β Jā'chin, and ^γ Zō'har, a^δ Shā'ul, the son of a Cā'nāan-ite woman.

11 And the sons of Le'vi; ^α Gēr'shon, Kō'hath, and Mēr'a-ri.

12 And the sons of Ju'dah; Ēr, an Ō-nan, and Shē'lah, and Phā'rez, and Zā'rah: but Ēr and Ō-nan died^β in the land of Cā'nāan. And the sons of Phā'rez were Hēz'ron and Hā'mul.

13 And the sons of Is'sa-char; Tō'la, and Phū'vah,^α and Job, and Shīm'ron.

14 And the sons of Zēb'u-lūn; Se'red, and Ē'lon, and Jā'h'le-el.

15 These be the sons of Le'ah, which she bare unto Jā'cob in Pā'dan-a-ram, with his daughter Dī'nah: all the souls of his sons

^α mouth.

^β carrying.

^γ Ps. 133. 1.

^δ Mat. 12. 25.

^ε Juo. 13. 34.

^ζ Ep. 4. 31.

^η 32.

^θ his.

^ι Ps. 126. 1.

^κ Lu. 24. 17.

^λ 46.

^μ Ps. 85. 6.

^ν Is. 57. 15.

^ξ Ho. 6. 2.

^η ch. 21. 33.

^θ 26. 32.

^ι 33.

^κ ch. 25. 11.

^λ 26. 3. 24.

^μ 28.

^ν 31. 42.

^ξ Nu. 12. 6.

^η Job 33. 15.

^θ Ac. 10. 3.

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Specimen of type.

Numbering of the people

NUMBERS, 26.

in the plains of Moab.

16 And the LORD spake unto Mō'sēs, saying,
17 Vex¹ the Mid'i-an-ites, and smite them:

18 For they vex you² with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Pē'or, and in the matter of Cōz'bī, the daughter of a prince of Mid'i-an, their sister, which was slain³ in the day of the plague for Pē'or's sake.

CHAPTER 26.

¹ The sum of all Israel is taken in the plains of Moab. ⁵² The law of dividing among them the inheritance of the land. ⁵⁷ The families and number of the Levites. ⁶³ None were left of them which were numbered at Sinai, but Gilead and Joshua.

AND it came to pass, after the A plague, that the LORD spake unto Mō'sēs, and unto Ē-le-ā'zar the son of Aār'on the priest, saying,

2 Take⁴ the sum of all the congregation of the children of Iṣ'ra-el, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers' house, all that are able to go to war in Iṣ'ra-el.

3 And Mō'sēs and Ē-le-ā'zar the priest spake with them in the plains⁵ of Mō'ab, by Jōr'dan near Jēri-chō, saying,

4 Take the sum of the people, from

1 ch. 31, 2.
2 Co. 7, 11.

2 ch. 31, 16.
Re. 2, 14.

3 ver. 6.

4 ch. 1, 2, 3.
Ex. 30, 12.
33, 25, 28.

5 ver. 63.
ch. 35, 1.

6 Ge. 46, 8.

7 ch. 16, 1.

8 ch. 16, 36.
1 Co. 10, 6.
2 Pe. 2, 6.

9 Ex. 6, 24.

10 Ge. 45, 10.
Ex. 6, 15,
Jenui.

hundred and fifty men; and⁶ they became a sign.

11 Notwithstanding, the children⁷ of Kō'rah died not.

12 The sons of Sim'e-on after their families: of Ne-mū'el,¹⁰ the family of the Ne-mū'el-ites: of Jā'min, the family of the Jā'min-ites: of Jā'chin,¹¹ the family of the Jā'chin-ites:

13 Of Zē'rah,¹² the family of the Zār'hites: of Shā'ul, the family of the Shā'ul-ites.

14 These are the families of the Sim'e-on-ites, twenty and two thousand and two hundred.

15 The children of Gād after their families: of Zē'phon,¹³ the family of the Zē'phon-ites: of Hāg'gī, the family of the Hāg'gites: of Shū'nī, the family of the Shū'nites:

16 Of ōz'nī,¹⁴ the family of the ōz'nites: of Ē'rī, the family of the Ē'rītes:

17 Of Ā'rōd,¹⁵ the family of the Ā'rod-ites: of A-rē'lī, the family of the A-rē'lites.

18 These are the families of the children of Gād, according to those that were numbered of them, forty thousand and five hundred.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1898. NO. 3.

POETRY.

“THERE IS NO SPOT IN THEE.”

DEFILED though I am, and a sinner undone,
I have hope, and rejoice in the crucified One.
The blood of his cross speaketh thus unto me,
“Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.”

Often my heart aches o'er inward uncleanness;
I am wearied, I faint, I yearn for completeness;
Thy righteousness, Jesus doth say, is of me;
“Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.”

In myself I'm all blemishes, wrinkles and spots,
I have comeliness none, I'm a mass of vile blots;
The Lamb's precious blood is my soul's only plea,
And Christ in my heart says, “There is no spot in thee.”

A song I would sing to the Lamb on the throne:
Jesus suffered and bled, all my sins to atone.
How blissful, how sweet, is his sweet word to me,
“Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.”

O, I'm all imperfection, a vile, dark spot;
Unightly, I am one of the “things that are not.”
I'm sinful, I'm nothing, yet something I am,
Through the obedience, sufferings and blood of the
Lamb.

Amidst my temptations, my trials and grief,
Let the truth of the gospel my soul bring relief;
O speak to my heart, to a poor worm like me,
“Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.”

O, 'tis all through exceeding riches of grace,
That I stand all complete 'neath the smile of God's face.
The voice of the Lamb is such music to me,
“Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.”

The accuser whispers, Thou art a dark spot;
I am pained, I am shamed, I can answer him not.
At the word of my Lord he nonplussed doth flee;
“Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.”

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CITY WHICH JOHN SAW.

REVELATION XXI.

IN writing upon this subject I shall not undertake to tell of things as they shall appear after this mortal life is over, but of things pertaining to the experience of the saints, and the order of the church, in this mortal state. Though I do not expect to be found in accord with the wisdom of the world, and though I may in some things be at variance with the previous views of some dear brother, I hope to be so in accord with the Scriptures that “by manifestation of the truth I may commend myself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.” I shall not speak of the rich and precious materials of which this city is made as literal, nor shall I present its beauty and glory and immensity as appealing to the natural eye, or as intended to excite the wonder of the natural mind and call forth the desires of the natural heart, for I do not so understand their meaning. I remember the description of heaven in the old familiar hymn:

“Thy walls are made of precious stone,
Thy bulwarks diamond square;

Thy gates are made of orient pearl;
 O God, if I were there!
 "Thy gardens and thy goodly walks,
 Continually are green,
 Where grow such sweet and lovely flowers,
 As nowhere else are seen."

There is something that appeals to my admiration of the rich and beautiful in this description, and some pleasant remembrances of childhood associated with it in my mind; but I hope I have been made to long for, and that I have had some sweet foretaste of, a heaven very different from that, whose attractions are not in gold, and pearls, and garden walks, and flowers, not in things of earthly value and beauty coveted by the natural mind, but in such spiritual perfections and glories as can but faintly be represented to the faith of God's people by these brightest and richest things of earth; in the perfect love of God, and his infinite favor and blessedness fully experienced, free from every taint of earthly desires, sweetly swallowed up in the life and will of God, satisfied with the likeness and ineffable glory of Christ, and resting in supreme, unspeakable delight in the morning of an endless day, whose satisfying pleasures can never be described in any language of earth.

I do not think any of the scenes and occurrences described in this book of Revelation are literal, but that they are emblematic representations of the same truth of God which is taught in other forms in other parts of the Scriptures. As a plain illustration and proof of this, I ask careful attention to the first of these things which John saw, and of which he bare record. All will at once agree that the description of the one like unto the Son of man is not literal but emblematic. This whole book is, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to shew unto his servants things which

must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." The revelation of the Father's will in all things pertaining to the salvation of his people, both in the suffering and the joy, was first given to Jesus, and by him, as the Head, it is shown to his people in their experience. All the things that pertain to this salvation were signified to John through these wonderful emblematic pictures, persons, scenes and actions.

The first thing that John saw was the mighty, fearful appearance that was like unto the Son of man; not the person of Jesus as he appeared in the flesh, nor as he shall appear in glory, but an appearance in which his truth and salvation are emblematically set forth; and the last thing that was shown to the apostle was that great city that presents the finished work of Jesus in that mighty and majestic emblem of the church, the wife of the heavenly Husband, whom he prepared and adorned for himself, "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, that it should be holy and without blemish."

A little more particularly, but still briefly, I will notice the appearance described in the first chapter. First, there is a special preparation of the apostle for this view, as there is for the view of the last thing signified to him. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." This is the preparation that is necessary in order that any man may be able to hear and see spiritual things. This day is the day which the Lord hath made by sending his Son "a light into the world," in which his people "rejoice and are glad," and which Abraham rejoiced to see; and he saw it and was glad.—Psalm cxviii. 24; John viii. 56. Only on this day of the Lord,

only by his own light, can any one ever see Jesus the Son of Righteousness, and behold his wonderful works.

The great voice as of a trumpet is first heard by the apostle behind him, and it turns him around; for only the power of that glorious voice felt in the soul can turn even the apostle entirely away from self and prepare him for a perfect view of the things of God. The first thing he saw was the seven golden candlesticks, which are the seven churches. In their midst is seen one like unto the Son of man. It is only in the church that Jesus is ever seen or known. The garment of salvation clothes him down to the foot, and is secured to the body by the golden girdle of truth. His head and hairs are white like wool, as white as snow, as was also seen by Daniel in the ancient of days, showing his purity and strength in his goings forth from of old, from everlasting.—Micah v. 2. His eyes as a flame of fire, consume with one look all the vain works of men, while they confirm with holy joy the souls of his people, whose righteousness is of him. His feet, like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, seem to represent the church on earth, in the furnace of affliction, yet joined to him, their living Head, and to all the saints in glory, by his own eternal life. His voice as the sound of many waters, signifying, it may be, the great multitude of his redeemed among all nations, and tongues, and kindreds of the earth, from whom atises the voice of his testimony, for it is Christ in the midst of his people who testifies of himself, and sings praises unto his Father.—Heb. ii. 12. The stars in his right hand signify that all the gifts in the church are from him, and that he only can move and control them, and set their dominion in the earth.—Job xxxviii. 33. The sharp two-edge sword that went out of his

mouth is the word of God, and the countenance as the sun shineth in his strength is the shining of God in the hearts of his people, "To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. iv. 6.

I have thus suggested a thought concerning each feature of this wonderful description to more emphatically illustrate my understanding of the character of the teaching in this whole book; that it is not a literal description of things that ever have been, or ever shall be, but an emblematic presentation of the things which "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither which have entered into the heart of man," but which God hath revealed unto his people by his Spirit. These are the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, and they are always, as revealed to us, the objects of faith and hope, always before us, looked for, hungered for, reached forth unto, never fully attained while here below, but pressed toward, as "the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and soon to be fully realized by each one whose faith beholds them, whose hope reaches toward them, and whose love embraces them. These are "the things which must shortly come to pass."

"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 first heaven and the first earth were the legal dispensation, the laws and commandments of God being the heavens, and the people to whom they were given the earth. Moses thus addressed the children of Israel when he spake in their ears the words of the song that told of gospel blessings to come, saying, "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak, and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth." There was no warmth or

light in those legal heavens, and no life or righteousness could be given by them to that earth, that fleshly people. The Lord by the prophet Isaiah said, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." This is the gospel dispensation, in which all things are made new; new laws and commandments; new ordinances; a glorious Sun to warm and light up this new heaven and earth, even Jesus; stars that shall never fall; no dark and threatening clouds, but "bright clouds" from which the precious doctrine of salvation drops like the rain upon the new earth, upon the redeemed people of God, who are new creatures in Christ. What John saw was the perfect fulfillment of what the Lord had promised by the prophet Isaiah. He saw the new heavens of the gospel dispensation, which "declare the glory of God," and the tabernacle which he hath established in them for the Sun (Psalm xix. 4), the perfect gospel church. He saw the end of all the former things of the law, and also the end of all those "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," over which the spirit of wickedness had ruled, which were the waters he had seen but a little before; "For there was no more sea." While his admiring and enraptured gaze was reaching up far above earthly things, into the glory of the gospel heavens, the darkness of the legal dispensation, and the wickedness of antichrist, could no more come into his view than the shadows of night could remain in the presence of the noonday sun.

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned

for her husband." Although in Isaiah lxx. 17, 18, the form of language appears to imply that the new heavens and earth which the Lord would create were Jerusalem and her people, yet it is evident that in all portions of the Scriptures, where these terms are used with reference to the gospel, the term "heaven" has a more comprehensive meaning than the expression "new Jerusalem," so that the new Jerusalem, the gospel church in her absolute perfection, is seen coming out of that new heaven, and down from God. This is the tabernacle of God which is now declared by the great voice from heaven to be with men. It is the greater and more perfect tabernacle, of which Paul speaks to the Hebrews, not made with hands, of which the first tabernacle was a type.—Heb. ix. 8-11. The "tabernacle that shall not be taken down."—Isa. xxxiii. 20. The tabernacle which God hath set in the gospel heavens for the Sun of righteousness, who came forth from the grave, "As a bridegroom cometh out of his chamber, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race."—Psalm xix. 4, 5. The heavens in which this Sun has his going forth and his circuit, appears to present the infinite height, unsearchable depths, and immeasurable extent of the things of God, while the great city, which is the tabernacle of God with men, appears to me to present more particularly the doctrine and laws and ordinances and order of the church, as definitely shown in the New Testament Scriptures, in which the Lord's people are called to walk, and to dwell together in that "fellowship which is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Thus I understand the declaration of the great voice from heaven which John heard, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them,

and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." This is the form of new covenant language concerning the gospel church. The absolute perfection of the pattern shown here and elsewhere in the Scriptures, has never been fully reached by any church or individual on earth, perhaps, for there can never be such a degree of attainment in the things of God experienced and manifested while in the flesh, but that some higher degree of perfection will appear before us to be desired and sought after. Even the apostle could not rest satisfied in what he had attained, but was still reaching forth and pressing toward a higher mark before him, a more perfect apprehension and fulfillment of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, which was the one only prize his soul desired.—Phil. iii. 12-14.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." It has been thought that such language cannot apply to any condition of the Lord's people on earth, but must have been employed to describe the state of the redeemed in glory. That it is all true of the eternal state of the blessed, I believe, except the first, for there will be no tears to wipe away in heaven; and that it is hard to see the full application of such sweet words to the sorrowful and afflicted people of God in this world, I acknowledge, yet we find many things to consider in this connection which seem to enforce the understanding that these things are not here spoken of the state of eternal rest in glory, but of the gospel of Jesus Christ here in the world.

First. We do not find the Lord presenting the attractions of a future state as an

incentive to a righteous walk, nor the fear of punishment as a reason for avoiding evil. He implants within his people a principle of love for the one, and of hatred for the other, which becomes a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. Those who hate evil need no threats to make them turn from it. Their highest joy is to find themselves free from its bondage. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness need no flattering attractions to their senses to draw them toward the dwelling-place of God, and cause them to work righteousness in order to get to heaven. The thirst after righteousness puts out all other desires, and when Jesus is revealed to them as the Fountain of life and righteousness, henceforth their souls thirst for him, and follow hard after him.

Second. These things were spoken not of heaven, but of that great city which comes out of heaven; of that tabernacle of God which was seen, and is seen, coming down from God, and is with men. They therefore must have reference to the gospel state of the people of God here in this world, as contrasted with their state of legal bondage; and we shall see the same blessings which are promised in the words of the great voice heard by John, declared in other parts of the Scriptures as true of the gospel, and as the experience of gospel characters. The gospel is called "a joyful sound," and the people who know it are blessed.—Psalm lxxxix. 15. The Lord will make his people joyful in his house of prayer.—Isaiah lvi. 7. Jesus gives beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.—Isaiah lxi. 3. It is said of the redeemed, who shall sing in the heights of Zion, that "they shall not sorrow any more at all."—Jer. xxxi. 12, 13. The

dear Savior said, "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 26. Again he said of the believer, that he "is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. By the Scriptures here referred to, and a great number of similar declarations in the Bible which will be recalled by the reader, exemption from sorrow, pain and death are assured to the people of God under the reign of Jesus as King in Zion. Considering the figure presented in the nineteenth Psalm, he is the Son of Righteousness who has come into the tabernacle which was set for him in the new heavens, and fills that blessed atmosphere in which his people now "live and move and have their being," with the blessings of light and warmth and every comfort; expressed in such language as I have referred to, so that there is no element in those gospel heavens which can cause sickness, sorrow or death.

Third. When we are reminded of the sorrows and afflictions of the Lord's people in the world, we must also consider that these blessed exemptions from evil were not promised to us "as men in the flesh," but were spoken of as the characteristics of that tabernacle of God which is with men. We must seek in our own experience for the fulfillment of these things, the same as we must seek to find how and when the words of the dear Savior appear as belonging to us, that we who believe in him shall never die. They all are true in him and in us, but it does not appear to the natural understanding.

It is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, that these blessings are known by the people of God. In us, and in the world, there is darkness, but in Jesus, and in the gospel, there is no darkness at all. In us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing, but in Christ, who is our life, and in his church, which is the spiritual

home of his people, there is no evil thing. In ourselves we suffer pain and sorrow, and when we live after the flesh we die; but in Jesus and his church there is no more any pain, or sorrow, or death; and when we are in the Spirit we know the feeling of these blessed things in which we are above and separate from the world. When we feel our vileness, and see our weakness and wanderings, we mourn, and call upon God for mercy with bitter crying and tears, but when he grants us an entrance in the Spirit, into the inner sanctuary of this holy tabernacle of God, then at once our cryings cease, our sorrow is gone, he wipes away all tears from our eyes, and we sing in the heights of Zion.

There is an immeasurable distance and difference between the "former things" of the law, which have passed away, and the present things of the gospel, which we can clearly notice when we can attain in some measure to the spiritual reality of these gospel things, and are not left to be satisfied with the mere outward observance of them. This satisfies the "outer man," but "the inner man," "the hidden man of the heart," must have the substance, which is only signified by this outward work—must be clothed upon with the heavenly realities. When we are "at home in the body," feeling only our earthly house of this tabernacle, looking only at things that are seen, hearing only the letter in the preaching, seeing only the forms in the ordinances, then we have coldness, heavy afflictions, and are full of complaints and sadness. But when Jesus appears in all the works of our hands, so that they are established upon us (Psalm xc. 17), and we are clothed upon with our house from heaven; when we look at the things that are not seen, which are eternal, and feel to be "absent

from the body and present with the Lord," then our tears are gone, our cryings cease, our light affliction is only thought of as working for us, and in us, "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and we rejoice in the experience of these blessings which John heard declared by the great voice from heaven. Then for the time, and according to the degree of our experience of the heavenly things, "Mortality is swallowed up of life."—2 Cor. iv. 16-18; v. 1-8. When we have such an entrance ministered to our souls into the sacred and holy realities of the gospel works, then how low and cold and unsatisfying appear all the joys of earth, and all the gratification derived from the mere attendance upon the forms of gospel privileges and duties. This "outer man" work must be done, the letter of doctrine must be preached, and its ministration attended to, and the order and ordinances of the gospel must be observed; and there is an answer of a good conscience in all this work, whether we are walking in darkness, and having no light at the time, or not. But how poor and sad we feel when it is only outward work, and we cannot feel the presence of Jesus in it, clothing us with the garments of righteousness and salvation.

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful." The same Jesus, sitting upon the throne, revealed the same truth concerning the church to Paul, and he wrote, "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17. "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

Thus the dear Savior, sitting upon the throne of his glory in the gospel church, for "his throne is in Zion," announces to his servant that the work of salvation is finished and the church fully established in her gospel order. Whatever was the Father's will and purpose in sending his Son into the world, is now done, and during the gospel dispensation that accomplished purpose of love and mercy shall be unfolded to the subjects of his grace. Then his character as the author and finisher of the salvation and faith of his people is declared in that name that signifies the first and the last of all knowledge, the beginning and the end of all the works of God; and in one sweet and precious sentence is condensed all the riches and goodness of gospel promises, which shall fill the hearts of poor sinners with unspeakable joy. "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Who he is, what he may be, whether he asks or not—of these things no question is asked; not even whether he knows his need, or has a will to drink. Only one thing is questioned concerning him, Does he thirst? Then he shall receive of this fountain of the water of life. The Savior's word has passed. If he thirst, this water shall be given him; and to the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well the dear Savior said, "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."—John iv. 14.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan., 17, 1898.

DELAWARE, Ohio, Dec., 20, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Having been requested to write something for the SIGNS concerning the Sabbath, and my thoughts this morning being along that line, I have concluded to make the attempt. But it is with fear and trembling, fearing that I am not fit to write about such sacred and holy subjects. I know of myself I am not, but if it is God's will, he is able to cause the weakest of the flock to speak and write that which is comforting and edifying to his children. May he keep me from every false way, and let me write only such things as are according to the truth. "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." And, "There is therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me and gave himself for me." Let me give some reasons for not believing in the sanctity of the first day of the week, or Sunday. That it is not now, or never has been, the Sabbath. There was a time when I was very zealous in the worship of what the hosts of Babylon call the Sabbath, namely, the first day of the week (Sunday). And then also, when I heard the teaching of of the Seventh Day Adventists, I thought what they said about the Sabbath sounded plausible. But before receiving their testimony, I flew to the Bible to see if these things were so. At this time I was a member of the Old Baptist Church, but did not

know what they believed concerning the Sabbath. I believe God directed me to ask wisdom of him, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. While prayerfully searching the word of God, I not only found which day the Jews observed as the Sabbath, but I also found something else, very beautiful and comforting to my tried heart: that God hath given to his people a Sabbath (of which the Jewish Sabbath was the type), so glorious and beautiful, it can never be adequately described. I trust I did, in the same degree at least, enter into this rest, or Sabbath; and I trust that it was given me to understand the meaning of the Scripture quoted as my text. It seemed, and I hope it was true, that God stood by me, pointing to this passage and that, and unfolding it to my view, said, "This is the way, walk ye in it." I would love to be able to express my feelings at this time, and tell how beautiful God's word appeared to me; all linked together in perfect harmony. No wonder the hearts of the two disciples who journeyed to Emmaus, burned within them, when Jesus opened to them the Scriptures. As I said before, I did not know what others believed concerning the Sabbath, and when I read an editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, on the same subject, and found that I stood by the side of this blessed man of God, I was again comforted. But I must not say more about the effects upon me, but return to the truth itself. Let me first tell you why I do not believe in the sanctity of the first day of the week, or Sunday. First and greatest of all, it is nowhere in the Scriptures that I have found, referred to as being sanctified. The Roman Catholic Church, and some of her descendants, if not all, not only hold sacred the first day of the week, but the day of the birth, and also the day of the cruci-

fiction of Christ. Indeed one is just as sacred as the other. History proves that Sunday, the first day, was first pronounced sanctified by the authority(?) of the Roman Catholic Church, and naturally enough, her descendants, who include nearly all the religious sects of our country, excepting the Predestinarian Baptists, followed her example. I care not who believes in its sanctity, if it is my most beloved brethren, nevertheless I believe it is no more nor less than one of the idols of Babylon.

Brethren, let us watch and pray that we be not found worshipers of the beast; but that we have on all the armor of God, that we may be able to withstand the fiery darts of the enemy. I fear the time is not far off, judging from the signs of the times, when we will not only be troubled with Sunday idolatry, but there will be a union of church and state; when the different branches of Babylon will unite to make war against the saints. But comfort your heart with these words, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." If God be for us, we need not fear what man may do unto us. He preserved the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith, which is the gift of God, who also said, "As thy days are so shall thy strength be." The teachers of Babylon, and their followers, worship their obedience (?) to the law as much, and more, than any heathens ever worshiped their idols. And especially do they put great stress upon the sanctity of Sunday; and will hurl vile epithets at those who refuse to follow them; knowing not that by their pernicious works and ardent effort to save themselves and others, they are desecrating the real Sabbath, or gospel rest, of which their "Sabbath" is not even the type, as it is the wrong day of

the week. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." I know by experience, how hard it is to give up the worship of a day which we have all our life (whether it be short or long), held sacred. We have heard some argue that Christ changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week; but I have not been able to find the proof of it in the Bible, neither in history. According to the history I have read, Sunday was not regarded as sanctified until perhaps three or four hundred years after Christ. This was when St. Augustine, a dignitary of the church of Rome, issued an edict, that all men should observe the first day of the week instead of the seventh, as did the Jews: and inflicted terrible punishment upon those who refused to obey his commandment. The Catholics to-day, boast of this fact, claiming that it proves that the "church" has a right to change God's laws, for it did change the Sabbath law, and other churches sanctioned it. God forbid that we sanction it.

I have also read when and by whom, Sunday was first called the Lord's Day, but I do not recall it at present. Some say that it was on Sunday when John "was in the Spirit in the Lord's Day," but there is not one passage in the Bible

to tell which day of the week it was; but as Sunday is now called by some the Lord's Day, they take it for granted that he meant Sunday. As for me, I do not believe he meant any day of the week, but that he meant he was in the Spirit, carried forward to the day of the Lord, spoken of elsewhere, when the angel shall proclaim, "Time shall be no more," and the saints will be gathered home. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."—2 Peter iii. 10. Some think there is proof of its sanctity in the two other passages which speak of the disciples meeting on the first day of the week. There is nothing which proves that they met every first day; although they probably did have some day set apart on which to meet, unless they were together all the time. We Baptists now, have Saturday and Sunday both set apart on which to meet, but we do not regard Saturday as sacred. I hope the most of us do not so regard Sunday. The most of the Baptist ministers, at least with whom I am acquainted, deny the sanctity of the first day of the week; but it seems some of the private members have given the subject no thought. Why is this? According to the New Testament Scriptures, Christ and his disciples, until the time of his death, observed the Sabbath of the Jews. The old covenant was not yet ended. Of course Christ kept the Sabbath of the Jews, otherwise he could not have fulfilled the law for us. There are many passages to prove which day the disciples kept, but it is necessary to quote but one. Luke xxiii. 56; xxiv. 1,—“And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the

Sabbath day, according to the commandment. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared,” &c. It seems from the account given from that time on, they were not taught to observe any day above another. If I understand it, the most of the followers of Christ were Gentiles, who surely had not been in the habit of keeping the law of the Jews, and nowhere in the apostles' letters to the saints are they commanded to observe any day as Sabbath. Why was this? They exhorted them to good works, and reproved them for sin. Yea, reproved them for living after the law. If I am not mistaken, the apostles taught that the people of God, who are included in the covenant of faith, are not only released from suffering the penalty for sin, but that the law, so far as they were concerned, was at an end. “Christ is become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” It was taken away; nailed to his cross; therefore dead, ended, fulfilled. “What then, shall we continue in sin because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid; how can we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” We would not for one moment think that God's people are licensed to live in sin, neither do we believe they wish to so live. May I tell how I feel in this respect? Let me refer to the time in my experience when I thought hell was my portion, that there was no possible hope for me. I felt lost already. My heart went out in prayer to God, that if it were possible, he would release me from sin for the rest of my natural life. For I abhorred all sin more than I can express, and I longed to serve him whom my soul loved even then, though I verily believed he would soon cast me into the

pit where the beasts and false prophets are. He was altogether holy, and beautiful, and just. My punishment was the just reward for my sins. He could not, I thought, release me and remain holy. I would like to tell more of this, but will just mention the time when I saw Jesus, my Savior, suspended up on the cross, and saw a glorious and bright light reaching from the cross to heaven, and heard his voice proclaiming, "Your ransom is paid; your many sins are all washed away; I kept the law for you; it is finished, and my righteousness is yours." Need I tell you, that I now desired with all my heart to serve and praise him as long as I lived? Yea, for eternity! Did I, did you, when the Lord put a new song in your mouth, did you need to be told, "If thou sinnest thou shalt die?" Or was there not rather a new law, written not upon stone, but within your heart, which is love, from beginning to end? For love is the fulfilling of the law."

Dear brother Beebe, it is with much fear and hesitation that I send this to you, fearing that it might be of the flesh, in some part or other, but I ask you kindly to prayerfully consider what I have written, and if it be not found to be in accordance with God's word, do not publish it. I know that if Jesus has not revealed his truth, and led me, I am sure to be wrong. If it is published, I ask all who read it, to make a prayerful search in the Scriptures to see if I speak the truth. If not, I earnestly hope that you may not be deceived by it. May God pardon error, and bless his truth to the comfort of our souls, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

Your unworthy sister,

JOIE E. WICKHAM.

RIVER VIEW, Ala., Jan. 9, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have just finished reading the SIGNS for January 1st, 1898, and have been so filled and edified by its perusal that I can hardly resist the impression to "cast in my mite." It is indeed a "feast of fat things." Recently I have been called to pass through the "deep waters," and so filled with doubts and fears, and harrassing temptations, that I had just about given up, and decided that the best thing I could do, both for the cause and myself, was to sever my connection with the church, and speak no more in the name of the Lord. My pen fails in the attempt to even give an outline of my inward trials and temptations. I have felt that I had none to pity me, or to sympathize with me. That truly I was "one alone," and I even questioned whether I had any brethren or not. But in reading the SIGNS this morning, tears of joy trickled down my cheeks, and I was made to feel that the writers were my brethren in love, in Christ, in faith, in doctrine, in trials, temptations, persecutions, sorrow and afflictions, pity and sympathy, and I "rejoiced in spirit."

Elder Rittenhouse wrote a good letter about Joseph, and I feel that I have had some experience in the afflictions of Joseph, but I must believe that in many things Joseph is a type of Christ. His sojourn and sufferings in Egypt, seem to me to be a type of the sufferings of Christ, and the provision he made in the providence of God for his brethren before the famine came, seem to be a type of the provisions of the gospel made for the chosen of God, and his subsequent revelation of himself to his brethren, a type of the revelation of Christ to his people. If Joseph represented Israel, so did Christ, hence it is said, "When Israel

was a child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt." Joseph's "coat of many colors," dipped in the blood of the kid, seems to be a type of the shedding of the blood of Christ. Joseph was also sold for twenty pieces of silver. There may be preachers whose resources never fail, but I have the first one to see yet. I know of but one whose resources never fail, and that one is Christ Jesus the Lord. It would seem also that Jesus himself did not wear well in some places. In his own country where he was brought up, "He did not many mighty works because of their unbelief." Christ said, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country," &c. I think that the Scriptures fully demonstrate the fact that the people of God have not always appreciated those whom the Lord has sent unto them, but have often ignored, despised and rejected them, and even persecuted them. Sometimes the people of God are not in a condition to appreciate the resources that flow from the gospel ministry. The Israelites would never have appreciated the benevolence of Joseph in the absence of famine and hunger. I have not written the foregoing in a spirit of controversy at all, but simply to state some things that seem very plain to me.

It has seemed to me that this number of the SIGNS is full of good things. Here are letters from Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, Georgia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Illinois, New York, and even far off Idaho and Oregon, all testifying to the same things, and making our hearts to rejoice to know that we are not alone in the world.

I was real glad to read from the pen of Elder James True; that he is firm and unflinching in the doctrine of the predestination of all things. Somehow or other

I had gotten the idea in my mind that he did not indorse, or that he had modified, on that point of doctrine. Some I know that did once advocate that doctrine boldly that have now ceased from it. I am afraid that love of popularity, patronage, and a big name, has more weight with some preachers than the untarnished truth has.

Brother Edward Heard, of Covington, Ga., has a strong article in this number of the SIGNS on the doctrine, I feel like adopting the closing words of Elder True's article, viz: "I am in harmony of feeling with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Others may cast reflections as to heresies being published in its columns, but if it be so, I can say that after the way that they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, and so am I a heretic." The doctrine of the overruling providence and predestination of God in all things, has sustained me through many trials and temptations, and I feel that I could as easily give up life itself, as to give up that doctrine; and I am strongly of the opinion that this doctrine will sooner or later be made a test of fellowship among Baptists. For the past few days my mind has been much exercised upon the declaration of John the Baptist, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." This work of purging the floor is the Lord's work, and I believe it is going on now, and it will continue to go on till the floor (or church) is thoroughly purged of the chaff. The fan is in the Lord's hand, and not in the hand of Satan, and the fire with which the chaff is to be burned, cannot be quenched or extinguished. The fear with me is, that I shall go with the rest of the chaff. Another Scripture that was on

my mind when I awoke yesterday morning was, "For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." I may be wrong in my conclusions, but it seems to me that an element has crept into the church, which has more love and sympathy for the Arminians, than for the Old Baptists; and this element is continually finding fault with ministers who do not preach to please the world. It seems to me that it would be a blessing to all such, and especially to the church, if such would go where they belong, and where the preaching is more in harmony with their views. "If I yet please men, I am not the servant of Christ," are words of depth, and heart searching, to every true minister of the gospel of Christ. O that I could always feel like Paul: "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."

Here I will close, but not for want of something to write about.

In trials and afflictions,

H. J. REDD.

WAVERLY, Pa., Jan. 13, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE OLD STAND BY, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:— You will pardon my intrusion, I hope, upon your time, and for asking for a little space in your paper, if you see fit to give it, for me to answer several questions that have been propounded to me at different times during the past several years. I feel sure that I cannot fully satisfy my own mind in writing, for I never have, and I doubt very much whether I can satisfy the mind of my brethren and friends; however I will make the attempt.

The first question that I will notice is as follows, Is it right for Old School Baptist parents to send or allow their children to go to an Arminian Sunday School? I answer emphatically, No. In the first place, a real genuine Old Baptist has no fellowship for such institutions. Being Bible scholars, they know that there is no authority for them, and their own christian experience leads them away from all such antichristian works. How then can such ones consistently send or allow their children to go to such places? No, brethren, it is not proper or consistent to let your children go where you would not go yourselves, and if you can go to an Arminian Sunday School, and I do not know of any others in the States, and take part in, and enjoy them, you are not an Old School Baptist. How can two walk together except they be agreed? What fellowship hath Christ with Belial, or righteousness with unrighteousness, or what communion hath light with darkness? Sunday Schools cannot eternally damn a child, nor save a child. Salvation is of the Lord, but most children brought up in Sunday Schools believe that they have somewhat to do with heaven and happiness beyond. I have questioned a great many from eight to twelve years old, and almost invariably they have answered in the affirmative. I have also attended them, and know what they teach. No Arminians would allow their children to go where the doctrine of grace is taught, because they do not believe it; hence they are more consistent than an Old School Baptist that would send a child where false doctrine is taught. Every parent is responsible in a great measure at least, for the company their children keep, and when and where they go, up to a certain age. They cannot excuse themselves by saying they

cannot harm the child. Does believing a lie harm your child? If so, pray keep them out of Arminian Sunday Schools. As ye have received the Lord Jesus Christ, and his precious truth, so walk ye in him; be firm and uncompromising with error, in faith and practice. Brethren, I hope that I have answered the question so as to be understood by all.

Second question. In regard to granting letters of dismission to members, Elder Chick has answered this question plainly. No church has any lawful right to present a letter of dismission to the member, but such letters should be sent direct to the church where it is the desire to unite. Such letters are the individual property of the church, and can never be given to members, at least never should be.

Third question. Is it right for members to live in the bounds of a gospel church, and hold their membership ten, twenty or more miles away? No, no, no; such a course is virtually disfellowshipping the church nearest them, and eventually proves disastrous or hurtful in most cases of the kind. When members of churches that I serve, move in bounds of other churches, I urge them to carry their membership there. It makes no difference if our ancestors have belonged to a certain church for a thousand years back, we should know no man, or church, after the flesh. If I am right, and I think I am, then those that differ with me are wrong.

Fourth question. Is it right to license men to preach? I do not know; it is practiced everywhere among the churches, as far as I know, but I do not know that there is any Scripture authority for it. I think there should be some public acknowledgment of the gifts God bestows upon his church and people. One thing I do know, if the Lord calls a man to preach, he will preach, license or no li-

ense. The gift of a man (not license,) will make room for him. When there is a real preaching gift developed in a church, they are so delighted and rejoiced, that it goes like wildfire, much faster than the man can go with his license; and when he gets where the Lord designs him to preach, he stands before the people and reads (not his license) but his text, and preaches unto them Jesus. Hence he does not need epistles of recommendation, written with ink. The precious truth written upon the fleshly tables of his heart by the fingers of Almighty God, will recommend itself, and the speaker, to the hearts and consciences of the saints. God gave Peter all the license he had, I guess, to go to the house of Cornelius, and preach the gospel, and Philip to go and preach Jesus to the eunuch. I wish the brethren would write on this subject. I am afraid I am not straight on it. But I do not find any scriptural authority for licensing men to preach. I wish the brethren would call up scriptural authority for it, and not say as I have said, it is, and has been, the custom of the churches. Such argument has no weight with me.

Fifth question. Is there any authority for, as it is called, giving the right hand of fellowship to those that have been received manifestly in the full fellowship of the church, and have been baptized? I do not know of any; therefore I do not do it. I have asked several that do, and they say, "It is customary." Brethren that does not satisfy me, give me Scripture please. Custom does not prove things practiced to be right, even though they are a thousand years old.

Sixth question. Is the one that is really called of God to preach the gospel, anxious to be ordained, and called to serve churches, and baptize, and marry people,

and administer the supper? I do not know. It has not been my experience. I was not willing to be ordained; I have never been anxious to baptize. I have been anxious for some to be baptized, but always realize my unfitness to baptize, and always wish some other one might do that work. I am perfectly willing that others should do the marrying, burying, and administer the Lord's supper. I would get out of it all if I could. Real preachers may not feel as I do.

Seventh question. How is a man to know whether his gift is appreciated by the churches? By the hearty "Come and visit us when the way is opened, come again," &c. Brethren should be honest, and if they do not want a man say so; tell them plainly. You injure a brother by encouraging him to come, when you know he is not appreciated, or wanted. If I tell a man to come to my house, and at the same time do not want him, I act a lie. If every one would be honest with themselves, they would be honest with other folks. If a man has a gift to preach the gospel, he will not look for places to preach, but places will hunt him up. I honestly believe that many of them look for places to get out of the work, feeling so acutely their lack of ability or qualification for so great and solemn a work. I for one had sooner listen to a man whose bones ached to keep out of the pulpit, than one panting to get in it.

A strange sinner,

D. M. VAIL.

MANORVILLE, N. Y., Dec., 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have for some time thought about penning a few lines for your perusal, and have as often given it up. I esteem you too highly to intrude upon your time, and

yet I venture, and hope that God will give you grace to bear with me this one time. I have been made to ponder the path of life more or less for fifty years, and while I have been led to conclude that it was the good Spirit of the Lord that was leading me about and instructing me, I have also been exercised by the spirit of the flesh, or Satan, so that I could not do the things that I would. My trials and temptations at times have been such that like the fool I have said, "There is no God." Then again the evidence has been such that I could not doubt. In this way the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err. I have passed through and seen things that no less than a God could perform. At such times I could say, "Glory be to God in the highest." Then I have sunk so low that the tempter has said, "Where is your God?" But, blessed be God, he is always near in the trying hour, and always comes to my relief, and so I could answer, "Our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." So I sing,

"The Lord is my strength and my song;
The Lord is my life and my light;
His praises shall dwell on my tongue,
Though plunged in the darkness of night."

Thus he has not left me comfortless, but has come to me. While the past year has been clouded, and I have been in a lukewarm state for most of the time, now and then the Savior has appeared, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the One altogether lovely. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. I can call to mind a crumb which he dropped for me on purpose, as it appeared to me, at our Association, the last time that Elder Wm. Beebe met with us. His discourse was upon the twenty-third Psalm: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I

shall not want." I shall not forget that sermon as long as memory lasts. It seemed that the Lord gave me Benjamin's portion. And at our yearly meeting this fall, the vessel was more than full. My heart was overwhelmed, and tears began to flow, that I, so vile a sinner, should be beloved so. For the past few days my daily bread has been wonderfully magnified, so that my soul doth magnify the Lord. He hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad. It does seem that all things do work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And not a sparrow can fall to the ground without him. He assured his disciples that even the hairs of their head were all numbered.

"How condescending and how kind
Was God's eternal Son;
Our misery reached his heavenly mind;
In pity he came down."

I am much pleased with the SIGNS in its present form, and with the contents that it brings. It is like water to a thirsty soul. I desire that the Lord may guide you in the future, as in the past. May the trumpet give no uncertain sound. For a few days past I have been highly favored of God in receiving a few passages of Scripture which have been given me, and have caused my soul to leap for joy. I will quote a few that were given me. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Truly this is good news to the children, as they are the only ones who labor and are heavy laden. On the nineteenth of November, the seventh chapter of Daniel, and part of the tenth verse, which reads, "Thousand thousands ministered unto him," seemed to me wonderful. Truly the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. He has all power in his hands, and controls all things.

What then has the saint to fear? The eternal God is his refuge. In Revelation, fifth chapter, and eleventh verse, it is more fully described, "And the number of them [the angels] was ten thousand times ten thousands." It is wonderful, it is supernatural. The power, wisdom and grace of our God, was seen upon the mount of transfiguration also. It would seem to be sufficient for one who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and that his mercy endureth forever. The twentieth of November this was given me to meditate upon, "And call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." This was precious to me, as my mind was somewhat dark. I would to God that I might always do this, but alas, how different it has been with me until all else fails me. Then I must call on him. Then as he comes to us we must glorify him, and own that salvation is of the Lord. Then the seventeenth verse of the sixty-eighth Psalm was given me, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." This also magnifies his power. In Isaiah, chapter sixty, and verse thirteen, we read, "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, * * * and I will make the place of my feet glorious." Thus it appears to me that he has left nothing undone to comfort his loved ones, and show them his glory, as he has said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and filled all the house where they were sitting: * * * and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Truly the place

of his feet was glorious. So when our cup is full we also speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gives us utterance. November 22d, the sixth verse and seventh chapter of Songs, came to me, "How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!" I was almost caught up to the third heaven. I have not been in such an ecstasy of delight but a few times in my life. Truly he has made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father. And David in Psalm one hundred and four said, "My meditation of him shall be sweet." And so I have found it when the Master comes. But ere the twenty-third day was gone, my Beloved had departed.

In looking over the above scribble, I had concluded not to send it, but the case of the four leprous men came into my mind, and I opened to it where it says, "Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace." So I will send it to you. It may be that you can rejoice too.

I am as ever yours in hope,

D. S. E.

DECATUR, Texas, Nov. 15, 1897.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—As my subscription will soon expire, I thought that I would write you a few lines, and send two dollars for another year's subscription. It seems to me that I could not get along without them. They contain nearly all the preaching that I hear in the way of truth, as I live in a country where nearly all are taken up with idolatrous worship. They trust in an arm of flesh, instead of in the true living God; they put on a cloak of righteousness, but deny the power thereof; they say lo, here is Christ, and lo, there is Christ, wooing

and beseeching poor dead sinners to let him save them, saying that the whole matter rests with them, for the Lord has done all that he can do. But, dear brethren, I feel thankful to the great Giver of all good for the little hope that causes me to look to him as an all-sufficient Savior, without the works of poor, puny man. I know that if salvation depended upon any good works of mine, I should be lost, world without end, and my hope of eternal glory would be in vain. If ever I am permitted to enter that mansion of rest, it will be of free and unmerited grace, for I am too unworthy to claim any merits of my own. The good that I would I feel powerless to do, on account of the sin that dwells within me. If I have ever been made to feast upon the love of God, it is by grace, and grace alone, and not because of any obedience of mine. All that I ever tried to do, to bring about this salvation, was vanity and vexation. The love of God is not bought with a price, either money or obedience. But the love of God felt in the heart brings in peace and obedience, and makes us feel secure, while his banner over us is love. If ever I was made to feast upon his love it was at a time when I least expected it. It was when gloom and darkness were pressing around me, causing me to view myself as altogether unprofitable, and all my works as an abomination in the sight of God. But, dear brethren, I sometimes think that I have been made to rejoice in the love of God, while meditating on the sovereignty, goodness, and mercy of our Redeemer; believing that he will fulfill all his promises, and that there is nothing under the sun that can change his design, or alter his decree.

Dear brethren, if you will bear with me this time for intruding upon your valua-

ble time, I will try and not bother you with my poor scribbles any more. When I began, I thought that I would write but a few lines, and send my subscription for another year, for the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for it defends what I believe to be the truth, and it is a great comfort to me to read after its many able writers.

When it is well with you pray for a poor sinner.

Your brother,

M. B. F. JONES.

BOWDOINHAM, Maine, Dec. 20, 1897.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—As I have to send my subscription for the SIGNS, I will also send you a line as to our welfare. I have many times thought of you, and I am glad that you have been strengthened and helped to go on with your labors. I have been reading the letter of sister Wheelwright, from Dixfield, in the last SIGNS, and also sister Attie's letter. They both seemed full of the glory of the Lord. It seems to me as though they had said, the Lord hath triumphed gloriously. I must acknowledge that he has been full of compassion and long-suffering to me. How often have I been so unmindful of him that I have hardly dared to lift my eyes toward heaven. I must put my hand to my mouth, and my mouth in the dust, and cry unclean, unclean. Yet he has not utterly forsaken me, nor withheld his loving-kindness from me. Many times the words, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him," have come to me with sweetness. I always have felt that unless the Great God had been a God of love, and the blessed Savior, just the tender, suffering, precious One, that he is, I could not have been saved. He must be an all-powerful God, who can reach my case. I have no

good works to bring; "Simply to thy cross I cling." Of all his little ones, surely I am the most helpless. To the flesh this is mortifying. Naturally we want to be able to stand by ourselves. But the child of God is sometimes made to rejoice even in this weakness. How precious at times, to feel that he has been touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He was tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin. O yes, this is the Savior that I need. This is the Savior that I must have. It would not do for the Savior to do a part for me. I cannot take a step alone, in the right direction. The instincts and impulses of nature are downward. Salvation therefore is of the Lord. Jesus expressly says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." This is the testimony that helps the helpless, hopeless sinner. It is good news that God is a God of power. It is wonderful to feel that he is our lover, our shield, and our refuge.

But I must close now. My love to you all.

Your sister in Christ,

ANGIE J. THOMAS.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

THERE seems to be a misunderstanding with some in regard to the pamphlet, "Feast of Fat Things." A number have written us ordering one or more of the six articles named in advertisement, and sent twenty-five cents for each article ordered. To prevent further mistakes, we will say, the whole six articles are to be bound in one pamphlet, and the pamphlet sold for twenty-five cents for single copy; five copies for one dollar; twelve copies for two dollars; twenty copies for three dollars. All to be ordered at the same time, and sent to one address.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOB IX. 2.

"BUT how should man be just with God?"

No question has ever been propounded by man, which has involved deeper and more profound truths, than did this question of Job. The question was a heart-felt one. It arose out of a deep conviction of sin in the heart and life, and of condemnation on account of sin, and of a knowledge that by no means at his command could he be justified before God. The occasion of this question was this. Job had seemed to his friends to justify himself before God, and to indirectly accuse the Almighty with afflicting an innocent man. Bildad is recorded in the preceding chapter as saying in substance, that if a man were innocent he would be blessed of the Lord, and prospered. The Lord was against the evil, and conferred blessings upon the good. There was an appearance of truth in this. It seemed to manifest a great zeal for the honor of God, and also an earnest desire for the good of Job. Now Job replying to this says, "I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?" He says to Bildad in substance, that he had mistaken the matter altogether. What he had said might do for a man who was just and good, but such was not his con-

dition. The language of Bildad could be of no use to him, because he was not just, he was a sinner. His advice was good for a man (if such could be found) who had strength and righteousness to present before God, but how could it be of any help to him, who had no righteousness? Job would say to Bildad, that he was mistaken as to the whole matter. His advice might do for a good man, but how was a sinner to derive any hope or comfort from such advice? The question was not how it should be with a just man, but how shall a sinner become just before God? A man is in a pit of miry clay, and is sinking: all his strength is gone. A ladder is let down to him from the top, and he is told to climb out. He lifts up his voice in complaint and says, This will do for a strong man, who is able to climb, but of what help can it be to me, who have no strength? If this is the only way of salvation, then it can be of no use to me, unless it can be shown to me how I shall become strong. I know that if I could climb to the top of the ladder, I should find my feet upon the solid rock, and my goings would be established, but will you tell me how to climb, since I have no strength, and all my bones are broken? How shall I become strong? How shall I, a sinner, be just with God? Sooner or later this question comes home to the consciousness of every heaven-born soul. There comes to that soul a time of trouble, and out of that trouble great questionings arise. The trouble is because conviction of sin has fastened itself upon the conscience. The soul pleads guilty before God. The legality which dwells in every one by nature, and legal ministers, and friends, all unite to tell the soul that if it will only attain to righteousness, all will be right, all will be peace. As the soul realizes that the cause of all the trouble

is sin, so it realizes that which is needful to heal is righteousness. Then arises a struggle for this righteousness. Good resolutions and good works are sought after in the endeavor to attain to peace with God. The soul realizes more and more the hopelessness of this struggle, and yet feels more and more the need of holiness, if it would ever be at peace. And now the answer comes to the core of the question, I know that the good are blessed, but I am not good, and my sins stare me in the face, and with them I can have no rest. How shall I be just with God? This swallows up all other questions in importance. I must be just; how shall I attain to this state? The answer to this is found in the word of truth, the truth of the gospel, and is at last given to the experience of every such convicted sinner. When this answer is found, then rest and peace is found. As no rest and peace can be found until this question of questions is answered, how important it is that we find and are sure of the answer. The question of how shall a man find peace? is inseparably wrapped up in the other question, How shall a man be just before God?

First. The Scriptures teach, and every christian experience finds sooner or later, that it is in vain to seek for peace with God by methods of our own. Our own works cannot justify us; our prayers and resolutions cannot justify us. Faith cannot justify us, in the sense of this question of Job. Repentance and reformation cannot justify us. Now let us look at these things for a little. Justification is a forensic term. Literally it means a setting or making things right. It is signified by an even pair of balances. There must be equal weight in each side of the scale. If sin rests in one side of the scale, then equal righteousness must

rest in the other side. How shall a sinner then be justified? It is not how shall a just man be declared just, but how shall an unjust man be made just? Until a man comes to realize how great a sinner he is, and how bitter is the condemnation on account of sin, he cannot realize the awful solemnity of the question, How shall a man be just with God? Now, as said before, our good works cannot justify us. In the first place a sinner cannot perform good works, for as a sinner, sin must be mixed with all that he does; and it is manifest that sinful works cannot atone for other sinful works, and justify the sinner. Even if a man might come to perform good works, such as should be acceptable to the all-seeing eye of Jehovah, even these could not atone for past sins, and so justify the sinner. The law requires all our obedience of heart and life, and all the time of our lives. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy powers, is the unceasing rule of the law of God. There can be no lessening of its demands, and there cannot be a moment when these demands are not made. If then they are not met by the subject of these commands for one moment, this fall cannot be made up by any future extra effort, for as said by the Savior, all the powers are demanded all the time. Future obedience cannot atone for past disobedience. Even in the administration of our human laws this principle is recognized. The man who has violated no law for seventy years, is not therefore saved from the condemnation of that law if then he shall kill his fellow man. Seventy years of right living will not atone for this one transgression. The man cannot be justified by such right living.

Again, repentance will not justify the sinner. What is godly sorrow and re-

penitance but an acknowledgment upon his part that he has sinned? And though he may supplement this repentance with a hearty and honest confession, this will not justify him. In fact by this means the sinner but confesses to the justice of his condemnation. He who has this sorrow in his heart, which leads to such a humble confession, has no thought that this will be counted to him for righteousness. Sorrow for sin cannot atone for sin—cannot justify the sinner. Neither can faith justify, in the sense of the word which we are now considering. Faith justifies in the sense that it looks to the only source of justification. Faith in Christ is but a confession that there is no righteousness and no hope anywhere else. Faith is not a merit upon our part, which will offset our sins, and blot them out. Faith is the gift of God, and it always looks to the Lord Jesus for justification and salvation. It does not blot out our sins itself, but it does look to that work by which our sins were blotted out forever. The Scriptures present the matter of justification in at least three different lights. It is declared that we are justified by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; that we are justified by faith, and that we are justified not by faith only, but by works as well. This may seem upon the face of the record contradictory, but it is not really so. It is manifest that the Spirit of inspiration does not contradict itself. It is evident that men are not justified in the same sense in these three different ways. By the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, men are justified actually as in the sight of God. By the death of the Lord, divine justice against the sinner was satisfied. And his resurrection is the evidence and seal of this fact. We are now justified by faith when our faith sees this

great truth, and we come to know that we are justified in Christ. We are justified by faith in our own experience, but not actually before God. Now this justification felt and realized in our experience, through which we have come to look to Christ, and to find in him all that we need, must be lived out in the sight of others. This faith which looks to Christ and his salvation also works. It works by love. Works prove our faith, of what kind it is, even as faith looks alone to Jesus for salvation; and works done in faith are such as glorify God and magnify his grace. Such works are not done to save ourselves, but as the fruit of the work of God for us and in us. A man is not in any sense justified by works, if he is found looking to those works to justify and save him before God. On the contrary, such works prove his condemnation, and that he is still in his sins. Such works are works of bondage, while the works which show forth his justification through our Lord Jesus Christ are the free fruit of the divine life within. It has been well said that the christian does not work for life, but from life. He does not work for justification, but because he is justified and is free.

Now we will consider the way of justification through Christ. The New Testament answers this question of Job, and all that we can know concerning this way of salvation, we must learn from the Scriptures. From their decision there can be no appeal by any one who accepts them as the word of God, and as the infallible record of his will. We have never thought it worth while to spend much time in following human reason in this matter. The reasonings of the natural mind are not in harmony with divine wisdom, because the wisdom of men is finite, and cannot ascend to God. Human

reason would count the doctrine of the cross folly, and ever rejects the atonement. No man could ever of his own reason contrive the way of salvation. Human reason knows of nothing but creature righteousness to appeal to as a ground of hope. Men have spoken of imputed righteousness as imputed nonsense. Yet if there be any meaning in language, the Scriptures abundantly teach that the only way in which a sinner can be just, is by the imputed righteousness of another. Let us appeal to the law and to the testimony, remembering that whosoever speaks not according to this word, it is because there is no light in him. We will not quote many texts. One has impressed itself upon our mind for many years, as presenting the whole sum and substance of the matter. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." The whole of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah presents this same truth. This chapter cannot be understood at all, except upon the ground of justification through the imputed righteousness of our Lord. Such expressions as "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," and, "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," and, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," and, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin," and, "For he shall bear their iniquities," all teach this. Also see Romans iii. 25; viii. 32; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. i. 4; Heb. ix. 28. All these Scriptures are agreed in substance with the one first quoted at the close of the fourth chapter of Romans. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." These Scriptures all agree in presenting the work

and sufferings of Christ as the one ground of a sinner's hope. They answer the question of Job, at the head of this article, in the only way that it can be answered. They declare negatively that we cannot be saved by our own works, by our own repentance and faith, but by the justification that there is in Jesus only. Justification is presented as the great work needful to be done for us. In these Scriptures it is declared that there is but this one way of justification, and therefore of salvation. We can by no means help atone for our own sins. The blood of Jesus Christ alone can cleanse us from our sins. No man can be justified by the deeds of the law. There is no law that can give life. Righteousness cannot come by the law. These are all scriptural sayings. These Scriptures declare, if they declare anything, that we have no hand in this work of redemption, but that the crown of salvation must be put upon his head alone. We did not work out a righteousness of our own, but he wrought it for us; we did not die for ourselves, but he died for us. We did not bear our own sins upon the cross, but himself bare our sins. We did not receive the stroke, but he was beaten for us. Christ died for our sins, and for us, we did not die for ourselves. We had no part in this great work of redemption, justification and salvation, except to receive what he had done for us. Therefore we must ever praise him as the redeemed are said to do, saying, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name." This is the wonderful answer to the question of Job, "He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification." This is the grace which we are called to contemplate, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. The

giving is all his, the receiving is all ours. He who was holy, harmless and undefiled, and separate from sinners, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. If we ask for a reason for all this, the only answer which the Scriptures give is, that it was according to the will of God. If we ask why one is taken and another left, this again is the only answer. If we ask why Jesus came into the world, and died for those who had no merit, and no claim upon the mercy of God, we can but answer again, It was the will of God. The love of God is manifested in this, that he gave his Son to die for us. And the testimony which we must give while time lasts, and with which we must fill the portals of eternity, is this, "A sinner saved by grace." That our God chose some sinners to salvation, and gave his Son to die for them, and for them alone, and surely accomplishes their salvation through the atonement, has always been a hated doctrine. The rebellious heart of man is not willing to acknowledge the divine sovereignty and the right of Jehovah to do with his creatures exactly as he will. If we ask of the Almighty what he does in the matter of salvation, we hear him say, "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and whom I will I harden." And so in all this great work of salvation, if we ask why he saves as he does, the only answer we receive is this again, "I have so done these things because I will." This is our hope, that our God has chosen us to salvation, and that he gave his Son to die for us according to the Scriptures. This is, we are persuaded, the joyful hope of thousands of saints to-day, as it has been the hope of thousands in all ages. So grace is praised, and not our works, and Christ is exalted, and not the creature. C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

LUKE XVII. 1, 2.

"THEN said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

These words were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ, and addressed, as our text reads, to the disciples. The time when they were spoken, is indicated by these words, "Then said he," &c., it was, as we infer from the preceding connection, immediately after he had spoken to them in parables, in the presence of the pharisees, of the unjust steward, for which the pharisees derided him; and after a direct rebuke to them, he also spake of the rich man and the beggar. Having uttered these sayings, and spoken the parables which are recorded in the sixteenth chapter, "Then said he unto the disciples," &c. All that was said by our Lord must be full of interest to his people; but especially those things which he said to his disciples. He said many things to them by way of instruction, encouragement and admonition, but nothing unnecessarily. There is a weighty importance in every word that fell from his lips, and he has informed them that they who heard his sayings and kept them, were like a man who built his house upon a rock, which could not be moved because it was built upon a rock.

From the application which he made of the words of our text, and the instruction and admonitions which are recorded in the succeeding part of this chapter, we conclude that he spake of offenses that should come among them as his disciples, and not only in the time of those who were personally addressed, but unto his

disciples in all the subsequent ages of the church, down to the end of her militant state. That offenses should certainly come, and in a manner that would offend some of his little ones, is expressly declared, but the source from whence they should come is not stated in the text. Elsewhere in the Scriptures we are informed of the exposure of the saints, from the world, the flesh, and from the devil. "Woe unto the world because of offenses." "In the world ye shall have tribulation." If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but I have called you out of the world. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. The apostle has said, and every christian has a witness of the truth of his words, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Satan goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He desired to have Peter, that he might sift him as wheat, and we have reason to know that he also desires to tempt, annoy and perplex the family of God as far as he may be permitted. Many offenses from the powers of darkness were, at the very time that the words of our text were spoken, just ready to break forth upon the little flock of our Redeemer. They were not only to witness the derisions and reproaches which the pharisees were belching forth on their beloved Lord and Master, the treachery of Judas, and the final sufferings and crucifixion of the Redeemer, from their wicked hands, but they were themselves shortly to be scattered abroad, and by the violence of persecution to be driven into strange cities, that they might go everywhere preaching the word. The man of sin, that wicked man whose coming is after the working of Satan, was also to

be revealed in his time, when the *let*, by which he was then in that form restrained, should be removed, and he should come with signs and lying wonders; with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, &c. The development of antichrist, in all its beastly forms of dragon heads and monster horns, should drench the earth with the blood of the saints. But besides all the offenses and opposition which the saints were admonished to expect from without, they were to experience offenses among themselves. These disciples to whom the words of the text were spoken, as we see by what is said in the fifth verse, were the twelve apostles, and Judas was still among them, and numbered with them, and special allusion was had to him, in the words, "but woe unto him by whom the offense cometh." This was clearly realized in the night in which our Lord was betrayed, when Judas came with a band of armed men, to deliver him into their hands. The fearful end of Judas, shows that it were better for him to have a millstone attached to his neck, and be plunged into the sea; for without tracing him after his death to his own place, where he went, his suicide, and the manner of his death was even more shocking than would have been a death by drowning in the sea. But it is not our privilege to say that all offenses were to cease among the disciples even after Judas had performed his dreadful work. Paul, in his address to the elders at Ephesus, said he knew that after his departure, grievous wolves should enter in among them, not sparing the flock, and said he, "Even of your own selves shall men rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." The very rule of gospel order laid down as the law of his kingdom, in the third and fourth verses of this chapter, and immediately following

our text, as well as the rule of discipline given in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, shows that offenses should come among brethren. Hence the solemn charge, Take heed to yourselves. If they were secure from danger of offending one another, why this admonition? If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day and turn again unto thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. Not only the primitive disciples, but the saints in all ages have great reason to heed this admonition to forgive their penitent brother, otherwise they become themselves offenders, and may offend some of Christ's little ones. It is not enough when we feel perfectly satisfied that their turning and repentance is honest, sincere and genuine; but if seven times in a day he offend, and as many times in a day turns to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. This lesson is solemnly enforced by the divine Master, when he taught his disciples to pray, saying, "For give us our debts as we forgive our debtors." For, said he to them, If ye do not from the heart forgive them that trespass against thee, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. And the inspired apostle exhorts the church of God to be kindly affectionate one towards another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake had forgiven them. The children of God possess a carnal nature that requires to be closely watched, it is predisposed to resent injuries, and would seize a debtor by the throat, and say, "Pay me that thou owest," and even when the debtor entreats, saying, Have patience, and I will pay thee all, will not relent, but thrusts him into prison. O, may the disciples of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, take heed to themselves.

It is impossible but offenses will come. Ah! in a variety of ways. They may be introduced by false brethren who come in unawares, to spy out our liberties. And we are commanded to "Beware of men who come unto us in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves." But how shall we know such, that we may distinguish between them and those whom we are commanded to forgive? By their fruits ye shall know them. Their ministry never builds up the saints in their most holy faith; never feeds the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. Where the evidence has been clearly given that a brother or a sister has passed from death unto life, if he or she be overtaken in a fault, (whatever that fault may be,) ye that are spiritual, are commanded to restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.—Gal. vi. 1, 2.

"But woe unto him by whom they come." If the offense comes from an enemy, woe unto him; for, "The enemies of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them." And if this offense comes through a tempted child of God, there still is a woe, bitterness, sorrow and anguish of heart, more to be dreaded than to be drowned in the sea. Their transgressions shall be visited with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes, but the Lord says, "Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."—Psalm lxxxix. 31–33.

Seeing then that offenses must needs come, and that all the children of God are exposed to trials and temptations, while here below, how important it is

that we should watch and be sober; that we should put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another. If any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. Seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. But if we bite and devour one another, take heed lest we be consumed one of another.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1855.

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S E L E C T E D .

THE TEMPLE OF GOD AND IDOLS.

2 CORINTHIANS vi. 16.

[READER, the following are the utterances, fifty years ago, of a "Man of God," a faithful preacher and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the latter part of the last paragraph is remarkable when it is considered that one in "high places," notwithstanding her "Coronation Oath" to maintain the Protestant Religion, sent "a mass bowl" to the Pope, sent her congratulations to him upon the attainment of his "Jubilee;" also to one of his priests upon being made a "Cardinal" in London this year 1893.—D. F.]

Idolatry consists in carnal and material things being put in the place of God; I think that is summing it up in as condensed a form as I can. For instance, crucifixes, altars, holy water, transubstantiated wine,—putting these in the place of God is downright idolatry; and this fixes the stamp of rank idolatry on the hierarchy of Rome—I never call it the Church of Rome, for I do not believe it to be a church. The elevation of the host, as it is called, the consecrated wafer, said to be transubstantiated or change; the holy water, which, by the bye, some mock Protestants tell us commences that justification which is to be perfected by and bye; these are put in the place of God. Would you imagine that any man possessing common sense could write such ridiculous nonsense, such downright blasphemy against God, such rank falsehood, such contradictions to the plain statements of Scripture? What! material things produce spiritual effects! What! the gestures of my body affect the state of my soul! What! a bowing to the east more acceptable than a bowing to the west; as if God were not the God of the west, but only of one quarter, or one point of the

compass! If it were not for the wickedness attached to them, I should content myself with calling these things childish. But it is worse than this—it is devilish, it is studied idolatry. It is putting carnal things and carnal persons in the place of Deity; it is losing sight of justification by the grace of God to find it in material water; it is losing sight of the witnessing operations and life-giving power of the Holy Ghost to transfer them to a carnal priesthood; it is losing sight of the absolute sovereignty, sovereign decrees, and fixed ends and purpose of God the Father, to put the canons of councils and the traditions of the fathers in place of God's written word of revealed truth. If this be not idolatry, I know not what it is. I cannot help exposing these things in their most formidable character; and for this one obvious reason—a little while longer, a few steps further in the same course that professors have long been pursuing, and all these things will be palmed upon us by law, enforced by pains and penalties, at the risk of property and life, too. O! may God deliver our country from such a calamity! "Spiritual wickednesses" are already set up "in high places;" and there is scarcely a man to be found, who deserves the name of Jerubbaal to lift up his voice against Baal-worship.

Mark, further, all this foolery which I have just referred to under the head of idolatry, is an impious mockery of Christ. To call it Christianity is to give it a positive misnomer. Look in your New Testament for Christianity, and see there what constitutes the gospel "simplicity and sincerity," which the apostles exhibited in their lives, and which ought to characterize every man who calls himself a christian, and especially christian ministers, down to the end of time. If I put anything between my salvation and Christ, I im-

piously mock him. If I love to mention even the name of Peter, or Paul, or the Virgin Mary, along with Christ, I insult him as my Advocate, I insult him as my Intercessor, I insult him as my High Priest at the right hand of God. These matters are not to be trifled with. It is no innocent thing to multiply intercessors, when God has told us that there is "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." If I put anything along with Christ's merit, along with righteousness, as part and parcel of my justification and acceptance before God, I am an impious mocker of Christ. I learn from the precious Word of the living God that "he is made to me," and that of God the Father, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." If I want the wisdom of old free-will to match along with Christ and help him out, I mock him. If I want creature righteousness to put along with the imputed righteousness of the Son of God, I insult him to his face by telling him that his righteousness is not enough for me. If I put anything beside the new nature, add anything to the indwelling of Deity in my soul, I insult the Deity of Jesus Christ, for he is my sanctification. And if I break down the boundaries which God has fixed, and insist upon universal redemption as the Papists all do, I thereby trample under foot the blood of the covenant, count it an unholy and an inefficient thing, and dishonor Christ in that very act. This is idolatry. I speak against it now that you may be found against it; that you may never be mixed up with it.

O! mark, I beseech you, the delusive nature of superstition. They have not yet put it in its undisguised form before our country; but they are seducing her by softening down the expressions used,

explaining away the idolatry practiced, putting a fair form upon the things which are most obnoxious and hateful both to God and man; and above all, the most accursed delusion which has ever been called forth to aid Popery, has been that of Puseyism. While reserving to themselves the name of Protestants—though some of them daringly let it out that they mean to unprotestantise the country—but while reserving to themselves the name, and eating the bread of Protestantism too, these men are all the time Jesuits in disguise, seeking to set aside Protestantism, and to set up Popery in its stead. And O! what numbers of christians probably are beguiled by the mere sanctimonious faces of these men, by their pretense to long prayers, their setting apart fast days and feast days under different pretenses, their affectation of superior excellence of character, and holiness, and devotedness to God, as if they, and they only, had absorbed in their own bosoms all the spirituality that was left upon the earth, whereas it would puzzle all the opticians in the world to furnish us with a magnifying glass which should discover to us an atom of spirituality in them! Yet this delusion is going abroad and the whole nation is being poisoned with it. Multitudes are every day flocking to them so that I should not wonder at all to hear of a change at the court, a change in the palace, and a change in the constitution, making all over to Popery at once. O! beloved, if you love your life, if you love your Christianity, if you love your Lord, if you love your privileges, join with me in the cry, "Good Lord, deliver us from such calamities."

From a sermon by the late JOSEPH IRONS, 1843.

MARRIAGES .

By Elder T. M. Poulson, near New Church, Va., Dec. 1st, 1897, Thomas L. Parker and Laura B. Taylor.

By the same, at the residence of the bride's father, in Somerset Co., Md., Dec. 22d, 1897, Charles C. Hamon and Edith Bailey, both of Somerset Co., Md.

By Elder Wm. Grafton, Dec. 11th, 1897, Wm. P. Nesbit and Addie E. Runner, both of Lancaster Co., Pa.

By the same, Jan. 11th, 1898, Edward E. Dawson and Satie D. Lowe, of Cecil Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

THOU, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth."—Psalm lxxi. 20.

One hath said, and that by inspiration, that hope that is seen is not hope, and although the righteous hath hope in his death, yet it is often a trial to those left behind, to say, they are gone. Brethren editors, we come at this time asking a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to record the departure of sister **Albina G. Gregg**, in the 38th year of her age. Our sister was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., June 14th, 1885, by the writer. She was the only daughter of the late Solomon and Malissa Gregg, both of whom, as well as herself, were members of the same church. After the death of her parents, and the marriage of a young sister, who had for a long time lived with them, she left Fairfield, and lived with an aunt, her father's sister, in Philadelphia, Pa., where every kindness and unwearied attention was given. The deceased had been a sufferer for many years before the end came. I visited her but a few days before her last, and a more calm and patient looking for that blessed hope, I never witnessed. She was strong in faith, giving glory to God. Her remains were brought on to Rock Springs, and laid to rest beside her departed parents, June 20th, 1897, after some remarks by the writer. Four brothers remain, two of them so far from home that they were not able to be present. May the Lord prepare us for the change awaiting us.

ALSO,

We send a notice of the departure of **William Rowland**, of Liberty Grove, Md., in the 54th year of his age. So they go as a shadow that declineth. The deceased was widely known in his neighborhood, and much respected for his consistent and orderly life, and will be much missed by his friends. It has been my privilege to be often at his house, and have been much attracted by his expressions of welcome, as have others of the Baptists, who found a welcome there. He made no public profession, but I believe he thought

much on the subject, and was pleased with Baptist preaching. He was for several months previous to his death, afflicted with a distressing cough, and shortness of breath, which never left him. Being aware that his end was nigh, he expressed a hope that the Lord would call those he left, and closed his eyes in death. I was notified to attend his funeral on the 18th of January, 1898, the services being at the house, after which he was taken to Rock Springs, and laid to rest beside his wife, who preceded him but a short time. He leaves two sons and two daughters. The daughter left at home must feel more keenly her loss in her loneliness. We can say, as the dying father said, "May the Lord take care of them all."

WM. GRAFTON.

P O E T R Y .

JESUS OUR REFUGE.

To Jesus all his saints shall fly,
For safety to his breast;
Yes, in his name they venture nigh,
And ever shall be blest.

No sinner e'er is cast away
Who once hath loved the Lord;
Then let us still hold on our way,
And trust in Jesus' word.

If we have ever had a crumb
Of living, gospel bread,
We never can be overcome;
We'll live in Christ our Head.

Kept as the apple of his eye,
We evermore shall be.
"Although a mother may forget,
I'll still remember thee."

Let Satan then try every art,
He never can prevail,
A single saint from Christ to part:
God's love shall never fail.

Safe in the hollow of his hand
We day by day abide,
To Zion, Jesus' chosen band,
No ill can e'er betide.

He'll bring us safe to rest at last
Within that home above;
We'll lean our heads upon his breast,
And know that "God is love."

Then let us as we onward go,
His praises sweetly sing.
Still may his love our hearts o'erflow;
The fairest offering.

JOIE EKELBERRY WICKHAM.

DELAWARE, Ohio.

RECEIPTS.

TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS"
TO INDIGENT SUBSCRIBERS.

John Hobson, N. Y., \$3.00; Mrs. T. V. Richardson, Md., \$2.75; Mrs. L. Minott, Maine, \$1.00; T. A. Ardies, Ont., \$1.00; E. Rittenhouse, Del., \$1.00; A Hornbule, Mo., \$.75.—Total, \$9.50.

ORDINATION.

PURSUANT to a call of the Old School Baptist Church, of Little Creek, Sussex Co., Delaware, a council convened with said church at their meeting-house, in Delmar Del., on the 16th and 17th of November, 1897, to consider the propriety of ordaining brother H. C. KER to the full work of the gospel ministry. At which the following brethren were present.

Little Creek—Elders A. B. Francis and W. W. Meredith, Deacons B. B. Hastings and Leven Hastings, brethren C. W. Hastings, T. J. Hastings, J. L. Hastings, H. Culver, W. S. Marvel, J. J. Ellis, Elijah Jones, Chas. Lynch, C. C. Tomlinson, S. W. Kenney, W. N. Hearn, P. D. Lecates, Samuel Benson, A. T. Benson and Ananias Hastings.

Broad Creek—Deacon D. H. Boyce.

Salisbury—Deacon Geo. W. Meziek and brother E. S. Truitt.

Nassaongo—Deacon D. J. Staton and brother W. R. Morris.

Rewastico—Deacon H. J. Seabrease, and brethren H. Evans, Wm. F. Donaho and F. J. Bradley.

Forest Grove—Deacons L. W. Hastings and D. J. Parsons, and brethren G. W. Adkins, J. M. Bethard, D. J. Perdue, J. H. Parker and J. R. Layfield.

Indiantown—Deacon J. M. Adkins and brother L. A. Hall.

Snow Hill—Deacon Zed Truitt, and brother J. H. Truitt.

Messongoes—Elder T. M. Poulson and brother M. D. Fisher.

Cow Marsh—Deacon J. C. Gruell.

Wilmington—Elder E. Rittenhouse.

Southampton—Elder S. H. Durand and brother C. Fetter.

The council organized by the choice of Elder E. Rittenhouse, Moderator, and H. Culver, Clerk.

Brother Ker, by request, gave a relation of his experience, call to the ministry, and views of Scripture doctrine and gospel order, all of which was satisfactory. It was then decided to proceed with the ordination, which was attended to on Wednesday the 17th, in the following order:

Praise, and prayer by Elder W. W. Meredith; sermon by Elder S. H. Durand; laying on of hands by all the ministering brethren, and prayer by Elder T.

M. Poulson; charge by Elder E. Rittenhouse; right hand of fellowship by Elder A. B. Francis. Hymn and benediction by the candidate.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Moderator.

H. CULVER, Clerk.

CHURCH NOTICES.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I wish to correct an error in the short communication published January 1st, of this year. In a letter received yesterday from Goldendale, Wash., the writer says, There is a church at Mayville, Gilliam Co., Oregon, an arm of same meets at Lone, Morrow Co., Oregon.

This correction is deemed necessary that strangers traveling in the State may know where to find Primitive Baptists. The churches here are so far apart, and difficult of access, it is not strange that one unacquainted with their location should make such a mistake. I trust some of the brethren on this coast, who are constant readers and supporters of the SIGNS, will let us see their names, and hear of their travel along the weary way to a glorious rest.

With regard, and unworthily,

EDITH H. ACKLES.

LA GRANDE, Oregon, Jan. 23, 1898.

BOOK NOTICES.

I HAVE some of the Mary Parker books yet on hand, which I will send by mail for 55 cents each. I have about two hundred, and wish to save myself from much loss if I can. I also have some of my Meditations, which I will send for \$1.00.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Jan. 17, 1898.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1898. NO. 4.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JOSEPH.

IN the SIGNS of January 1st and 15th, appear articles upon this subject, by brother Rittenhouse, written with that thoughtfulness and care which characterize all his writing, and full of the good and profitable things which make his writing and preaching and conversation of such interest and value to his brethren. He is now the oldest in the ministry, in this part of the country, and his long experience in the service of churches, his clearness of view in his line of scriptural things, and his gift to express plainly, and illustrate definitely, his understanding, and his unfeigned interest in the welfare of churches and brethren, and for the good of the cause of truth, for these many years, entitle whatever views he may express, to the careful, respectful and brotherly attention of all spiritual readers. I believe the reading of these two articles has been of value to me. In the first one some objections are presented to the idea that Joseph was a type of Christ. I am glad he has presented them; it will bring the subject more definitely and forcibly to the consideration of

brethren. I, in common with many others, have regarded Joseph as intended by the Holy Spirit to represent Jesus in many things, in a typical way, and have so presented the subject, both in speaking and writing. As I wrote upon it for the SIGNS in 1874, and have written elsewhere within a few years, I did not first think of presenting my views at this time; but it is now upon my mind to express as briefly as possible my principle reasons for regarding Joseph as a type of Christ. And here let me say to any who may be apprehensive of controversy, with the evil effects that have been supposed to result from it at times, that we do not regard it as controversy. When we converse upon scriptural subjects, either socially, or in conference, or through the SIGNS, each presenting the various views that may occur to his mind, but for our mutual benefit. No one has any special views of spiritual truth which are regarded as personal property, and must be defended, and for which he claims honor; and if he had such patented property in his own estimation, his fancied rights would not be held sacred by the brotherhood, nor save them from rigid examination. No heated, bitter, personal

controversy, if any of our brethren desired to enter upon it, would be admitted into the SIGNS, I am glad to say. But, so far as I know the brethren of our correspondence, we have no wish to enter into debates with each other on scriptural subjects. We only want each other's views for mutual profit and comfort—at least such ought to be our only object—and we feel that we have a right to them. Brother Rittenhouse has done what he ought to do in giving his understanding of this subject; and as I have heretofore presented a different view upon the one point concerning the typical character of Joseph, if I still remain in the same mind, and have some thoughts that appear to confirm it, the brethren have a right to them for their consideration. The one thing to be regretted in such references to the writings of another is, that the things only are noticed in which we differ, while the many good things in which we agree must be left without special mention.

My reasons for regarding Joseph as representing Christ I will now express.

First. We are authorized to look for a presentation of Christ in some way in all the Scriptures, either typically, prophetically, or in parables. The testimony of Christ is not only the spirit of prophecy, but is the purpose for which all the inspired Scriptures were given. I do not understand that the Scriptures tell us directly who were intended as types of Christ. We know that some who appear very clearly as typical of his person and work in some part of their life and actions, are not directly said to be types, as Joshua, Samson, Hezekiah, and others. In the light of the New Testament Scriptures, the meaning of Old Testament things appears, and in having come unto Mount Zion we have "come unto the

spirits of those just men" of old "made perfect;" unto the spiritual meaning of what they did and said, as they were moved by the Spirit of Christ which was in them.

Second. The peculiar history of Joseph presents such a likeness to the things of Christ, and is of so unusual a character, that it appears to me as though the likeness and the recital must have been according to the purpose of God, to set forth in that typical manner "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." We cannot think that the Scriptures are occupied with the relation of personal incidents and histories because of the intrinsic interest of them, without reference to their relation to Christ. Let us notice some of these peculiar incidents and circumstances in the life of Joseph. The first-born of Jacob's first loved and best loved wife, though second in marriage, he also received the birthright of Reuben, the first-born of all the sons of Jacob, (1 Chron. v. 1, 2,) that he might in this respect also have the pre-eminence among his brethren; loved by his father more than all his brethren, and receiving as a token of this special love, a coat of many colors; dreaming and telling to his brethren prophetic dreams, in which his exaltation over them is foretold, and thus exciting their hatred against himself; sent by his father to see after them, and when one found him wandering in the field and said, "What seekest thou?" he said, "I seek my brethren;" taken by them with intent to kill him who had come for their good, but prevented by the intercession of one of them, who, although showing this tenderness, yet united with the others in concealing the crime from their father, and evidently shared in the price for which his brother was sold; suffering in the prison unjustly, until "the

word of the Lord tried him," and caused the king to release him; laying up corn during seven years of plenty for those who hated him, and thought him dead; occupying the most exalted place in the kingdom, next to the king, when his brethren are driven by famine to come before him, seeking to buy of his corn; his knowledge of them, while they knew not him; his rough manner of speaking to them, charging them with evil motives in coming down to Egypt, which, though not true, brought them under solemn conviction of conscience for a greater crime, known only among themselves, as they supposed, and confessed to each other with sorrow, without a thought that the man before whom they stood trembling understood what they said, much less that he was their brother against whom they had so terribly sinned; imprisoned three days, then brought out as an act of special mercy, given corn for their need, and sent back with supplies for their father and families at home, but with a command that must bring them back again with the youngest brother; the finding of their money in the mouth of their sacks, showing that whatever was received by them from him who was to represent Jesus in the gifts of his grace, must be received as a gift through love and mercy, and in not the least degree as paid for or merited; their second coming with a full surrender of all that was held dear by their father and themselves, and yet with no thought of any other way of getting the needed supply than by returning the former money, and also with money to pay for that now asked for; the manner of their coming before him the second time, the release of Simeon, the words of the steward, "I had your money: God gave you treasure in your sacks;" their astonishment that he should have them dine with him, and that he should have such knowledge of the age of each one; his deep emotion as they talk before him, causing him to enter into his closet to weep; his course with them in bringing them back as criminals, and Benjamin, who was innocent of their crime, as the worst of them, appearing to have stolen the divining cup, and thus condemned by their own judgment to die; their entire humiliation before him; the plea of Judah for Benjamin's deliverance, he having become surety for his return to his father; the final closing of this most terrible interview to them, by Joseph making himself known to them with that great outburst of tenderness, and love, and joy, which had been so long restrained, and the wonder and joy and fear of the brethren as they hear the wonderful words, "I am Joseph, your brother," and see in the man before them, who had spoken to them so roughly, and before whom they had been so abased and humbled, and consciously guilty, the very brother against whom their crime had been committed, and as they find that, instead of feeling hatred, and determining upon revenge, he felt only love, and tender pity, and a heart full to overflowing of joy, because he could see them again, and because he was able to deliver them from their suffering, and keep them during all the years of famine yet to come. Such a wonderful likeness as the poor sinner sees and feels in all this, to his own experience in being brought to a knowledge of Jesus as our Savior, cannot, it seems to me, have been without purpose on the part of our God. When thousands and thousands of the dear children of God have felt their own relationship to Jesus shown to them through this wonderful story of Joseph and his brethren; their sins against him; their felt

guilt before him; their efforts to obtain his favor by some merit of their own, and their disgraceful failure; their final giving up of all hope, and then the surprising and soul-enrapturing revelation of Jesus as their Brother and Savior, who has loved them with an everlasting love; how shall we say that it was not thus to set forth Jesus and his salvation, that this personal history was given by inspiration of God? And we notice the greater minuteness of the recital at those places where the experience of the Lord's people is most especially presented in the most important particulars.

Third. Joseph is never spoken of as a tribe of Israel, as are the other sons. In Numbers xiii. 11, the expression is used, but followed with an explanation: "Of the tribe of Joseph, namely, of the tribe of Manasseh." It is also used in Rev. vii. 8, but the tribe of Ephraim is there meant, for the tribe of Manasseh has already been mentioned, which constituted part of the house of Joseph. This expression, "house of Joseph," evidently represents the church in Amos and other places. Jacob claimed of Joseph his two sons to be his own, as Reuben and Simeon were his; and each of them became a tribe in Israel, and both constitute the house or children of Joseph. Thus Joseph had one portion above his brethren, Gen. xlviii. 22; Ezekiel xlvii. 13; his two sons were given the birthright of Reuben, who had transgressed. "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's."—1 Chron. v. 1, 2.

Fourth. The manner in which the psalmist refers to this shows, to my mind, that his faith has Christ and his people in view as he recounts the incidents, for he speaks of them not in the order of their literal occurrence, but in the order

of the experience of them in their spiritual significance. The famine and hunger are the beginning of the knowledge of spiritual things. Then the sending a man before them, even Joseph. The wicked acts of his brethren are not here referred to, Psalm cv. 16-22, but the declaration that the Lord sent him before them assumes all the circumstances of his getting into Egypt as part of the Lord's purposed way, and brings to view the sins of the Lord's people, in this type, which caused him to go before them, and become a servant, and suffer that they might live. The psalmist "foresaw the Lord always before his face," and speaks of such things only as set forth Jesus and his salvation.—Acts ii. 25-31.

Fifth. The peculiarity of the blessings pronounced upon Joseph by both Jacob and Moses. Both use highly figurative expressions that would hardly apply to Joseph naturally, even with all his wonderful experience, but which suggest at once the One who was greater than Joseph. The fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall, suggest him who is the Branch, and the goodly Vine, and the well of salvation, and the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. The speaking of archers that hurt him, and of the strength in which his bow abode, reminds us of similar expressions which refer to Jesus in the psalms. The parenthetic reference to "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel," is very significant; and also the words of Jacob, "The blessings of thy Father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; they shall be upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren," seem to me at once to direct our minds away from limited man to him who re-

ceived the blessing, "upon the mountains of Zion," "even life for evermore," which prevails unto all his people throughout all generations. When Moses speaks of "the precious things of heaven, and the dew, and the deep that coucheth beneath, and the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and the precious things put forth by the moon, and the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the lasting hills, and the precious things of the earth, and the fullness thereof, and the good will of him who dwelt in the bush," as abundant reasons for the blessings which he invokes upon the land of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him who was separate from his brethren, it seems to me that his faith must have been looking away to Jesus, the Sun of righteousness, who answers in his glorious person and work to all these sublime expressions.

Sixth. This reference by both Jacob and Moses to Joseph as the one who was separate from his brethren, I have regarded as one of the special marks of his typical character. The separation, as expressed, would not mean from any one or two of them, but from all. As Joseph's presence among ten of his brethren only made them want to kill him, it must have been more comfortable for him to be separate from them. But this expression does not appear to me to be intended so much to refer to Joseph's personal feelings in the matter, as to state an important fact in his life, which was a far more important truth in the life and death and work of him whom I understand Joseph to represent, who trod the winepress of God's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with him; Isaiah lxiii. 3, 5: who said, "I am become a stanger unto my brethren, and alien unto my mother's children."—Psalm lxix. 8; whose

disciples, when he was taken by his enemies, all forsook him and fled.

Seventh. The last expressions in the blessing of Moses has no apparent application to Joseph as a man, but does clearly apply to the great antitype Jesus: "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." By his own power, sometimes compared to the horn of the unicorn, Numbers xxiii. 22; xxiv. 8; Psalm xcii. 15, Jesus brings his people to the end of earthly wisdom, strength and righteousness, and there they see the salvation of God.—Isaiah lii. 10. "And these are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousand of Manasseh." That is, they are his own house that he thus pushes together to the ends of the earth, and to whom he says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."—Isaiah xlv. 22.

Seventh. The prophet Amos vi. 6, speaking of the prominent and confident pretensions of those who are at ease in Zion, the carnal professor under the law, presents as one necessary mark of a child of God which they lack: "But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." When Joseph's brethren stood before him, and were roughly spoken to, and charged with evil intentions, they were for the first time grieved for the affliction of their brother, in that they saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought them, and they would not hear, and they knew this distress to have come justly upon them because of their iniquity, which God had found out. So whenever any one has been brought before Jesus he is made to feel grieved for the very sins that pierced him, and to "mourn as one mourneth for his only son," and to "be in bitterness, as

one is in bitterness for his first-born." This is true of all the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.—Zech. xii. 10. And to those who have felt that bitterness of grief on account of sin, it is a blessed thing to know that only those whose sins Jesus bore can feel that bitter sorrow. Only his brethren, but all of them, "are grieved for the affliction of Joseph." Only they know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ.

I have not thought of Joseph as typical of the ministry, though it may be so in some sense. But preachers have no such control over the store of grace and spiritual comfort as Joseph had over the store of corn. Jesus only controls and dispenses that, placing so much in the hand of each servant as he will have that one to give to the hungry at the time, and never giving to any servant a handful to-day for use to-morrow. No one has anything to do with his own preparation for the work of dispensing the good things of the gospel. If one has a larger amount and greater variety than another he is neither to be blamed nor praised for it, for he has only what Jesus gave; but if one should assume that he was better prepared with a better variety than other servants of the Lord, he would manifest that he was carnal, and would be reprov'd in his conscience when awakened by the voice of the Lord out of this carnal sleep. The variety which would interest the natural mind would not richly feed living souls. The same blessed words of truth furnish in themselves a rich variety for the hungry soul; and this heavenly food, as Jesus hands it to the servants at the time they need to hand it out, is ever new and fresh. The one who esteems himself least sufficient, and most unprofitable, and therefore most dependent, is most likely to come to the

saints with this rich variety, while he who regards himself as having it in store to use at any time, is most often found empty handed by the waiting, hungry soul.

Eighth. Joseph's prophetic declaration that God would surely visit his brethren, and the oath he took of them that they should carry up his bones from thence, seems to me to greatly confirm the figurative meaning. It was not his body but his bones that he spoke of. These were carefully preserved through all the years of bondage, carried up out of Egypt, and through all the wilderness journey, taken through Jordan, kept during all the wars under Joshua, and finally buried according to his command.—Josh. xxiv. 32. There must be some spiritual significance in this, so carefully recited; and we cannot but think of the careful preservation through all the ages of the world, and through all the bondage and terrible wilderness of sin, of those who are manifest in the gospel as "members of Jesus' body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Jesus said of himself by the psalmist, "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."—Psalm xxxiv. 20. And again, "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him?"—Psalm xxxv. 10.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 25, 1898.

LOS GATOS, California, Dec., 1897.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Though a stranger to you in the flesh, I sometimes entertain a trembling hope that I hold a little relationship to you in the fellowship and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. This little hope enables me now to pen these few lines for your inspection. In all this I may be grievously deceived.

That which I have fondly hoped is a real hope in Christ may be a vain delusion, and I may be still in my sins, and in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. That you may know something of my natural relationship, I will say that I am a brother of the late Elder George Y. Stipp, of Illinois, and a nephew of the late Elder John Stipp, of Oregon. In submitting this manuscript to you, I do so to ask a place for it in the SIGNS, if it meets your full approval. If on the other hand, your mind is impressed after perusal that it is not of the Lord, but that it is a delusion, and a vagary of the natural mind, I hope that you will discard it, and cast it away. For twenty weary and sorrowful years, I trust that my face has been turned to that great Rock in a weary land. Yet it has not pleased the Lord to make me conscious of a time when he graciously and mercifully liberated me from the body of this death, unless it was in the scenes and incidents which I am about to narrate. And now I humbly and prayerfully trust that he will guide my pen as well as my mind in the matter, that nothing may be written except that which was given to me of him, if indeed it be by the Spirit of inspiration.

For a long time I had been in great darkness and gloom. Not a ray of light had been permitted to fall across my pathway. I had often asked the Lord, in my stammering and halting way, if consistent with his will to give me some sign or token that would enable me to feel that he had mercifully borne my sins in his own body upon the cross of Calvary. In answer to my stammering prayer, as I fondly hope and trust, he gave me two dreams. I know that there are many good Baptists who have little confidence in dreams or dreamers. Hitherto I have had but little confidence in dreams my-

self, unless there was some special reason for believing that they were of the Lord. These dreams were given to me about two years ago. I had retired for the night with my usual burden of prayer upon my soul and lips, to the Lord. It seems to me that this dream occurred about midnight. It seemed that I was overcome with a painless sickness, but a sickness unto death. It seemed that I had been sick for a long time. It was soon made apparent to me that I was dying. The dreadful thought came to me, Is this indeed death? If it is, what of eternity? What is to be my doom? I thought surely I was dying. My breath became shorter and shorter, and my weeping friends stood around my bed to watch the flickering spark go out forever. I was conscious of everything around me. I felt no pain, nor uttered a groan, but could not move. I was fully conscious that the time of my departure was at hand. My breathing became less labored, and shorter and shorter. I watched my breathing with profound interest. Every now and then the dreadful thought would occur, Is it to be a departure to be with Christ, or to hear the terrible malediction, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. My breath grew fainter and fainter, until I could hardly realize that I was breathing at all. The end soon came. The last feeble breath left me with a gasp, and a mortal shudder, but there stood beside me an angel, clothed in a robe of spotless white, who took me in his arms, when we began to slowly arise. The higher we ascended the faster we seemed to go. He bid me fear no evil, for he said, I am with you. My rod and my staff they shall comfort you. Meantime I was shouting praises to God for deliverance from the earth, and the mortal clay, that I had so gladly

left behind. On and on we rose, which made me to so rejoice, and become so happy and demonstrative, that I awoke, to find alas, that I was still in the galling fetters of this vile tenement of sin, lust, passion, and all uncleanness. No pen nor tongue can portray the dreadful disappointment and sorrow that overwhelmed me when I realized that I was still fettered with this vile body. I wept bitter tears that my death was not real, but amid my tears there came a still, small voice, You asked for a sign, a token, and why do you yet murmur? At this a peace came over me which passeth all understanding.

Two or three months after this I was in the valley of the shadow of death again, spiritually, and was again seeking the face of my absent Lord, which had been withdrawn from me in chastisement of my multiplied wanderings and transgressions. I had been trying with my stammering tongue, and with shame and confusion, to implore him to restore unto me once more the joys of his salvation. I fell asleep as usual one night, judging from the time when I awoke, it was about the hour of midnight, when I was given another dream. It appeared that I was in a beautiful field. The sun was shedding his soft, mellow rays of splendor over hill and vale and mountain top. It was just such a scene as sunny California delights in. All nature seemed to be in the loveliest garb. It was a scene of surpassing beauty and grandeur. Suddenly a pall of gloom seemed to fall upon the face of the earth. It was a sort of indescribable pallor, which accompanies a total eclipse of the sun. Everything seemed as still as the grave. I stood awe stricken, and exceedingly feared and quaked. Soon I heard the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. Look-

ing upward I saw Christ, with all his holy angels, coming in the clouds of heaven, to take vengeance on all who knew not God. The dead seemed to be rising from their graves all around me, some shouting glory to the Highest, while others were wailing and calling upon the mountains and rocks to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him who sitteth upon the throne. While these dreadful scenes were transpiring around me, I stood trembling, wondering what was to be my doom, whether I was to be taken or left. But I was not held in suspense long. I began to arise, slowly at first, and joined the redeemed in the air. As we arose we shouted victory! victory! through our Lord Jesus Christ, who giveth us the victory. As we rose higher, we sang praises, and gave thanks to our Savior, who had redeemed us unto God. When we had risen to a great height, we came to a glorious house of many mansions. It seemed to be hanging in mid heaven. We landed on a platform, and entered a great hall of wondrous beauty. Here the redeemed were promenading, singing the songs of deliverance, and of redemption, and praises unto God. This did not in my dream seem to be the third heaven, of which Paul speaks. Neither did the Father nor the Son seem to be present. But it would be impossible for mortal tongue to describe this mansion. Shortly the word went round, O, see the earth! see the earth! I approached a window, with many others, and away down, down, revolving in space, not much larger apparently than the full moon, was the old, sin-cursed earth, from which we had been just now redeemed, but it was in flaming fire. Millions and millions, untold millions, were perishing in the vengeance of eternal fire. The scene, while it was unutterably grand, and sur-

passing in splendor, was awful to contemplate. It so excited me that I awoke to endure another disappointment, over which I could not refrain from weeping bitter tears of sorrow. And now my daily refrain is, "O, when shall I see Jesus, and dwell with him above." But the enemy comes in like a flood, and says it is all a delusion. These dreams are of the natural mind. If you depend upon them as tokens of your final destiny, you are doomed to certain disappointment. God does not condescend to give signs and tokens in these last days to such sinners as you. And now, my dear Elder Chick, you have my little story of hope, if haply it is a hope. It is the only deliverance the Lord has been pleased to grant me, of which I have any vivid consciousness, if indeed this can truly be regarded as a deliverance from twenty years of weary toil towards that great Rock in a weary land. Sometimes I fondly cling to these dreams as signs or tokens that I have been accepted of the Beloved; that though a stranger in a strange land, a wayfarer, and a wanderer from my Father's house, a lonely exile from his dear people, the privileges of his house and its consoling ordinances, yet he has mercifully recognized me. At other times when I have a clear view that I am full of bruises and putrefying sores, from the soles of my feet to my head, and that there is no soundness in me, my heart sinks within me, and I go bowed down in sackcloth and ashes.

Now, dear Elder, all this is confidently submitted to your riper judgment. Do with it as shall seem best to you, and it will all be right with me, who am a sinner, saved, if saved at all, by grace. For Jesus came into the world to save his people from their sins. If you can see your way clear to publish these dreams,

and feel impressed to offer any comments upon them, it will be a source of great encouragement to a lonely wanderer.

In the tribulation, fellowship and patience of the saints, I trust I am as ever yours,

HENRY S. STIPP.

(See editorial reply in this number)

318 HYMAN ST., LONDON, Ont.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to see a little sketch of mother's life published, and will now write a little about it, and leave the matter with you to publish or not as you see fit.

Mrs. Sarah Scates, my mother, was born in Suffolk County, England, November 22d, 1806. Her mother died when she was only two years old, and her father marrying a second time, and her step-mother not being kind to her, she got no education and was compelled to work out when very young, and until twenty-one years of age had no thoughts of her sinful state, or her need of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. About this time her oldest brother was under deep convictions of sin, and wrote to her what she then thought a very strange letter. He was living about one hundred miles away, and mother having no knowledge of writing could not answer it; but immediately commenced to study writing, and in a short time was able to write an answer, and in a short time came home and saw her brother, and wondered at the change that had taken place in him. He had left going to the Church of England, and was going to the Baptist Church, which he shortly after united with. Soon after this mother began to feel herself a sinner, and as she says she became anxious about her salvation, but could not feel it was the Lord who was thus working in her; and as she did not feel the terrors of

the law as she heard some tell, she felt she could not be in the right way; but the words came to her, "Do not limit the holy One of Israel," which gave her some hope, and she kept crying to the Lord for mercy, and shortly after had this promise sweetly applied to her soul, "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." She did not know where these words came from, but afterwards found them in Isaiah lxx., which was very satisfying to her mind, though the burden of sin still was heavy upon her. But the word of the Lord came again in the following, "For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth, to hear the groanings of the prisoners," &c. And the words, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings;" and hymns that she would read were made sweet to her, especially the one that commences,

"'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?"

This she says was very precious to her as telling her feelings, as were other experimental hymns. She was, she says, thus tossed up and down for two years, being desired by the church to unite with them, but not feeling at liberty to do so, until reading in the tenth chapter of Romans, she came to the words, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," which so set her soul at liberty that she went to the church trembling, but rejoicing, and was received and baptized in June, 1829. Soon after she joined the church the pastor began to change his views, and preach a conditional salvation, or Fullerism, as it is called, and she had not at that time the spirit of discernment to see the erro-

neousness of these things; but a number of the older members, and among them her brother, became very much dissatisfied with the preaching, and after a time withdrew from the erroneous church, and formed a separate church; choosing rather to suffer the loss of all things than pander to false doctrine. Before this division took place mother had emigrated to Canada, where she soon after married James Scates, who had been a member of the same church in England, but had come to Canada a year or two previous. Father was a very consistent, orderly, humble-minded, but firm Primitive Baptist, and always enjoyed spiritual controversy, and had a sweet, precious gift in prayer.

About the year 1842 father and mother united with the Regular Baptist Church in the town of Dundas; but it was not long till Fullerism, with its brood of errors, began to be preached, and after much contention against these new errors, a number of the members, among them our parents, either withdrew or were excluded, and formed a separate church, and for some time without a pastor met for prayer and conference, and though they did not increase in numbers, they had what was far better, the peace and love of God, and many were the pleasant seasons they had in talking of the goodness, mercy and love of God, which I think was more felt at that time than is generally the case now, when riches and fashion seem to engross much of the time, even of those who profess to know and love the truth. I believe all of that little band has passed from earth away, mother being probably the last of their number.

Our parents moved from Dundas to Aylmer, about eighty miles, in the spring of 1855; and here for a time they were religiously alone. There were churches in

plenty, and among them a large Baptist Church, but mother and father had no fellowship for them, and preferred living alone religiously, to affiliating with those who did not believe in the doctrine of sovereign grace and eternal love, as set forth in the Scripture, and experienced in the hearts of his believing children. But in the course of the following summer they heard of a church about thirty miles away that, after visiting, they found were the people they loved and could fellowship. This was the Covenanted Baptist Church, with Elder McColl pastor. They were much rejoiced at finding this people, and well do I remember, though but a young lad, what feelings of joy and pleasure they expressed on their return home, at finding a people with whom they could take sweet counsel, and walk in company, and be agreed; and it does seem to me there was more love and gospel simplicity among the church at that time than there seems to be now, and less of the pride and fashion of this world. I can say for myself, I am guilty. Please excuse this digression.

It was at this time mother sent a short sketch of her experience to the SIGNS, of which they had been readers for a time. This was the winter of 1855-6. In the following summer our parents went to Ekfrid, and for the first time heard Elder Gilbert Beebe preach. Elders Hill, Meaders and McColl were there also, and I remember mother telling how they enjoyed the preaching, and what a feast of spiritual things they had; and one text that Elder Meaders used about the small dust of the balance, and also, "Except the Lord had left us a remnant," &c.—Isaiah xl. 15; i. 9, mother often referred to as being sweet and establishing. I think mother always looked upon that meeting as being one of the "waymarks," or

"high heaps," that she could always look back to with feelings of joy and praise.

Father died in 1866, since which time mother has had a comfortable home with her eldest daughter. But till her strength failed somewhat she visited a great deal among friends, brethren and sisters, where she always received a warm welcome, as she was a good conversationalist, an extensive reader of spiritual subjects, and almost always ready to talk on the things of the Spirit, and willing to try to encourage the weak, trembling ones, as many can testify. She felt her unworthy, sinful nature, as the following extract from a letter written by her many years ago will prove: "O, dear brother, when I reflect on my unworthiness, and sinfulness, and heart-departures, and baseness, I abhor myself in his sight, and how blessed have I found those words of the Lord by the prophet, 'Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow,' &c. I have felt my sins to be of crimson-dye," &c. Mother gradually failed in strength, but her mental faculties remained strong almost to the last. About three weeks before her death she had an attack of severe pain in her stomach, which so affected her heart that her breathing was very difficult, at times almost smothering her, and she could not lie down, but had to be propped up in bed. She did not talk much in her last sickness, much to our disappointment; but I asked her how she felt in her mind a number of times, and she always said her hope was firm, and alone on Jesus. Once she said Jesus was not as near and precious as she desired. A few hours before the end came, while suffering from suffocation she said, "Dearest Lord! blessed Jesus! do come and take me." I think she was the most peaceful, calm, serene looking one in death I ever looked upon.

In sorrow,

R. SCATES.

(See obituary notice in this number.)

MT. VERNON, Texas, Jan. 23, 1898.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—BELOVED BRETHREN:—Unworthy as I feel to claim relationship with the children of God, I often feel after reading a number of the SIGNS, that I desire to bear some testimony to the wonderful works of God, in his dealings with his people. The apostle Paul says in his second epistle to Timothy, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 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." From this we learn that there was some probability of Timothy being ashamed of the "testimony of our Lord," and we learn also that there was "afflictions of the gospel" to be partaker of. From this we may know that there was a cause for being "ashamed," and for afflictions. Have these causes ever been removed? To my mind it seems clear that this cause arises from the natural enmity of the carnal mind against God, which mind is in all his children, as well as the world without, the difference being that the children of God have also the mind of Christ.—1 Cor. ii. 16. The truth to-day is just as unpopular, and just as little in harmony with carnal reasonings of the natural mind, as it ever was. "The preaching of the cross is [just as much to-day as it ever was] to them that perish foolishness." Every duty enjoined upon the believer is a cross to the flesh. Our natural minds are ever averse to the "testimony of our Lord." To believe it, to love it, and to walk according to it, we would not nor could not, unless led into the belief, and the love,

and the practice of it, by the Spirit and power of Israel's God. What is the "testimony of our Lord?" Surely it is all that the Scriptures testify of him. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel."—Isaiah vii. 14. The angel said to Joseph, "And she [Mary] shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."—Matt. i. 21-23. The testimony here is, that his name signifies what he is, "God with us." The testimony is that this "God with us," "shall [not may] save his people from their sins." Further testimony says that this Emmanuel came down from heaven not to do his own will, but the will of his father which sent him, and the will of him that sent him was that of all that he had given him he (Emmanuel) should lose nothing, but should raise them up again at the last day.—John vi. 38, 39. Further "testimony of our Lord" says, "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."—John xvii. 1-4. How contradictory is all this testimony to what the

world believes and teaches concerning Jesus Christ. It has not been many days since I heard a preacher bearing the name Baptist, tell the people that "Jesus had atoned for the sins of the whole world, and had made the way passible, and possible, whereby all men might be saved." All was hinged upon their will and works as to whether they would be saved or not. This is the popular idea, the idea of a vast majority of the professed christian world, There is nothing, perhaps, that more plainly displays the ignorance of the "wisdom of this world," as to the true character of the Son of God, and the work he came to do, and did do, than such teaching as this. Their testimony is that Jesus accomplished nothing by his coming into this world, with all his trials, temptations and sorrows. And even the suffering of death, and his resurrection, finished nothing. The salvation of no sinner was complete; but the sinner must add the saving ingredient to what was done by our Lord, or all that he has done amounts to nothing. This is all false testimony; it gives the true testimony the lie. But thanks be to God, it is so plainly contradictory to the truth, that all God's little children are able by the light which he gives them, to see it. The true testimony is that God the Father sent his Son into the world at his own appointed time, to do a specific work. This work was to save those whom his Father had given him, and to raise them up again at the last day. And this work he did. He finished it. Nothing can be added to it; it is full and complete. He fully overcome his enemy, and the enemy of his people. "He made an end of transgression." "He put away sin." Well might the apostle exclaim, "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, ye rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" The apostle felt that none of these things could make void the work of Christ, for he further says, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, no 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." How sure then is the salvation of that people for whom Jesus died. He hath saved them, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. Happy is that people saved by the Lord.

I will say in conclusion, dear brethren and sisters, I have no doubt of the truth of this testimony. The only thing that gives me trouble in regard to the matter is, Am I one of this number? Am I really personally interested in the finished work of this Redeemer Christ? I find in myself so much evidence to the contrary, as I go halting, fearing, trembling, along the journey; often doing the things I would not, and leaving undone the things I would. I know that if it is not the grace of God that hath saved, and that does save me, and will save me, I am among the unsaved. If ever I am walking in the path of duty, I have to say, the grace of God has led me here; I have nothing to boast of; to his sovereign grace all praise is due. "By the grace of God I am what I am."

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;

It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Yes, "Grace all the work shall crown," whether for time or for eternity. May this grace ever be the guardian, protector and guide, of both editors and correspondents of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in common with all the saints of God.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all, in hope of life eternal,

H. B. JONES.

NORTH HENDERSON, Ill., Jan. 26, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—As I have just received the inclosed narration written by my dear father, who has now gone home to heaven, after preaching the old doctrine of salvation by grace for nearly sixty years, and I feel sure there are some of the brethren of the Old School Baptists who live in this country, who were acquainted with him, will you kindly give it a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES?

Believe me your unworthy sister,
HANNAH M. SLADE.

COMPTON, DUNDON, SOMERSETSHIRE, England, }
July 24, 1890. }

THE memory of the just is blessed.—Proverbs x. 7.

What I am about to write, if the Lord will, is of the experience and death of my dear daughter, who died in her fourteenth year, of typhoid fever. When she was seven years of age, she was standing before the fire, when a hot coal flew from the fire into her bosom and burnt her very badly. She said to her mother, "O mother, if this is so painful, what must it be to endure everlasting burnings? I hope from this time I shall take care how I live in this world." Afterwards we could always observe that she never wanted to see or join in any amusement with the children, but would rather withdraw. We kept her in a good school, and

she was quick at learning, and was loved by all who knew her, until God in his providence laid the above named affliction upon her, which terminated in death. At first she was very calm. After that she became insensible. At this we were very much distressed. She was her mother's darling, and most affectionately attached to me, her father. I committed her to God in prayer, and it was very trying. The next of age to her, a sister, was taken with the same complaint. I sought for her in prayer to God, and she was restored to health again. As my wife was very much fatigued with the family and the business, I stayed with the one who died, mostly at night. One night she kept talking. I felt much distressed, and went down stairs at 2 o'clock in the morning, and stood outside the window, and could hear her there. The following words were applied to my mind, "The desire of the righteous," and "What is it that justifies a sinner before God?" I felt that I knew something of this by the grace of God. I went upstairs again, and she looked upon me and said, "Is this my dear father?" I said, "It is, my dear." She said, "O how thankful I ought to be that God gave me such a father as you are." "I am a poor, sinful man," I said. "Yes," she said, "I know that we are all sinners, but some dear children have fathers who never pray for themselves, and I know they do not for their children." I was surprised, and said, "How is it, my dear, that you have never said anything of this to me before?" She said, "I could not, but I feel that it is the Lord's will that I should tell you now. O father, I have had such a feeling sense and sight of the Almighty God, and of myself as such a poor, little, sinful creature, and I have thought, can that great, just and holy Being, have mercy

upon me? Father, can you tell me if the Lord Jesus loves me?" I said, "Do you love him?" She said, "I desire to love him with all my heart and soul." I said, "It is written, we love him because he first loved us." She said, "That is blessed: then he does love me." I could but say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." She said, "O father, many times when you have gone out to preach the gospel to our poor fellow sinners, I have gone in secret and prayed to God to bless his word to their souls. O, my dear, dear father, the longer you live, the more trials and afflictions you will have, and the sooner you die, the sooner you will be with the Lord." I said, "I hope so, my dear." She said, "I believe that you will." After this she prayed as I have never heard a child pray before or since. I thought she would be exhausted. Then she said, "My dear father, you must be very tired staying up with me by night, do lie down by my side, and the Lord will protect you from the disease which I have." In the morning she asked for her mother to let her brothers and sisters come up to see her. She said, "The Lord will protect them also." Then she said, "I am going to die and be with Jesus. May the Lord prepare you to follow me. You must be born again, of water and of the Spirit. You cannot enter the kingdom of heaven without being born again. These are the words of our Savior." Then she said, "My dear mother, are you born again?" She then asked God to bless them. After this she sunk into a languid and low state, which lasted all the day. In the evening I came home, and going upstairs I secretly prayed that God would give me one more evidence that her soul was resting on him. When

I entered the room she sighed and said, "O blessed Lord Jesus, do deliver me from my pain." Then she lay as in a sound sleep, breathing shorter and shorter, until six in the morning, when she breathed her last, and departed without a sigh or a groan. I stood and saw it and said, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord." Now I must say this took place forty-five years ago. I should not have written this had it not been brought to my mind while lying on my bed two nights in succession. I have no more to say, only forgive all my infirmities, as I am in my eighty-fifth year.

G. PAUL.

"FREE MORAL AGENCY."

HAVING seen several articles recently published on the words quoted at the head of this, I feel somewhat to-night as I suppose one of Job's comforters did, when he said, "I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion." I am also reminded of what Elihu said, "Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment." I fully indorse the last clause of this last quotation, yet, feeling I hope, a proper anxiety for the truth as taught in God's written word, I sometimes feel like speaking.

I note an article as published in another paper, over the signature of Elder S. A. Elkins, of Montgomery City, Mo., that I was much pleased with, on the subject of "Being made free." I like the way Paul says we are free. He does not say we are "free, moral agents." No! That idea is not near so old among Old School Baptists as the writings of Paul. It belongs with innovations brought forward in the last half century among Baptists. Paul says, "For the law of the

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me *free* from the law of sin and death." Surely every child of God can realize the fact very forcibly that they are the servants of sin. All language, if worth anything in determining things, teaches that a person who is a servant, is not free. A man may be ever so moral as to his conduct, but that does not make him an agent of God. Paul said, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," while he was shutting up the saints in prison. Paul surely was not an agent of God, viewed in the light that those advocating "free moral agents," would have it. He was a free man, but not an agent, under even the law. An agent cannot be free, as he is governed by another. He may be moral, and as Paul said, blameless when under the law, but he is not yet free until made free "from the law of sin and death." Very recently, having read two lengthy articles as published in some of our periodicals, trying to establish the belief that God is not *altogether sovereign*, but that man is partner in the matter, and is a "free moral agent," makes me think of Paul's language to Timothy: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, * * * Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."—2 Tim. iii. 1-5. Again, in the first chapter of this same second letter, he says, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." O, that our brethren would heed this, both in speaking and writing. Where is free moral agency taught in the Bible, either as referring to

salvation, or man in nature? Do we not read, "For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not, but what I hate, that I do. 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. * * * For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me?"—Romans vii. 14-21. This does not sound much like Paul felt that he was a "free moral agent," but rather that sin controlled his actions, and that he was an unwilling slave thereto, and not in that sense free.

In conclusion, let us hear some of Christ's words to the Jews, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Again, in referring to what Esaias had said, he said, "By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall not see, and shall not perceive." Again, "Ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." If they had been free agents, this would not have been appropriate. But as John records it, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

JAMES M. TRUE.

KANSAS, Ill., Jan. 31, 1898.

DAYTON, Washington, Oct. 27, 1897.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES
—DEAR BRETHREN, AND FELLOW-SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST:—After a three months' absence from home, in the state of Idaho, I am again at home, and seated to write in response to brother Chick's request, in the first of August

number of the SIGNS, in an editorial reply to a short article of mine on the subject of the parable recorded in the thirty-third verse, of the thirteenth chapter of Matt., and which reads, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." I wish to say that what Elder Chick has written in an editorial article, previous to the one now before me, has opened up the subject of the use of leaven in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as being typical of the use made of it in the New Testament Scriptures. It is not worth while for me to go over the same grounds that have been so well, and ably, and clearly, gone over by brother Chick. What he has written, has my full indorsement. But the purpose of this article is to bring out an additional use of the word leaven, as presented in the holy Scriptures. I do not presume to be able to treat this subject in an able manner. This much, by way of an apology.

The additional thought which I wished to present, is found in the words, "Till the whole was leavened." The obvious meaning, seems to me to be, the thoroughness of the work of the leaven, whether it be used in the Scriptures, in a good or a bad sense. Thus Paul, for instance, says in 1 Cor. v. 6, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" And again in Gal. v. 9, besides in many other places, where the word leaven is employed. These examples I think sufficient to show the idea intended, which is the completeness and thoroughness of leaven in its operation in and on the mass into which it has been introduced. Hence, if the leaven be good, it will assimilate the mass to its own kind. If the leaven be of a good kind, it will cause the mass to also be good. And contrariwise, if the

leaven be of a bad kind, it will cause the mass to be of a bad kind. And so, in either case, the mass partakes of the nature of the leaven, which has been introduced into it. And so the power of the parable lies not so much in the use of the leaven, as it does in the effect produced in either case, by the leaven, upon the man or woman in whom it has been placed as a power that works. The kingdom of heaven has been set up, or placed within the hearts of men, or in the whole body of the church. Its effect will be to assimilate the whole mass or body to itself. And this, I conceive to be the same thought expressed by the apostle Paul when he said, "Where the Lord hath begun a good work, he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." In this view of the subject many portions of the Scripture become plain, carrying the idea of regeneration, or the new birth, producing a change in men, in order to their seeing, entering into and comprehending the things of the Spirit, or of the kingdom of heaven. All this class of Scriptures is illustrated, explained, and enforced by our Lord's use of this simple and common thing, leaven, in this parable. It seems that the mind of a child, or of one who is weak minded, might take hold of this parable. However, that mind must have been enlightened by the Spirit of truth, to discern the things of the Spirit of God; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. That is, the Spirit must translate the literal parable, or word, into its spiritual meaning. Only thus it becomes plain, so that the warfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. It may as well be added to the foregoing, that the leaven was put into the three measures of meal till the whole was leavened, with emphasis upon the three measures of meal. But I do not even think of exhausting

the subject. The three measures, as it seems to me, represent a definite number, an ascertained quantity. And this represents the whole church as being a definite number. And this church is the whole body of Christ, of whom the whole family, in heaven and in earth, is named, otherwise called his sheep. He said to his Father, Thine they were and thou gavest them me. And they shall hear his voice, as he says. They are a definite number, whose owner first is God, and then by gift they are his Sons. He is the good Shepherd, and he gave his life for the sheep. The three measures may mean his church, for which he gave himself, that he might sanctify, and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing. He sanctifies and cleanses it with the washing of water by the word. And it is thus that the heaven, or kingdom of heaven, may be said to work in the heart of each individual member of that measures, or body, or church, or sheep, or whatever figure representation, or pattern, may be used to designate the elect of God, who are embraced in the covenant of redemption, which is ordered in all things are sure.

As ever your brother,

I. N. NEWKIRK.

BROOME CENTER, N. Y., Dec. 26, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Having a little leisure time, I am persuaded to pen a few thoughts, having no thought who may read them, if any one. My mind has been reflecting upon some of the laws of nature, which have been fixed by our God. They were predestinated and originated by him in the ancients of eternity, and all have been, for thousands of years, as unchangeable as is the Maker and framer of them. First, one of the grand laws

or principles is, that every seed begets its own kind. The life that exists in every plant, grain, shrub, tree, animal, or being, must remain in its own environment, and live in its own sphere. There is no life capable, or that has power, to change its own nature. Corn has always produced corn; wheat produced wheat; the acorn the oak; and Adam is Adam to-day, as he was six thousand years ago. No change, no better, no higher order of life to-day than when he left the garden. If man, or any living creature has been unable to lift itself into some higher order, for six thousand years, do we, or can we, expect that it will do so in the future? No! no! We fully believe that all things will remain as they are, as the God of heaven has ordered them. Now if no life has power to lift itself into any higher order, what has it power to do? God had given to each form of life a power, or principle, or law, or desire to live. And, if injured, to use its power to restore itself to health or soundness. We see this in the vegetable kingdom, as well as in ourselves. Bruise a tree, and the life in that tree, at once commences the healing process. Now how does it accomplish this work? Upon the same principle that it, at the first, built itself a body, as our life has built itself a body. No life has ever reached up to some higher order, and drawn that down to build itself up with. But, on the contrary, each and every life reaches down into the order or kingdom below itself, and selects out of that order or kingdom, such material as it desires, out of which to build itself up a body. To illustrate. We know that the vegetable kingdom, or the life in that kingdom, reaches down into the earth, or mineral, or dead kingdom, and takes up such material as each grain, or life desires, and builds itself up to that. So also the

animal kingdom, or its life, must go down into the vegetable kingdom, and take such as each desires, and build up each his own body, after his own life or order. Neither of these kingdoms ever reaches up to a higher, for life or support. They cannot. They have no power to rise above their own environment. Life is something that we cannot control, it controls us. It reaches out and selects such material as it desires, to build itself up a body, and manufactures the material after its own order, and uses it as seems good to itself. We all know this to be true. It is manifest in all nature. It is manifest in the life of our own body.

We hear the religious world proclaiming their efforts to get to heaven, and their determination to get there. As I look over both the vegetable and animal kingdom, I fail to find any living thing or body that is trying to grow or build itself up, by taking hold of higher things. Neither is there any outward compelling power, but a union, a desire, a willingness, to reach down, and grasp what it desires. It is always down, never upward. I find this law in my body; and in my experience. My body has never tried to grow. For forty years I have not tried to get to heaven. But for the truth's sake, that love, that inseparable love and union which exists between the head and the body, the vine and the branches, has drawn me. Does the body try to grow, or get up to the head? We know that there is no trying in the matter, and neither does the branch try to grow, or get in the vine. Each and every organ of my body, has been always content with its situation. Is it not so, or in like manner with the body of Christ? All are content with such things as they have (when in the Spirit.) There is no murmuring, no trying, no forcing, but a sweet and per-

fect rest. Yea, do we not rest from all our labors? May God grant us that sweet assurance and rest in him, that the world knows nothing of.

But to return to the matter of which I was speaking. Life is something that cannot be described. No person has yet been able to find it, handle it, or tell us of what it is composed. With all our ingenuity, this is something which we have not attained. We also know that we did not obtain life, by any effort of our own. It is a gift. It was bestowed upon us. As in nature, so in grace. In order to possess spiritual or eternal life, it (this life of Christ) must reach down and take root in us, and lift us up to the kingdom of grace. That we may be partakers of his grace we must be born of him, born again. Christ must be formed in us, the hope of glory. When this is accomplished, we find that this new and higher order of life, reaches down into our natures, and lifts us up, and gives us a desire to be like him, who has begotten us, to eat his flesh, and to drink his blood; in fact, to live on him and by him. He now is to us our all. He is our sufficiency, and our whole trust and life is in him, because we are begotten of him. And as every seed begets of its own kind, we must be of the same nature as he of whom we are begotten. This law is fixed, there is, and there can be no change in nature, or in grace. Now, as we have been begotten and brought into the kingdom of his grace, we become as little children. In fact, these children of grace never get beyond childhood. They have found themselves always too helpless. They always need the watchcare of their heavenly Father. O, how they long to be concealed, or hid under the shadow of his wing, or in the cleft of the Rock. He only is their comfort, and support, their Rock of defense,

yea, their very life. Now comes that which afflicts them. They find, that in this same tenement of clay, their old nature remains. It has not been fully subdued. The Canaanite is still in the land. Like the Shulamite, they find in themselves as it were the company of two armies, warring against each other continually, so that they cannot do the things that they would. Like Paul, the good they would, they do not, and the evil that they would not, that they do. Yet it is no more they that do it, but sin that dwelleth in them. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. It has always been so, and always will be so. And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. This is unchangeable. Each life had its existence in its progenitor, and each has been produced or made manifest after its own kind.

Your brother.

D. M. LEONARD.

PLETA, Alabama, Dec. 18, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—No doubt you will wonder for a short time, who it is that seeks publicity in your precious paper. I have prayed the Lord to direct me. I desire to have this published, I feel that I have a few friends who have known me in my youth. And there are poor, afflicted ministers of our God, who have lodged with me, like the woman of old, who had a little room built upon the wall, that a man of God should lodge there. Have I not desired that ministers of the gospel should lodge with me? Yes! tears come to blind me as I remember the glad tidings of salvation by grace alone which they brought. They were not hired to come here in this dark corner to tell it. On the other hand, a few will call back some bitter persecutions which they had for coming. To all I would say, there

are a few who have been faithful. But some have turned to the beggarly elements of the world. Some, who have had the care of the flock, have left the poor sheep to wander upon the high hills. Some, like the poor writer, have wandered down into the valley of humiliation, to weep over the desolation of Zion. My harp is unstrung and hung upon the willows. Wo unto the shepherds who have eaten of the flesh, and used the fleece of the flock, and have not fed them. They cry unto the Lord daily. The Lord is not far away from his afflicted and persecuted people. Some shepherds seem to like a large herd, with long, fleecy locks, and despise the poor, lean, and sick ones. But Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Dear saints, I will soon close. I fear that this little scribble will be crowded out for other matter. I have been heavy laden of late. I feel like I desire a little token of remembrance from my few friends, who read the SIGNS. I hope that I shall be able to get some subscribers for the SIGNS. I am sorry to say that there are many Baptists here who do not love the doctrine of predestination as I do. Mt. Pleasant church seems in the throes of death. They have no pastor, and the church does not meet. I hope that they will not succeed in doing away with associations very soon. I would like to unburden my heart fully, but fear to do so. I hope that you will send me a copy of the SIGNS soon. I feel as though I should perish, without the pure wine of the gospel. Pray for me and mine.

Yours to serve,

L. E. SELLERS.

[In a private letter sister Sellers says that she formerly wrote for the SIGNS, in the days of Elder Gilbert Beebe, and that

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1898.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLY TO HENRY S. STIPP.

(ON PAGE 102.)

It will be seen by reference to the communication of our friend, that he requests some remarks from us in reply to his letter. We feel willing to respond to his request, for several reasons. First, we believe from what he has written that he is a child of God, and our brother in Christ, and we have always felt that a request from such an one was not to be lightly passed by. Second, the Scriptures say much about the subject of dreams, and therefore they are worthy of our careful consideration. Third, many of the people of God speak of great lessons which have been given them in dreams, and therefore they are important to them. We have never been favored with any such dreams as have seemed to others of importance. We do not recall that we ever had a dream that seemed to us worth telling, but at the same time we fully believe that the Lord can, and does often, seal instruction in dreams. To disbelieve this would be to deny the Bible, or else to say that the Lord does not now work as he was wont to do in former days. Our God has formed the mind, as well as the body, and he is not confined to one way of speaking to the minds of his people. We fully be-

she desires to hear from some who may remember her, in the north. We trust that the Lord may visit her with comfort from his presence. May he revive his work in her section, if it be his will. In her private letter she asked that we make some reply to her letter in the SIGNS. She has this for her comfort, that she believes that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Through she be alone, yet she is not alone. The Lord is with his people to the end. We trust that some who used to be familiar with her name, will write her, as she so much desires.—
Ed.]

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

BIBLES WITH COMPREHENSIVE HELPS.

WE are so highly pleased with the comprehensive helps, connected with the new list of Bibles advertised, that we wish to call special attention to them, feeling assured that all who purchase one of these Bibles, will be equally pleased. They certainly contain the most complete and systematic set of helps yet published. The table of contents, together with the general index, enables one to readily turn to any part of the helps, for such information as they may desire. For further description, and for prices, see pages sixty-three and sixty-four, in No. 2, of this volume. In ordering please be sure to give the *number* of Bible you wish, for there are many Bibles of the same price, but no two of the same number.

BACK NUMBERS.

WE have run a number of extra copies of each issue of this volume, and new subscribers received before the supply is exhausted, will be furnished with back numbers to first of current volume.

lieve from the testimony of the Scriptures, that he can control the thoughts of men as well when they are asleep, as when they are awake. But, concerning dreams, as well as concerning any other experience, it must be said, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them." A dream, whether waking or sleeping, is of no value, spiritually considered, unless it teaches us some lesson in full harmony with the word of God. It is said, "He that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully." We understand this to mean that the dream is to be told as a dream, and let it be considered and accepted only at its true value. It may be the word of the Lord, or it may not be his word. The revelation which the Lord has given must judge all things, dreams as well as all other things. Still further, a dream, like any other word, may not appear to another as it does to the one who receives it. The Lord may give it to one, to teach him some great lesson, and he receives the lesson that the Lord designs him to have. To another the dream may seem to mean nothing. This need not be wondered at, because the same is true often when some word from the Scriptures, or some word spoken from the pulpit, may come to one with power, while to another there may be nothing peculiar in it. The Lord sends his word in what way he will, and it comes to each one as he pleases. We remember once being present at a church when a sister came and asked for baptism and membership. During the narration which she gave as a reason of her hope, she related a dream, in which we could see no meaning, but which she spoke of as leading her to hope in the grace of God through Christ. We could not deny the work of the Lord in her, and yet he had taught her by ways that seemed to us to be almost foolishness. We remember that we felt humbled, and were compelled to confess that the ways of the Lord were above our ways. If by a dream, or in any other way, the soul is led to trust in Christ, and to see in him the only and complete Savior, that work is of the Lord. Whatsoever testifies of Christ, must be the teaching of the Holy Spirit. For we are told in the Word, that he testifies of Christ. We doubt not also that the Lord is pleased to favor some of his people in ways that he does not others. Peter, James and John, were favored in the holy mount, and in the garden, more than were the other disciples. Yet Peter himself was inspired of God to tell us we have a more sure word of prophecy. He would have us to understand that while these things are wonderful, they yet belong to but a few, and that there is something else more sure and more abiding than even these wonderful visions. Paul was caught up in vision to the third heavens, so far as the record goes, but once; yet he was caught up there, and the other three disciples were with the Lord in the holy mount, and in the garden. All these experiences were real, and they could but remember them. And so while it may be given to but few of the Lord's people to have dreams, yet to some it is given, and that from the Lord. Such dreams as show them wonderful things from the Lord, they cannot forget. It is well to speak of them. If some, however, who have not been thus favored, feel troubled by this, let them remember that only three out of the whole number of the disciples were with him in the holy mount, and in the garden, and no one else speaks of the third heaven as does Paul. Of one thing we feel sure, that

when we dream of the goodness of God, or of any of the things pertaining to his religion, and his salvation, it is sure that here is where the mind is placed. It is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, and it must also be true that out of the abundance of the heart come these thoughts of God, and of his word. Dreams are but the thoughts of the heart, which the Lord gives when any dream of him and his salvation. One said, "My heart is inditing good matter: I will speak of the things which I have made touching the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." Literally the word inditing means bubbling up. So it seems to us, if dreams mean nothing more, it is sure that they proceed out of the heart, and therefore when we dream of spiritual things, it is sure that the heart is bubbling up with the things of the Spirit. Such thoughts are the voice of the Lord in the soul. Such dreams then are the evidence that the Spirit of God is within the heart. And, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The testimony is that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Therefore it seems to us that such dreams as lead us to the contemplation of divine things, are of the Lord, and may well be taken as evidences of the favor of the Lord. Our brother's dreams were very vivid, and it seems to us that he has a right to be comforted by them, and to feel an assurance that they were given him of the Lord, for his comfort and his hope. Perhaps some who may read these dreams will say within themselves, If I could be thus favored, I would never doubt my acceptance with the Lord again. Let such ones take note that our brother confesses to being full of doubts. These outward signs and tokens come to us at times as a source of present comfort, but we find that they lose their effect. We cannot call them up afterwards, and rest upon them. We need supplies day by day. This is what we have understood Peter to mean when he spoke of the more sure word of prophecy. If we are not mistaken, our friend has some evidences in his own heart, which are better, and more enduring, and of more value, than even the wonderful dreams which were given him. The true evidences of being a child of God, are not the wonderful things of which some can speak; they are not such things as we have been speaking of in the case of Paul or Peter, James or John, but they are the things which abide at all times in the heart of the believer, whether it be dark or light, whether it be a time of sorrow, or of joy. Some of these things we will speak of for the comfort of our friend Stipp, as well as others who may write bitter things against themselves, because they have not been favored with such wonderful revelations as others. There are some things which never go out of the heart of the believer, after they have been once planted there. There are some things which he will feel, whether his hope seems to him bright, or whether it seems ready to die. Indeed, there are some things of which we feel more sure when our hope seems dim, and we are ready to say, there is no hope, than when we feel more in the light and comfort of the gospel. One of these abiding evidences of which all the above is true, is love. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." If our friend, or if any one who may read this, finds that he loves the people of God, he has an evidence which abides at all times, in greater or less degree. The special seasons of joy, or glad-

ness, pass away, but this love does not pass away. Our memory of times, or of seasons past, may grow dim, but this lamp of love keeps right on burning in the soul, where it has once taken up its abode. At those times when we feel most hopeless on account of the great sin that seems to us to fill all our heart and life, and we cannot understand how the children of God can retain us in their company, then our heart goes out to them more earnestly, and with greater longing than before. If we doubted before that we loved them, we cannot doubt it now. Our friend's dreams were but for a little while, and they afforded him comfort and assurance but for a little time; but this love which he feels for the people of God, will not go out. It will be with him always, and will always minister comfort to him, as often as he shall have need. The apostle did not say, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because the brethren love us, but, "because we love the brethren." Sweet as the love of the brethren is to us, to love them is sweeter. That they love us, may have in it the bitter thought that we have deceived them; but to love them can give room for no such root of bitterness. The only bitter thing about it is that we may and do feel that we do not love them as we ought to. But this very fear is only the further proof of this love.

Another witness that we have passed from death unto life, is found in the fact that Jesus has become to us all in all. To know that salvation is of the Lord, is full proof of the work of the Spirit in the heart. Such as are taught of God, do not trust in the arm of flesh, but in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life. And he that believeth in him hath passed

from death unto life. The Scriptures testify to these things. This also abides when all may seem dark to our mind. However low we may become in our feelings, this one thing we know, that salvation is of the Lord. None but a child of God can know this. Still another evidence that is abiding, is that sin has become a burden, and a shame to us. We cannot love it any longer, and we must pray that we may be delivered from the body of this death. How constant is the feeling expressed in the words, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Also the warfare will be felt within. It is manifest that where there is a warfare, there must be two opposing forces. If the warfare proves that the flesh still exists within, it is also a full proof that the Spirit also dwells within. If the flesh lusts, it lusts against the Spirit, and therefore affords full proof that the Spirit dwells within. That man in whom the Spirit dwells, is a child of God. These are some of the evidences by which one is known as a believer. Many more will occur to our readers beside those which have here been named. To sum the matter all up, our glad seasons and our sad seasons all pass away; they last but for a season; they are of the Lord, and by them he teaches us something which we ought to know, but they do not endure. We have a right to be encouraged by them, in our hope, by the sad seasons, as well as by those that are filled with gladness; but still they are not the abiding evidences of our heirship. Likewise those dreams which are of the Lord, are encouragements, but yet they are not the abiding witnesses. These things are not to be despised as of small account, but the word of truth abiding within is the best and constant evidence of the new

birth. We think that our friend ought to be comforted and encouraged by the dreams that the Lord gave him, but still more by the love, and faith, and hope in the Lord, which he realizes. His hours of trial and anxiety are as full proof of the mercy of the Lord toward him, which has given him to see his need of a helper, and a Savior, as are the more joyful and happy hours with which he has been favored.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION.

OUR Standard Lexicon defines *absolute* to mean, in its literal, or general sense, free, independent of anything extraneous. 2. Complete in itself; positive, as an absolute declaration. 3. Unconditional; as an absolute promise. 4. Existing independent of another cause; as, God is absolute. 5. Unlimited by extraneous power or control; as an absolute government or prince. 6. Not relative; as absolute space. See Webster's definition. As this word is nowhere used in the Scriptures to qualify the word Predestination, we will not contend for it, especially as the word predestination when rightly understood needs no such qualification, as it cannot be otherwise than absolute. We merely use the word absolute to distinguish our views of predestination from those who, while they admit that the term is frequently used in the Scriptures, deny its plain and obvious meaning, as though it were only vaguely used by the inspired writers, without any positive or unequivocal meaning.

On the signification of the word predestination, our brother is correct; it means foreordination by an unchangeable pur-

pose. But the grand question on which we are principally at issue, is, whether the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men or devils. We have rejoiced greatly in the firm belief, that God's government is universal, that there is not a sparrow or a worm, but is found in his decree. That sin, and death, and hell are under his control, so that the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. If the Scriptures do not authorize us so to believe, we know not at what hour we may fall a prey to the unbridled rage of the enemies of God and of his people. If the divine government of Jehovah only extends to the good conduct of his creatures, his government is much more limited in regard to this world, than we had supposed, for he has informed us that there is none that doeth good; no not one. But that he has set limits to the wicked men, we should infer from his declaration, "I have formed the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and bringeth forth an instrument for his work; I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that riseth 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."—Isa. liv. 16, 17. If God has created the smith, and the waster, to destroy, and so limited their operations that they cannot go beyond his decree, and if this is a part of the heritage of his servants, they cannot yield it without marring their inheritance. We confess that to us this part of the saints' inheritance is too valuable to be sold for a mess of pottage. Paul has said, that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and God has told us, by the mouth of Isaiah, that he has de-

clared the end from the beginning, &c., "saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravening 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." How unmeaning would all this language be to us in the absence of predestination! The end declared from the beginning, and yet not determined in the mind or purpose of God, how preposterous! We cannot believe that our God would declare a thing beforehand that he was undecided upon, and which might be quite different from what he had declared; and if he has only declared what he had determined on, that is the most absolute predestination that we have any knowledge of. This predetermination of events extends throughout all the intervening space, from the beginning to the end, and consequently embraces all things. When wicked men conspired against the life and liberty of Joseph, and against the predestination of his and their own destiny, as signified by Joseph's dreams, they intended evil, but God intended all for good. If God had not previously intended to harden Pharaoh's heart, he would not have told Moses that he would do so. If he had not predestinated that the children of Israel should sojourn in a strange land, and be afflicted by the Egyptians four hundred years, he certainly would not have told Abram so; read Gen. xv. 12-16. Let it be remembered that God told Abram this long before either the children of Israel or the Egyptians, who were to be concerned in it, were born, and the things which the Egyptians were to do to the children of Israel were such, as God told Abram he would judge and punish them for.

The Son of God was delivered into the

hands of wicked men, that they should, with wicked hands, do to him what God's hand and counsel had before determined to be done. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Paul writes to the Thessalonians concerning the manifestation of that wicked people, whom the Lord would destroy, and says, God will send them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that all may be damned, &c. God said by the mouth of Isaiah, that he would choose their delusions. This is solid Bible testimony, and it is what we intended to express by the words absolute predestination. And pray brother, what objection have you to it? Would you wish the right, the power, or the government of God to be circumscribed? Would you wish to restrict his government, and confine his dominion to good people and their good works, and leave the powers of darkness to rage at random, without the restraint of God's predestinating decrees? Are you fearful that this view reflects upon the purity and holiness of God? But why these fears? Are not the inspired Scriptures sufficiently guarded to secure the honor of their supreme Author? If not, all our attempts to supply the supposed deficiency, will be as vain, if not as presumptive, as Uzzah's attempt to protect the ark of God. Because God controls, restrains, overrules and disposes of all beings, and all events, precisely as he eternally designed to do, it does not by any means follow that he is the fountain from whence impurity proceeds. He is perfectly holy, just and good; but he has all power to set bounds and limits to that which is unholy, unjust and wicked. If it be admitted that God now has power to restrain the wickedness of men and devils, according to his sovereign pleas-

ure, and that he is immutable, then it follows, that he always had that power. If it be denied that he has that power, where is the safety of his church? Or if he has now a perfect knowledge of all beings and of all events, then he must always have had that knowledge. It certainly does not become us to say that either his wisdom, holiness, prescience or power, are at fault, that he has allowed his creatures to rebel against his government, when he had power and wisdom enough to have prevented it, if it had been his pleasure so to have done. We do not charge our brother, nor those brethren who are associated with him, with attempting to limit Jehovah, or set bounds for him to be governed by, but we would give and take the admonition, "Be still and know that he is God." If we cannot comprehend him, it still is our privilege to confide in him, for he is too wise to err, and too good to do that which is wrong.

We have no disposition to press our views on those who do not understand the Scriptures as we do, on every subject. But we wish all our readers to understand that we do as firmly believe, and as greatly rejoice in the doctrine of Predestination, and its extension to everything in heaven, earth and hell, as we do in any other part of divine revelation.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 1, 1855.

THE foregoing article was published in the editorial columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES nearly half a century ago, and many thousands of copies of it read in nearly every State and Territory of the country, and received by the brethren and sisters generally, as the truth. As then stated by our dear father, "This is solid Bible testimony, and it is what we intend to express by absolute

predestination," so we now state. Many of the dear saints have been deceived by a misrepresentation of the position of the SIGNS on this subject, and we can but feel that in many cases they have been deceived by those who knew they were misrepresenting us. There has been an effort to make it appear that the SIGNS advocates, and its patrons believe, that God, or the Holy Spirit of God, prompts man to sin. Some have even gone so far as to say that with us a man can commit any sin, and if arraigned before the church, he can plead that it was all predestinated, and we are obliged to accept his plea, and can take no further action in church discipline.

Now if any one will show us a single number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in which any such a sentiment is published, either in the editorial, or correspondents' columns, we will make a public acknowledgment of the error, if in an editorial, or if by a correspondent, we will refute the same, and beg the forgiveness of our brethren for having published it.

We have seen quite frequent allusions to a mythical individual, who somewhere, came before some church, with the argument that he was not accountable for his sin, because it was predestinated, and he could not help it. But personally we have never met with such a case, nor have we ever met with any one that has ever met this much maligned individual. And if there are any who may know of an authentic case, among Primitive Baptists, who will write us, giving name of party, church, place, and date, when and where this oft repeated incident occurred, we will agree to send that church a scriptural antidote, or specific, for all such maladies.

We have been pained to observe of late, in some of the periodicals claiming

to be Primitive Baptist publications, a disposition to resort to ridicule, and slang, in referring to brethren who believe the doctrine of the predestination of all things, designating them as "The can't help its." Aside from all question as to the truth or error of the views held by the brethren on this subject, there can be no doubt as to the spirit manifested in such a course being prompted by the carnal mind. It is one of the strongest evidences of the self-consciousness of the weakness of the position of an opponent, when he is driven to ridicule or derision, in an effort to maintain his position.

As to the appellation itself, taken in a scriptural sense, it is not so objectionable to us. We were born of the Adamic race, and we "can't help it;" we were conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and we "can't help it;" we are prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upward, and we "can't help it;" the good that we would, we do not; but the evil which we would not, that we do, and we "can't help it." Almost endless instances of scriptural definitions might be sighted in which we know that we are a "can't help it." Does it then follow that we are led or prompted by the Holy Spirit to sin? God forbid. From whence, then, come these wicked promptings, causing us to sin? Let an ancient inspired "can't help it," answer. He says, "Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."—Romans vii. 20.

Now if Paul done that he would not, he most certainly was a "can't help it." But he does not leave us in the dark as to why he could not help it, but tells us it was because of sin that dwelt in him. Inherent sin is the cause of all our wicked acts, the grace of God is the restraint, power, or limit placed upon them. The psalmist says, "The wrath of man shall

praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." In our sinful nature we are full of wrath against God; our carnal mind is enmity against him, and is ever striving to rebel against his holy law, and if not held in restraint by his almighty power, will make itself manifest. The engineer admits just such amount of steam in his engine as may be necessary to accomplish his work, and the remainder he restrains, but what sane man would say that the engineer propels the engine? Just so we understand our God permits just sufficient amount of the wrath of man to escape, to accomplish his praise, and the remainder he restrains.

That every thought, act and circumstance, is as firmly fixed in the future, as in the past, and that by the determinate counsel of God, we most sincerely believe, and this is what we mean by the predestination of all things. If this doctrine seems, to some, to be fraught with too fearful consequences, we have no disposition to argue that matter; the inspired word, to our mind, answers all cavilings on that point. What we wish to refute in this article, is the false charge that is being circulated throughout the land, that the SIGNS, and those that indorse its position in regard to predestination, believe that the holy Spirit prompts men to sin, and that a member of any of our churches having been overtaken in a fault, could plead that his wickedness was predestinated and therefore he was not responsible, and we would be obliged to accept this excuse, and could not deal with him for his sin. As stated above, we never knew of such a case, but if we should, we would have no hesitancy as to what course to pursue. In the first place, we should have very serious doubts about any one who could commit sin, whether discovered by his brethren or not, and

not experience "A certain looking for of judgment," having any knowledge of the grace of God. But, be that as it may, we have the law of the gospel directing us how to proceed against a transgressor, and if we act in obedience to that, we need have little concern as to whether or not it is in harmony with the reasonings of the carnal mind, as to justice.

When we commenced this article it was on our mind to simply append a note, stating that the editorial above, was in accord with the views of the present editors of the SIGNS, and its readers in general, as far as we understand them, but we have extended it to a much greater length than we intended, and ask the forgiveness of our brethren for trespassing upon their forbearance. If what we have written is of the Lord, no matter how crudely it is expressed, it will be blessed to the comfort and edification of some poor saint, but if it is merely the promptings of the flesh, we know that the Lord can overrule it for good to them that love him.

B.

RECEIPTS.

TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS"
TO INDIGENT SUBSCRIBERS.

A friend, N. J., \$1.00.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. L. Beebe, Feb. 2d, 1898, at the residence of the bride's father, in Middletown, N. Y., Mr. Peter W. Osborne, of Minisink, to Miss Susie F., daughter of Mr. George Hunt.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, Jan. 19th, 1898, at the home of the bride's father, near Delmar, Del., Mr. Theodore H. Hastings, of Delmar, Del., and Miss Maud H. Ellis.

By Elder P. D. Gold, Jan. 23d, 1898, Jesse Taylor and Miss Martha Dew.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At the home of her daughter, Mrs. Carter, near Melbourne, Ont., Nov. 5th, 1897, Mrs. Sarah Seates, aged nearly 91 years. We hope our dear mother fell asleep in Jesus, and has entered into that rest that will never be disturbed by sin, sorrow, pain or death, and therefore, though feeling sad and lonesome, we sorrow not as those who have no hope. Mother was a member of the Baptist church for over sixty-eight years, and ever held and contended firmly for the principles of sovereign grace, without any of the works of man to help in the eternal salvation of God's people. She was a firm believer in election, unlimited predestination, and the sovereign right of Jehovah to do as seemed good in his sight, with all things. Mother was only sick about three weeks, and suffered much from difficulty of breathing to the last. She was sensible to the last, and though not able to talk much, she expressed her hope as being firm, and resting alone on what Jesus had suffered for her. She leaves two sons and two daughters, who all attended her death-bed, and mourn the loss of a kind and affectionate mother, besides a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her maiden name was Hazelwood. Elder Pollard preached at her funeral to a very large gathering, from the words in 2 Tim. i. 9.

Yours in sorrow,

R. SCATES.

(See sketch of her life in this number.)

OUR grandfather, James C. Beard, died Friday evening last, Jan. 23th, at the age of 95 years and 8 days. His home has been with us during the last eighteen years, his children having died many years ago. His wife (grandmother) Lorena Rundell Beard, died also at our house, Jan. 14th, 1882, she having only lived two years with us. Grandfather was born in Orange County, N. Y., and was the last one of a large family of brothers and sisters, most of whom lived to an advanced age. His father was Charles Beard. His youngest brother, Nehemiah, died July 5th, 1897, aged 85. Grandfather experienced a hope early in life, united with the church at Greenville, Orange Co., and found much joy and consolation in associating with the Baptist brethren in those early days. He loved Elder Gilbert Beebe fondly, whose gift was choice to our grandfather. At the time of his death he was a member of the Chemung Old School Baptist Church, of Waverly, N. Y. Not much of spiritual privileges has been his to enjoy for the last few years, and he lived much in the past. His was necessarily a somewhat solitary life, having outlived all his old friends, as well as his companion. His vision, speech and hearing were so impaired that it was difficult to converse with him toward the last.

His physical condition was also painful, and he expressed a longing for death to release him from his sufferings, since he could no longer enjoy health or companionship. A short time before he lost consciousness, when asked if he ever felt that he would like to be with Jesus, he said, "Yes, and I want my grandchildren to be relieved of the care of me." Then the hymn beginning, "O when shall I see Jesus, and reign with him above," was repeated to him, and after hearing it through he immediately repeated a verse of another hymn, many years familiar to him, "Why should we start and fear to die?" After repeating it through, he said, "I do not fear to die, I do not want to get well." He often expressed appreciation of our care of him. His death was quiet, and apparently painless.

(MR. AND MRS.) J. C. BEARD.

OWEGO, N. Y., Feb. 2, 1898.

DEPARTED this life, Jan. 7th, 1898, **David T. Scudder**, of Union, Tioga Co., Pa., in the 80th year of his age. Deceased was born in Delaware Co., N. Y., in 1818. He had been in failing health for a number of years, with diseases peculiar to old age, but bore his affliction with christian fortitude, waiting till the summons came. In youth he married Miss Mary Anna Monroe, of Andes, Delaware Co., N. Y., whose parents embarked from Glasgow, Scotland, in 1821, and settled in the above vicinity. Together they toiled, and reared a large family of children, as follows: Mrs. S. S. Vermilya, Mrs. H. D. Muir and Mrs. F. E. Owen, of Grover, Pa., J. N. and J. M. Scudder, and Mrs. F. Stull, of Union, Pa., Mrs. Chas. Spalding, of Canton, Pa., G. D. Scudder, of Corning, N. Y., and Miss Grace Scudder, of New York city. The next to youngest daughter, Mrs. J. Morgau, preceded her father to the grave two years ago. The mother also passed away in 1878, leaving the father sad and lonely in his declining years. He always led a very exemplary christian life, being a member of the Old School Baptist Church something over fifty years. In 1865 he with his family moved from Delaware Co., N. Y., to Pennsylvania, and when the church at Grover was constituted, he was chosen deacon, and ever fulfilled the office with a feeling sense of his unworthiness. His seat was never vacant as long as health permitted him to be there.

Elder Bogardus spoke on the occasion of his funeral, to a large concourse of people that assembled to pay the last sad rites to the departed one. He leaves his family, together with the little church at Grover, Pa., very lonely, but we mourn not as those without hope, for our loss is his gain, and he so longed to be at rest where sickness and sorrow are felt and feared no more. May the Lord prepare us to meet our dear father in the realms of eternal bliss.

AUGUSTA VERMILYA.

Jemina Elizabeth Harlan was born Sept. 13th, 1836, in Crawford Co., Ohio, and lived there until she was eighteen years of age, and then moved with her parents to the State of Iowa, and settled at Jamison's Grove, Butler Co. She was married at that place to Jonathan H. Allen, April 23d, 1856. To this union fourteen children were born. Six of this number have gone before to their long eternal home. Four sons and four daughters, with twelve grandchildren, and brothers and sisters, and many neighbors and friends, survive to mourn their loss. She united with the Primitive Baptist Church in 1860, and was baptized by Elder J. B. Burch, in the fellowship of Providence church, at Clarksville, Butler Co., Iowa, and remained there until the fall of 1897, when she asked the church for a letter, which was granted, and she united with the little Leder church, near Nora Springs, Floyd Co., that place being near her home. She was a faithful member until death. She died Jan. 2d, 1898, being 61 years, 3 months and nineteen days old.

The funeral services were conducted by Elder M. E. Jackson, with Elder E. A. Norton to assist, who tried to speak a few comforting words from Phil. iii. 20; 21, to a goodly number of friends and relatives. After the service repaired to the cemetery, and laid the body to rest to await the morn of the resurrection, when it will, as we believe, awake with the likeness of Christ, and live with him forever, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. M. L. JACKSON.

Mrs. Sarah Hockenbury was born in 1829, and married in 1843, to John Sutton Hockenbury. She was the eldest daughter of Benjamin and Mary Rittehouse, who were long time members of the church at Kingwood, N. J. She was the mother of twelve children, six of whom preceded her to the grave. She had never made a public profession of religion, but as we learn, loved the doctrine of grace, and salvation by grace, and always attended the meetings of the Baptists when it was so that she could. She seldom missed attending the Associations when held at Hope-well, Southampton or Locktown. She was a devoted wife and mother, kind to the poor, never turning any hungry away from her door. As a daughter writes to us, there never was a wife and mother more sincerely mourned. She had been called to pass through deep waters, but her trials have now ended, and her family are comforted with the assurance that she is at rest, asleep in Jesus, from which none ever wake to weep. She passed away from this life suddenly from heart disease on Saturday, Jan. 29th, 1898, at her home in Stockton, N. Y. We attended the funeral on Monday, the 31st, at Stockton, when the Scripture found in 1 Cor. xv. 17, was used as a text. The interment was at Flemington, N. J. May God comfort the afflicted husband who has in his old age lost the companion of his youth and old age. May his blessing rest upon the family as they have need.

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“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1898. NO. 5.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW.--REV. XXI.

NUMBER TWO.

“AND there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” I do not understand this to be another view of the city spoken of in the second verse, but another and more particular statement of the same view. In the first statement there is a general presentation of the new heavens of the gospel, and the perfect church appearing in those heavens, and coming down out of them from God, as his tabernacle in which he dwells with men, and in which he is known as a refuge (Psalm xlviii. 3), giving rest from pain and weeping, and the water of life to him that is athirst. Also there is a

declaration concerning the fearful punishment of those who abide in wickedness. Now the inspired servant of God tells important particulars concerning the vision: first, the call of the angel that made him desire to see it; second, the place from which the view is had; and third, a careful description of the appearance of the city as a whole, and of its various parts. For many years it has been impressed upon my mind at times to write some of my thoughts concerning this wonderful vision; but a deep sense of the vastness of the subject, and of my great insufficiency for it, has kept me from undertaking the work till now. The Lord only can lead me into the truth which was signified unto John in this mysterious, emblematic way, and I desire and pray that he will do so if consistent with his purpose, so that my labor may be in the Lord, and therefore not in vain.

First. The call, “Come hither.” Every one who is to receive a revelation of divine things, is prepared for it by the Spirit awakening a desire in his heart for a further knowledge of those things. No one is self moved in seeking after heavenly things, but every motion of the soul in

that direction is caused by the power of the dear Savior's "Come." Divine life is the gift of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who "quickeneth whomsoever he will." The first experience of the power of that life is the feeling of a strong desire to be righteous before God, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. It is the power of the Savior's call, "Come unto me," felt in the soul. As we desire to move toward holiness, our sins and sinfulness are felt as a hindrance, an impassible barrier, rendering any movement on our part impossible; even as the grave, the bands and the stone, would have rendered any motion on the part of Lazarus impossible after the experience of life made him desire to rise and come forth. But the dear Savior's power renders his call effectual. His "come" works wonders, "even making a way in the wilderness." He reveals himself as the way, and by faith the poor sinner, still sinful, but sorrowful, repentant, and longing to be holy, sees or feels Jesus to be his righteousness; comes forth out of darkness and the bondage of sin by the power of Jesus' call, through faith; is given joy and peace in believing; and, still dead in his body because of sin (Romans viii. 10), but alive unto God in the spirit through Jesus Christ, lives and walks in him by faith, and enters into gospel rest. After this, until the final release "from the bondage of corruption," the child of God realizes divine life in exercise, and power to go forward in the things of that life, only as the Spirit of Christ calls within him, "Come hither." It is to the obedient saint that the apostle says, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 13. The apostles have the same experience of weakness and helplessness in the flesh as the least of the saints, and the same ex-

perience of the unaided power of God in the work of salvation within them, and in every revelation of heavenly things in their souls. Therefore they tell only such truth as each of the saints knows in his own experience, even when describing such glorious visions as these of John; and so by manifestation of the same truth which the saints have felt, though not perhaps understood, they "commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

And here let me remind the spiritual reader that in no other way can any preacher, or writer, even though an apostle, commend himself to the conscience that has been made "a good conscience" by the cleansing power of the blood of Christ, than by telling the same things which have been taught to each child of God by the anointing which teaches all of his children of all things.—1 John ii. 27. When an experimental truth is unfolded from any portion of the inspired Scriptures of truth, it will be commended to the tender, truth-loving conscience, and sink down with sweet power into the heart, never to be removed. Tradition will fight against it, and the natural mind of the very one whose heart has felt its power, and whose conscience has approved it, may be even affrighted from it by dogmatic assertions that the best human authorities are against it, that but a few comparatively approve of it among the churches throughout the land, that it is a "new thing," that it is contrary to reason, and the like; but it will stay in the depths of the soul where it has found a lodging-place, and its power will be sweetly felt in secret, and finally overcome all opposition of the flesh, and come forth into manifestation in the life. There are many who are affected in their outward attitude toward a point of doc-

trine, or an exposition of Scripture, by the dogmatic assertion that the best authorities are opposed to it, and that three-fourths of the Primitive Baptists do not believe it. But that kind of argument never touches the conscience where the truth or the sentiment objected to has been felt, nor removes the spiritual power of it which has been experienced in the soul. A simple, honest, faithful exhibition of the Scriptures that show such a sentiment to be untrue, will be enough for an honest-minded christian. Convince him that the word of God (not human wisdom) is opposed to it, and at once he will desire, and seek of the Lord, to be fully delivered from the error.

"Come hither." The word of the Lord is not to the natural ear, but to the heart. Even when in the flesh Jesus said to the Jews, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word."—John viii. 43. But those unto whom he speaks hear with spiritual ears. The words he speaks to them are spirit and life. (John vi. 63.) Their holy power is felt by them, and cannot be successfully resisted, though they may not know at the time that it is the power of the Lord's call that they have felt, until some prophet or teacher has been sent to interpret it to them. But it "works in them to will." What a longing there is within them to come away from the unholy, selfish desires and lusts of the flesh, away from the enticing vanities of the world, away from the showy but unreliable works of men. The prayer of Moses is theirs: "Let thy works appear unto us, O Lord."—Psalm xc. Their worldly ambitions and projects, their lusts and passions, their troubles, disappointments and afflictions, all seem to lose their power over the mind, and they have only one thing that they desire of the Lord, and that they

will, they must, seek after; and that is that they may be holy, may be free from the vileness of sin, may come near to the Lord, "May dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of their life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." They want to understand more and more of his wonderful works, and pour out their souls in thanksgiving and praise to his blessed name, unhindered by the vanity of the flesh. But the hindrance of the world, the flesh and the devil, is felt, and they cannot come. The new "creature has been made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."—Romans viii; and they cannot do the things that they would. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," and under the heavy burden of that "bondage of corruption," they groan, earnestly desiring to be delivered from that weary bondage, "Into the glorious liberty of the children of God." How common is this experience of wretchedness because we cannot deliver ourselves "from the body of this death."—Romans vii. 24. But there are better seasons for the poor, tried and heavily-burdened children of God, when they are favored to experience the better things of the gospel, as the Lord works in them, not only to will, but to do, of his good pleasure. Again and again the truth is taught them in their sad experience that they cannot lift themselves above the dust when their soul cleaveth to it; cannot release themselves from the law of sin which is in their members. Then they are given richly to realize the blessed power and province of that faith which "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." To see and enter into the good works they long to do, which have been all done and finished for them by

the dear Redeemer, and which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. (Eph. ii.) To know and feel the power of Jesus within them, his arms of love bearing and carrying them, his works revealed to and in them as the perfection of beauty, his love delighting and satisfying their souls, and himself their exceeding joy.

"Come hither," the angel said; but the angel himself wrought the obedience to his own sweet command. "And he carried me away in the Spirit." In the flesh he remained where he was when the angel came and talked with him, but in the Spirit he was far away from the scenes of earth; far away from the hindrances of earthly sorrows, cares and delights. When Paul had a similar experience, he could not tell whether he was in the body or out of the body; but to John it was given to know and state distinctly for the special instruction and comfort of the saints, that it was in the Spirit that he was carried away. For it is true of all the saints, that only in such measure as they are carried away in the Spirit from self and fleshly things, can they see and understand spiritual things. Those things which God hath prepared for them that love him, are not seen by the natural eye, nor heard by the natural ear, nor do they enter into the natural heart of man; "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. By the Spirit those heavenly things were signified to John, and in the Spirit he saw and understood the meaning of the wonderful emblematic vision, and was given the special gift, as an apostle of Christ, to declare those things "to those of like precious faith," in all ages of the world, who "have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things."—1 John ii. 20; 2 Peter i. 1.

"To a great and high mountain." Here is where John was in the Spirit when the bride, the Lamb's wife, which is the church of the living God, was shewn to him. This great and high mountain cannot be seen upon any map of the earth's surface, for it is not an earthly elevation. Its foundation is infinitely above the highest mountains of this world. No man from any height of earthly wisdom, or knowledge, or power, can see the things of the kingdom of God which were here signified to John. The mountain upon which the apostle was placed in the Spirit signifies a spiritual exaltation, the mountain of God's holiness, the height of God's wisdom and knowledge. In the Mount Sinai the Lord shewed to Moses a perfect pattern of the earthly tabernacle; in the Lord's holy mountain he shewed to John the perfect pattern of the spiritual tabernacle of God, the city which is "the perfection of beauty, and the joy of the whole earth." "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

"And shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." The first thing observed by those who have been prepared and enabled to see this city, the gospel church, is that she is descending out of heaven from God. This great and most important truth, which appears at once to the spiritual sight of a child of God, the natural man cannot see. It does not appear to the highest wisdom of this world that salvation is of the Lord from beginning to end; that the church is the workmanship of God from the foundation to the top stone, and that no works of man are found therein in the least degree. The most exalted of human wisdom, the highest attainments of earthly knowledge, cannot enable one to see this truth, "Neither can he know it, because it is

spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. Even the child of God, even that disciple whom Jesus loved, cannot see that everything pertaining to salvation, and to the order of the gospel church, comes down from God out of heaven, only as he is carried away in the Spirit from the power of the flesh, and from the dominion of human wisdom, into the great height of that wisdom which cometh down from above. Whenever the church, or any part of it, is seen in its spirituality by any man, it is seen above us, far up in the heavens of God's eternal truth and glory, out of our utmost reach, but coming down, always coming down toward us. It is only when in "the mountain of the Lord's house," that we can see the Lord's house, and still we look upward, far upward, to see it, always seeing it far above us. No one can in any sense ever look down upon the church of God. Those of the world who look down arrogantly and contemptuously upon the people of God, do not see them in their holy relationship to God as his church. To the spiritually minded man the church always appears above him, far better and more worthy than he, and he feels himself not worthy to look upon her purity and glory, much less to have a home there. But such a one is favored, to his soul's constant surprise and joy, to see all the excellencies and beauties and glory of that church; all the rich grace and salvation and love of God which are in and upon her, coming down to him from God, appearing to him out of the gospel heavens as his own, reaching and embracing in its sheltering and protecting home even one so unworthy as he.

Let us note here as one of the reasons why we are not to regard this city as a literal description of the final and eternal abode of the righteous, that it is seen,

not fixed and remaining in the infinite heights of heaven, but coming down. This, as well as the peculiarity of the descriptions of its various parts, hereafter to be dwelt upon, require us to regard all this vision as emblematically signifying the things of God in the church of Jesus Christ, which are only known by the Spirit of God.—1 Cor. ii. 11.

"Having the glory of God." It is only in the church that the glory of God is seen. It is there that we see the victorious outcome of all his work, and all his battles, the perfect fulfillment of all of his "eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began." Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and placed in Zion as the foundation, and in building up Zion the Lord appears in his glory.—Psalm cii. 16. His people are "a crown of glory in his hand," and are called his glory, and they shall speak of the glory of his kingdom, and shall shew forth his glory, which appears in all their experience of salvation. If any works of man appeared in the church, then the glory of God would not appear there. If one of the purposes of God, who is King in Zion, should ever fail, then his glory would be gone. His glory cannot be united with the glory of man, but must ever be alone, full and sufficient of itself. "His glory covers the heavens, and the earth (the new earth) is full of his praise."

"And her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." The light is not compared to the color of a precious stone, nor to the brilliancy of a jasper stone, but to the stone itself. It is a most rare and striking illustration, but most remarkable when we see its meaning. It is "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel," that is meant here, for Jesus is the light,

and the only light of the church. He lighteth every man that cometh into the new spiritual world, and all other light, professing to be spiritual light, is darkness. The light of the church is different in character from natural light; for while natural light enables the eye to see, and the mind to perceive things, substances and thoughts, which then have an effect upon us, spiritual light is the spiritual substance itself. Jesus, "the Stone of Israel," the "precious corner-stone," is himself the light of his people, as he is also their salvation. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men."—John i. The light manifests to us all our sins, all our sinfulness, "all that is re-proved," and causes us to mourn, and to feel condemned; but in God's own time the light itself is felt as our justification, makes us free, removes our guilt, and becomes our righteousness, our joy and our salvation. We feel it to be "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God," the shining in our hearts of that "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," "in the face of Jesus Christ." It is as a stone most precious to us, a firm foundation for hope and joy to rest upon. It is the perfection of beauty to us, and clear as crystal; for while natural light may deceive us through its own fault, or through the imperfection of our sight, this light experienced in the soul will be absolutely reliable, and will lead us into all truth, for it is itself the truth, and also the way and the life. How clear to the mind of the poor sinner is the fact that he is a sinful, guilty being in the sight of a holy and just God, unworthy of his favor, but justly deserving his anger and condemnation. When he feels the forgiveness of sins, and the love and peace of God are sweetly felt in his heart, then how clearly he sees that the death of

Jesus justifies the sinner. He cannot understand it as he understands earthly things, but he feels it, and rejoices in it. He has been given the precious stone as his light, and in that firm and unwavering light he sees clearly that salvation is of the Lord, and that all contrary doctrines are false and vain. The inspired servant of God is still looking upward in the Spirit from the great and high mountain, as all must look upward who ever shall see the church of the living God. The first thing observed is that the city is coming down, that "all things are of God." The next thing that is seen is the glory of God which she has, and which covers her within and without. Then appears the wonderful peculiarity of her light, likened unto a precious stone; and next in the order of observation is her "wall great and high."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 14, 1898.

LEOTA, Indiana, Dec. 25, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I will venture to give a few thoughts upon the subject of christian duty. And although I may present nothing new, and nothing that you have not often read in the Word of God, and heard from the pulpit, yet I am convinced that the children of God need to have their pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance of their obligations, and to be exhorted to love and good works. I deem this subject to be of vital importance to the church of Christ, involving in a great measure her happiness and prosperity, while in her militant state, as well as the glory of God. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." It is the duty of the believer in Christ to obey his commandments, among which one is to come out from the world

and unite with the church of Christ, and to put on Christ by a public profession in baptism, and then to walk in all the ordinances of his house blameless. In this new relation as a church member, he should take a deep interest in the happiness and prosperity of his or her brethren. They should attend their meetings regularly, and take a share of the burdens of the church, and so fulfill the law of Christ. The worldly-minded professor, who can make a frivolous excuse on the day of his church meeting, and allow his secular concerns to keep him or her from the house of God, should reflect that they thus alienate the affection, and weaken the confidence of their brethren and sisters, while they also bring reproach upon the cause of Christ, and strengthen the bonds of infidelity. The delinquency of church members in attending their meetings, is also very discouraging to the minister of Christ, who having left all his worldly interests behind, and traveled many miles to meet with and preach the Word to the children of God, finds the seat of some brother who lives near by, vacant, and upon inquiry learns that this brother is at home, engaged about his domestic affairs. The pastor of the church has a heavy load of cares and responsibilities pressing him down, and many temptations and trials peculiar to his solemn calling, not the least among them being the carelessness of his brethren in attending their meeting, and aiding him in his public ministry. But when the poor and tried minister feels that he has the approbation and prayers of his brethren and sisters, he takes courage, and can speak boldly as he ought to speak. I exhort the brethren therefore to forsake not the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is. Dear brethren and sisters, I exhort you

moreover to search the Scriptures. Take them as the man of your counsel, as your standard and rule of life, rejecting all religious societies not of divine authority, and especially all secret societies which are of the world, and if so, will come to naught. Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. Pray for the peace of the church, and watch over yourselves and your brethren. Make straight paths for your feet, and as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men, and especially with the household of faith. Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. Dear brethren, how painful it is, and how sad the scene, when a lack of brotherly love is manifested among believers, and that christian forbearance which should exist among brethren is wanting, and instead a spirit of intolerance abounds. Brethren, if you love God keep his commandments. Live up to the covenant which you have entered into. We have covenanted with our brethren to meet once in each month in a church meeting, to set the things of the house of God in order. Do we do this? or are we too busily engaged with the things of the world? If so, let us remember the words of 1 John ii. 16, 17, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." O, brethren, let us be faithful. Let us be ever ready to discharge our duty one to another. If we do this, and meet at the house of God, we shall always find it in order.

Now to the ministry I would add a word. Dear brethren, we should take heed to our walk as well as to the doc-

trine, in order that we may be, as the apostle says, ensamples to the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made us overseers, to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. Hence, brethren, you should so walk that you might be able to say with Paul, "Be ye followers of us as we are also of Christ." Then, brethren, you should take the sword, not to use it upon your brethren, but reserve its use to be applied against the enemies of the truth. And let your light so shine that others seeing your good works, may glorify your Father, which is in heaven. And, dear brethren, as God has so loved us, we ought to love one another. The fact of the exercise of the Father's love to us, shows the near relation which we bear to him as our Father. He sent his Son to redeem us from our sins. Here is an exhibition of the Father's love which he bestows upon us, showing that we are his sons, and if sons, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, that fadeth not away. Being in possession of such an inheritance, they are immensely rich with the true riches from heaven; and those riches are a gift bestowed upon those who are unworthy receivers of such a boon. Hence it is free grace given, and is the earnest pledge of our inheritance. Therefore, dear brethren, we should lay aside all malice, guile, hypocrisy and lying, and every one should speak truth with his neighbor. Also, lay aside all jesting, and joking, which are not convenient, in which with shame we have to say there is too much indulgence, by both members and ministers, to the injury of the cause of the dear Redeemer. And it also effects the confidence of many dear brethren and sisters, and also many who are looking, taking cognizance of the walk and con-

duct especially of ministers, expecting better things of them. Therefore a little reform would not only be good, but is greatly needed, and much called for, to the honor and glory of God. We should have our conversation honest in the sight of God and men, having all our words seasoned with grace, as with salt, that the enemy may have no occasion to speak evil of us. And as the sons of God, we are to be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves, that we may shine forth as lights in the world, though not of the world. Be faithful in the administration of the word, contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

I will now say to the beloved brethren and sisters of the church of Christ, "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, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye love me keep my commandments. 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." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." "Rooted and built up in him, and established in the truth, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of

God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Then let us look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities. In that city the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick, and the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.

I am well pleased with the change in the SIGNS into pamphlet form, making it more convenient. Do with this scribble as you think best. Now may the God of peace that brought again from the dead the 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.

With the sincerest love to the brotherhood, and requesting your prayers, I am yours in much weakness,

THOMAS J. MOUNT.

[How good is admonition when it is scriptural admonition. All the things of which our brother speaks are important. We cannot too carefully watch our conduct and our speech. What a force is in the admonition to watch unto prayer. The enemies within us are many, and we are weak. We are made to feel that we need help; and this leads to prayer. The more one watches, the more will he feel the need of help from God. A consciousness of these things felt in the heart will make one sober and thoughtful and careful. It has been said that if these things which are evil are in the heart, they might as well be given utterance. How false and fleshly is this conclusion. If we are greatly troubled with evil thoughts or desires, shall we therefore distress our

brethren by exhibiting them? What does bridling the tongue mean? What does taking heed to our steps mean?—ED.]

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 3.

"BUT if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost."

This subject has been upon my mind for some time, and I thought that I would give my views upon it, hoping that the good Lord may direct my pen in the way of that truth which is in Jesus. Nothing but truth will ever do us any good. The ark wherein eight souls were saved, I believe was a figure of the church militant. They, like Noah, are the only ones who are righteous in keeping the ordinances as delivered to them by the great Head of the church. Before the flood, we are told that when the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, they took them wives of them; and when they bare children, they became mighty men of renown. This, it seems, was the cause of the destruction that followed. Noah was perfect in that generation. Now I do not believe that all that were destroyed by the flood were eternally lost. The Lord knows them that are his. So I believe that there is but a small remnant of the Lord's people who are in the church, because the daughters of men, as modern institutions may be called, are so beautiful. And the god of this world, or the ministers of Satan, and false teachers who compass sea and land to make one proselyte, so that in many places there is nothing else, are those of whom the apostle speaks, who are transformed as the ministers of light. So the gospel is hid from them, they are lost. A tender babe, having life given, will take hold and eat what is given by the hand that feeds them. Many thousands are fed upon falsehoods taught them in youth,

and their fetters are made strong by tradition, and they live and die in Babylon. Yet are they the Lord's people, and in death are made to rejoice that they are going to the Savior. Now I believe firmly that but a very small portion of the Lord's people were saved in that ark, which was a figure of the church. But just as many as are righteous in keeping the ordinances, and are not willing to marry and intermarry with antichrist, or the institutions of men, are saved. Now if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. One who is dead cannot be said to be lost. Jesus came to save those who were lost. So I do believe that the apostle had under consideration the children of God, and that he would say that the gospel was hid from their minds, being blinded by false teachers. For we hear the dear Savior say to the false teachers, that they would not themselves enter in, nor suffer those who were entering. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than themselves." We now and then find some whom God has brought out of Babylon with a high hand, and to whom he had given this treasure in the earthen vessel; and I doubt not that many thousands are there still, whose discernment is weak, who cannot discern their right hand from their left. They have been born of the Spirit, but have been raised and taught the language of the Ashdods. If they should by chance hear of the true church, their teachers would tell them that this doctrine is of the devil, as they told the Savior. When we view the Arminianism which belongs to the flesh, and which oftentimes is so destructive to us who are in the faith, and who do believe the gospel, and have a

discernment between truth and error, we cannot wonder that these others are blinded. We so often feel our backslidings, so that we do not hardly know whether we have ever tasted of the Lord that he is gracious? The God of this world seems to blind us. We realize our lost and helpless condition. Often our hope seems clean gone forever, for we seem to ourselves so impure, and we hate and abhor ourselves. At such times the gospel seems to be hid from us. Yet we must pray to him who is able to save; and there is salvation in none other. How can we sing the songs of Zion in a strange land? I have no doubt that there are many of the children of God in the town in which I live, yet they are joined to their idols. The religion of the world is so popular. They are trying to bring souls to Christ. They have been raised and taught in that way. I find that the greatest woes pronounced by the Savior and his apostles, were against false teachers. I and my family are the only ones that differ from them in this town. I often feel that my soul is vexed with their abominations, yet while I condemn their doings, I cannot condemn them, for I feel that I, also, am a poor sinner, and unless I am saved by the mercy of God alone, I shall be eternally lost. I have no righteousness of my own to plead. I feel to be a lonely wanderer here in an enemy's land, having no abiding city. This world is a wilderness of woe. Will I be so happy as to meet those whom I love, as the excellent of the earth, in that blessed abode? O how I desire the prayers of the people of God, that I may come off conqueror, and meet where parting is no more.

May I be forgiven for so encroaching on your time. From your poor, unworthy brother, if indeed I can claim such a rela-

tionship. May the Lord be with you in my prayer.

E. D. VARNES.

FARMINGTON, Ill., Nov. 14, 1897.

[WE are always glad to hear from our brother Varnes. The Lord has kept him steadfast in the truth of salvation by grace for many years. But we want to say that the darkness and anxiety of mind of which our brother speaks, when he can hardly claim a hope in Christ, and sees so much of his own vileness, is an evidence of life and light from the Lord, instead of his being led captive by the devil at his will. When it is given to any man to see his great vileness, it is because the light is shining within him, and not because he is walking in darkness. What he sees in himself makes him sorrowful, but still he sees. When his mind was darkened by sin, and the god of this world, he had no sorrow, for he then saw nothing to be sorrowful over. But now the path of the just is shining, and he sees all the evils of his nature. He is walking in the light, but not in joy. But when he is given to look up, and to see the sun whose light is shining around him, then he can forget the trouble for a little time, and can rejoice in Christ as a Savior. We do not doubt, as our brother says, that many of the chosen and redeemed people of God are in darkness; that is, they do not see the truth, which makes free in Christ. The gospel is hid to all men by nature. It is true of all men by nature that they are lost. But when the Lord calls a man by grace, and quickens him by his Spirit, then he is no longer among the lost, but is possessed of an experience of salvation. He may have never heard the gospel, in the ministry of it, but he has it in his heart, and he will know the joyful sound when he hears it. The gospel will come to him, in its ministry, as a witness of

that which he has already felt. We can feel for our brother, living alone as he does, for during all the years of our youth we ourself had no church-privileges. How precious they seemed when it was given us to enjoy them.—ED.]

DELMAR, Delaware, Dec. 5, 1897.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I feel like writing a few lines for the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS, if you shall think them worth their notice. If not, throw them into the scrap basket. I leave it to your better judgment. A portion of the word of God is on my mind. It is found in Deut. xxxii. 9-12. 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, and beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." My mind is called back to the promise that God made to Abraham, saying to him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing."—Gen. xii. 1. 2. The Arminians say that here were conditions, but I cannot see it that way. For the Lord God commanded him to go out of his country and from his kindred. Here we have presented the Lord's people, when he calls them by his grace. They, like Abraham, look by faith to the land that the Lord has promised. Abraham doubtless thought that he would find a land of peace and plenty, and that his

seed would multiply in his day, and be a great joy to him. But like every child of God, he met with many trials and disappointments. We read that he tried to help the Lord in what he had promised, thus showing his weakness. Seeing that his wife was barren, and that this land was given to him and his seed for a possession, at the command of Sarah, he took to himself her handmaid, and she conceived and bare him a son. Thus the Lord was leading him, but he could not see why it should be thus. But this son was not the promised seed. Still, how could it ever be, or how could this promise ever be fulfilled, except as every child of God, in his weakness comes to feel, that every hope is cut off, and that God has forgotten him, forgotten to be gracious? Then we read that Sarah, his wife, in her old age brought forth a son, thus showing the power of God. Thus we, like Abraham in the extremity of our need, are brought to see that it is the Lord that is leading us by his almighty power. This son who was born to him was Isaac. And Isaac had born to him two sons, Jacob and Esau. And the Lord said of them, even before they were born, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated. This shows that one does not have to come to the age of accountability, knowing good and evil, before the Lord chose his own, but that he chose them before the foundation of the world. We read, as we go on that it was given to Isaac to bestow a blessing upon his son, and he would have blessed his oldest son, but the Lord had dimmed his eyes, so that he could not see, and had put it into the mind of Rebekah to deceive her husband, and so cause that the blessing should be bestowed upon Jacob, the younger; thus kindling the wrath of Esau against him, and so compelling Jacob to leave his father's house, to go to his mother's people, where he was to find a wife. Like all the people of God, he had no knowledge of what was before him, and did not seem to realize that the Lord was leading him. But it is said that he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, and the sun was setting, and he took of the stones of that place and made a pillow. Dear trembling one, do we not many times in our experience come to that certain place where we feel that the sun has set, and that the night is upon us, with nothing but stones for a pillow; and in this dark night, dreaming as it were, we see the ladder that Jacob saw, which is Jesus, with the angels of God ascending and descending, with the Lord standing above all? for we always see him above us, and then we are made to fear, and to say, this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. Then Jacob was led to the house of Laban, his mother's brother, where his first service was easy; but he soon met with many troubles, and the older he grew the more the troubles. Has it not been so with the people of God of to-day? Jacob looked forward to a better time, but it did not come to him. Even his son, whom he loved more than the rest, was sold, and he was led to think that he was dead. Ah! says one, does the Lord deal with his people in that way? I thought they were a happy people. Let me say to you who feel that you are not worthy to even take the name of God upon your lips, and who look upon the church as being composed of good people, you are being led by the Lord, as Jacob was. But if you look forward to the time when you will feel that you are good enough to become one among them, if you are his child, you will never see the time when you will feel that way. But

the time will come, when you will rejoice in Christ as your Savior, and will say that it is by grace that you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. And this is so, that no man should boast. Moses said the Lord's portion is his people. Arminians claim that the whole world might be his people if they would, and if they will give their hearts to God, and let him save them. I do not understand the Scriptures to set forth any such doctrine. He declares that he has a remnant according to the election of grace, and that they are a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Still further, he said that they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. I am convinced, from reading the Scriptures, that there is but one people who can claim these promises, and they are that poor, despised few whom the world says are behind the times. For I do believe that the Old School Baptists, or those who believe this doctrine, are his people. Then Jacob said that the Lord found him in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness. Dose he not find all his people there? I feel many times that I am in that land of wilderness. And there the Lord led them about, and instructed them. Each one feels that he needs his instruction, but says, I am not worthy of his notice, but if I am one of his people, he will keep me as the apple of his eye. Then he said, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest," &c. The eagle is the strongest bird of the air, and its nature is to build on a shelf of a high rock, and when the young are old enough to fly, the parent birds will pull away the nest from under them, stick by stick, and then push the young eagles off, and if they cannot fly, with watchful care she flies under them, and bears them up on her wings to the rock again. The eagle being strong, represents in the figure, the

power of God. Also, the God whom we worship, builds upon a Rock, for he has said, "Upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And as the sticks of the nest are pulled from under the young eagles, so the Lord pulls the sticks of self-righteousness from under the child of God, until he is sinking in utter despair. Then the Lord puts under him his arm, and holds him up, and places his feet upon a rock; the Rock of salvation. And so the Lord alone leads him, and there is no strange God with him. The people of God feel many times that the way is dark and dreary, and that they surely cannot be his, or they would not be so dealt with. Yet, if we turn to the Scriptures, we find that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were thus led. The Lord alone did thus lead them. He said, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He is also the God of all those that are led in the way in which they were led. For it is said, that there is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. May the Captain of our salvation be with us wherever we may roam or rest, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in hope of life everlasting,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

ARCADIA, Ohio, Jan. 5, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I was born of Old School Baptist parents, and raised by them. (I was not raised a Baptist, however, as the world claims.) When I was a boy of fifteen years, I was very profane, and none of the best of boys in other directions. I thought when I got to be twenty-five or older, I would be a christian, for I thought I could do so. I fully thought it was in my power. I had an attack of lung fever and measles, and all gave me up to die. My father asked me if I ever thought of death. I told him no,

I soon began to mend. I thought if I got well, I would be a better boy. But before I hardly got able to work I was twofold worse than I was before. My parents never told me that I must join the Baptist church. I was at an association at Eagle Creek church, about fifteen years ago. I was sitting in a wagon, opposite the stand. Elder Levi Sherwood was preaching. He said, "Poor, trembling child of grace, are you here to-day?" "All at once there was a burden of sin resting upon me, that weighed me down so that I looked around to see if it was not on my shoulder. With tears streaming down my face I said, "Where shall I go?" It is just; I am justly condemned; O, how miserable, how wretched I am; the darkest regions in hell are my portion. And it is just; I will go down into some dark woods. I do not deserve to be in the presence of human beings; I am unworthy, but praise the Lord, though I am the poorest, meanest of all, I want to praise the name of Jesus." Time went on year after year. I thought, what does this mean, that when I was reading the Bible, it seemed to be talking to me? I thought, can it be possible that I have faith in Jesus? I went after a time to the Old School Baptist meeting. Elder George A. Bretz preached at VanBuren. I thought I was the least of all, if one at all. Then I felt that it was my duty to be baptized, and I was compelled to offer myself to the church. But it seemed that I had no experience. Then my mind ran back to the time when I felt the load of sin and guilt. I was received, and baptized by Elder A. F. Dove. At first my mind was clouded, but this feeling left me. I rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. I thank God for the SIGNS. I thank him for the gift of his Son.

C. C. CONOWAY.

LINDALE, Texas, Jan. 18, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I herewith inclose a letter written to me by our beloved brother, Elder H. B. Jones, which has been a source of comfort and consolation to me, coming as it did when I was bereft of my comrade in battle, my true and faithful yokefellow, brother F. Odom, with whom I have spent many pleasant days in traveling, and hours in the pulpit.

Your brother in tribulation, if nothing more,
F. LODEN.

MT. VERNON, Texas, Jan. 2, 1898.

ELDER F. LODEN—ESTEEMED BROTHER IN THE AFFLICTIONS AND CONSOLATIONS OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST:—It is with somewhat of a sad heart I take my pen this evening, to write a few lines to you. Your card containing the sad intelligence of brother Odom's death, reached us in due time, and I can hardly realize it as a fact, that he is no more. A good man (speaking from a human standpoint) is gone; a blessed and gracious gift to the people of God, is removed from our midst. Though like the prophets of old, and the apostles, and our blessed Master, too, he received his share of the persecutions at the hands of those to whom he was given. O, could we say with one of old, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken; blessed be the name of the Lord." I feel like the Scripture is applicable to him, to the extent of his gift, as it was to the apostle, "He has fought a good fight, he has kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness," which he has now gone to possess. I know that while living, he sought not the praise of men, and I will not here undertake to express my appreciation of him, but I do desire to thank the Lord at all times for his blessings to his people,

in bestowing such gifts upon them. And I do desire to trust him for a continuance of such blessings. My hand trembles as I write of this dispensation of God's providence, as I think that I, too, before long must be called from this stage of action, to meet the Judge of the quick and the dead. Shall it be with triumph, or regret that I shall meet the call? O, am I mistaken in my calling? Have I presumed to take upon myself things that do not belong to me? Have I been deceived, and have I deceived God's people? These are questions now arising in my mind. If these things are so, O the woes that are in store for me. I know that I have labored much among the dear people of God, trying to strengthen, comfort and instruct them, in the things of their Master's kingdom, but have these efforts arisen from a good source, or are they the fruits of pride, vanity and ambition? It makes me fear and doubt, because I see so much of pride, vanity and ambition, in this sinful heart of mine. O, how poor I see myself to be this evening. Only a little while past, I felt full of confidence as I talked to the people, of God's power, wisdom, goodness and mercies, and of the certainty of the fulfillments of all of his promises, and even now I feel sure of the sufficiency of all these things in behalf of all his chosen people, but the question is, am I one of those interested in these things? If I am, all is well with me; if not, woe is me. I can but leave the matter in the hands of him who never done wrong. Dear brother, a few more days, months, or years, at most, of trials and tribulation, mingled perhaps with joys at times, and we, too, will be called hence, as our beloved brother and yokefellow has. Then all our doubts will be solved, and we will know the end of the matter. May it be revealed to and in us ere this

time, that we are really interested in that "Inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

I feel to sympathize with you in your loneliness, but God is able to give you grace according to your trial. I hope that it may be your mind, and the Lord may open the way, for you to visit us some time in the future. Give our love to sister Odom. Tell her that she has our sympathy and prayers. Pray for us, that we may live in peace, and feel the assurance of acceptance at the throne of grace.

Your little brother in the afflictions of the gospel,

H. B. JONES.

(See obituary notice of Elder F. Odom in this number.)

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

A SISTER requested me to write for publication in the SIGNS upon the above subject. For two reasons I have much hesitancy in attempting to comply with her request. I feel my ignorance in spiritual matters, and this I give for the first and sufficient reason. My second reason is that I have no desire to write for publication, unless it may prove profitable to those who read the SIGNS. If we could have the assurance before we write that our words written would furnish spiritual light and comfort to the saints, the task of writing would seem quite easy. We do know that the word of the Lord shall not return to him void. He alone can make the work profitable, giving life and instruction to his children. With the hope that the Lord may open our understanding to write and receive the truth, I will venture a few thoughts. The word impute is derived

from *im*, which means upon, and *puto*, to charge or reckon. So the meaning of imputed righteousness is a righteousness charged or reckoned upon the person for whom it is intended. As the subject of imputed righteousness must necessarily be passive, it can never be acquired by works or by purchase. Paul quotes from David, "Even as David describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." If it could be obtained by works, it could not be said to be imputed, but would be simply a reward for labor performed. Paul writes again of those who receive abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness. Now we may sometimes overlook the true meaning of even small words which yet are important to the understanding of the sense of the passage. The true meaning of the word give, is never to offer. It does not even imply the assent of the person to whom it is given. If it did, it would mean to offer. An offer depends upon the assent of the person receiving, but a gift does not. When Christ said of his sheep, "I give unto them eternal life," he did not say that their consent should be asked, or impose any conditions. They should be made willing in the day of his power. So this gift of righteousness comes without any conditions, and is gladly received by those who hunger and thirst after it. This righteousness is the righteousness of Christ, imputed or reckoned unto his people. Paul speaks as follows, "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. Again, we read in the Psalms of David, that we shall receive blessings from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of salvation.

There is another sense in which the children of God receive righteousness, and that is by inheritance. In worldly matters, property left by will is never called an inheritance. If a gift of land is left by will, it is called a devise; if personal property, it is called a legacy. But in every case where property is inherited, a relationship is implied. The word inheritance, is derived from *Haeres*, which means an heir. And we read in Romans, "And if children then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." John writes, "And now are we the sons of God." "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." The above, and many other portions of the word, establishes the fact of the relationship between Christ and his people. This blessed relationship entitles his children to all the wonderful inheritance left for the saints to receive and enjoy. In Eph. i. 11, we read, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance." Now, among the blessings which the sons of God inherit, is righteousness reckoned to their account, because of their relationship to him. To the elect children of God, Christ is made righteousness. Those who are looking for righteousness through the works of the flesh, will never find it there. It is an imputed and inherited blessing, and it can be found only in Christ, "Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

B. F. HAMILTON.

NEWARK, Del.

ALDIE, Va., Jan. 21, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER FORAKER:—I was agreeably surprised yesterday at the receipt of a letter from you. I know that

you are very busy generally, and did not suppose that you would think it worth your time, to spend any of it on a worthless creature like myself. I ought to appreciate it very much, and I think that I do. At any rate, I am glad to hear from you, and to hear just such things as you write. Your letter makes me think of the motley crowd that joined David when he was trying to keep out of the hands of King Saul, who was threatening his life. Those who were in debt, or discontented, or fleeing from justice on account of crime, went to him, a large company. So, you seem to be of a similar company, hiding, or trying to, with our King David, confessing yourself guilty of willful sin, and trying to escape from it. Is it not strange that we love just such company; and the blacker our companions paint themselves, the better we love them? At any rate it is so with me. I cannot believe there is one in the church so utterly unworthy as myself. That, I suppose, is the reason why I have love for those who talk about themselves, as you and brother Coulter both do, in the letters which I received from you both yesterday. Now if you had told me how good you were getting, how much you had improved upon what you once were, and how you were growing in wisdom and knowledge, you would have left me out entirely. Strange, is it not, that we should seek such company, sinners, self-confessed sinners, vile as the vilest, who know that they cannot tell what they see and feel of all manner of uncleanness and meanness, as you call it? Well, these are the companions of our Lord, our David. He eateth with publicans and sinners. This was the charge that good people made against him very many years ago, when he was in the flesh. He does the same to-day. He is found only with sinners. We look

for him in vain elsewhere. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. But they are sinners only in their own nature and life. In him they are holy and without blame. So, all their plea, and all their hope is, "A sinner saved by grace." So, our David is king over all his followers, and they are a poor, blind, lame, halting, ragged, unclean, beggarly company, as they themselves confess. But his glory is upon them, and he sees them not as they see themselves, but instead, in his own likeness and glory.

Pardon this poor letter, and write again when you feel like it. Love to yourself and sister Foraker, and to the brethren and friends in Philadelphia.

As ever, yours unworthily,

J. N. BADGER.

[If brother Badger is disposed to blame any one for the liberty taken with this private letter, he must not blame brother Foraker, and we do not think that he ought to blame us either, but rather, himself for writing such a good letter. We read it, and we take the liberty to publish it.—ED.]

MAYS LICK, Ky., Oct. 26, 1897.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BROTHERN:—I herewith inclose a letter from brother Dudley G. Johnson, which I would like to see in the SIGNS. I received it some months ago, and feeling that it is worthy of a place in your paper, I submit it to you.

Your brother in hope,

R. L. TURNER.

LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., April 6, 1897.

MR. ROBERT TURNER—DEAR BROTHER:—If we love one another, I see no reason why we should not manifest that love by word and action. As I often think of you, and feel a desire to write, I

will try this morning. Trying may prove one thing, viz: the desire. When Christ is manifested in the heart of a child of God, it is manifest to others of like precious faith. So when I see him manifest in others, it gives me some hope that he is with me also, else I could not love them. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." When he came, he found sin and all uncleanness in the world. His doctrine rained upon the just and the unjust, bringing condemnation upon the dead sinner; but it was glad tidings to the believer. Christ said, "This is the work of God that ye believe." Thus we see how the glad tidings reached them by the power, or the work of God. In those days, this divided the world into two classes. The one had only the nature of Adam, and inherited the sin, disease and death of Adam. The other had not only the life of Adam, but also a higher, the life of Christ. While this class experienced the effects of sin, disease and death through Adam, yet, through Christ, they triumphed over death, hell and the grave, and enjoyed the full inheritance of their elder Brother. It does but little good to read of his coming into the world nearly nineteen hundred years ago, unless we know something of his coming into the world to-day, that is, his coming into the world in us. We cannot understand the coming, and purpose of him then, unless he be come in us. For, "No man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost," and "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God." Hence, if we confess in our experience, the coming of Christ, we can take comfort in the thought that we are of God. Then what evidence have we that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, not only

in those days, but that he is in us to-day, and walks in us? We are such doubting creatures that we are continually going over what little evidence we have, and, like his disciples, we follow him, ever listening to his words, and wishing for the crumbs that fall from the Master's table, hoping that thus we may find some evidence of his power in us. He never ceases to lead his own. Though they may feel that he is gone, still his power is guiding, protecting, leading them on, whether on the sea in the midst of danger, or in his banqueting-house, under the banner of love, or wherever they may be. If by the eye of faith, we can see what he did when he came into the world, then by the light of the Spirit, we can recognize his work in us to-day. The first of his sayings that I recall is in Luke ii. 46. In the midst of the doctors of the law, both hearing them and asking them questions. Does he not lead us here also? Do we not hear the law in all its terrors, while question after question is brought up by the Spirit of Jesus, in the first of our experience? Then the beginning of miracles, when he made that wine which brought cheer to the hearts of his friends. Did not he make wine for you, and are not his servants still bearing this wine to the governor of the feast? Then we go with him to Capernaum (city of consolation) and to Jerusalem, and find that he still purgeth the temple of buyers, and of them that sell, and find in our experience that the idea of buying and selling is driven out of us, if indeed we are the temple of the living God. Then, in our experience we learn of his death and resurrection, when he is revealed as our ever living Head. He not only found the dead and raised them, cleansed the lepers, cured the sick, made the blind to see, and the lame to walk then, but

now to-day, he is doing the same thing in you. He raised you from the dead, and made you see. He casts out devils from us daily, and when we are blind, makes us see. It is comforting to know that he has done this for others, but is it not a joyful time when we feel that he is doing these things for us personally? Thus when led of the Spirit, we can see that Jesus came into the world then, and we can rejoice now, because he is manifesting the same power now in us, that he did then. May you be led by the Spirit to trace this much further than I have done, and to pardon all my blindness, for the sake of him who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief, is my prayer. Love to all the household of faith.

Yours, as I trust, in Jesus,
DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

MUNROE, Randolph Co., W. Va., Nov. 29, 1897.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—If one so weak and sinful can be permitted to call you brother. I do love to read the SIGNS. They are a feast of fat things to me. I just look for them as I would for a dear friend. They contain nearly all the preaching I get. The editorial in the last number did me good. It was from 1 Tim. iv. 16. I live quite a distance from the church, so that I do not get to meeting very often, but I do so love to meet the children of God. But it is seldom that I can enjoy that privilege. "Like one alone I seem to be, O! is there any one like me?" I am a poor sinner save by grace, and have no confidence in the flesh. I can truly say with Paul, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing." The enemies of truth would say, if I believed as you do, I would take my fill of sin. My dear brethren and sisters, we

have all had our fill of sin. My soul's desire is to be without sin. "But when I hear, or read, or pray, sin is mixed with all I do. You that love the Lord indeed, tell me is it thus with you?" I professed a hope, and joined the Old School Baptists in 1849. I have never found any righteousness in myself. But Christ is my righteousness, and he is my redemption. He is all and in all to me. He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. He is Lord of lords and King of kings.

" My Jesus did the law fulfill,
His work is all my plea;
My Jesus and his righteousness
Is all the way I see.

From every other hope I've come;
All other names decline;
Let others take what road they choose,
Let Christ alone be mine."

Do with this poor, imperfect scribble as you think best.

EMELINE FINDLEY.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

BIBLES WITH COMPREHENSIVE HELPS.

WE are so highly pleased with the comprehensive helps, connected with the new list of Bibles advertised, that we wish to call special attention to them, feeling assured that all who purchase one of these Bibles, will be equally pleased. They certainly contain the most complete and systematic set of helps yet published. The table of contents, together with the general index, enables one to readily turn to any part of the helps, for such information as they may desire. For further description, and for prices, see pages sixty-three and sixty-four, in No. 2, of this volume. In ordering please be sure to give the *number* of Bible you wish, for there are many Bibles of the same price, but no two of the same number.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

*All letters for this paper should be ad-
dressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.***BRIEF REPLIES.**

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—Will you please write replies to the following questions? Who are the sheep, and who is the hireling spoken of in John x. 12? Are other people called sheep beside the people of God? Did God ever commit his sheep to the care of hirelings, or are his ministers called hirelings, who flee when they see the wolf coming? Again, Jesus says, My sheep follow me, and a stranger will they not follow. Now Peter, writing of false teachers, says, Many shall follow their pernicious ways. Does this mean many of God's people (or sheep) follow their pernicious ways? Remember Jesus says, A stranger will they not follow. Please bear with my folly, if these questions are not appropriate, or not convenient, and pass them by unnoticed. I wish you and the SIGNS success. I like your editorial of December 1st on predestination.

Your brother,

DAVID L. McNEES.

MEMPHIS, Tennessee.

R E P L Y .

Jesus said that he was the true Shepherd, who would lay down his life for the sheep. He enforces the truth that the sheep are his by drawing a contrast between a mere hireling, who had no interest in caring for the sheep, save to earn his wages, and the true Shepherd,

who had a real interest in and love for the sheep as his own. He would enforce the truth that none could love or care for the sheep as well as he. The figure would be well understood by his disciples to whom he spoke. They were familiar with the life of the shepherd, for it was a common occupation in that land and day. The shepherd whose own the sheep were, would have a real affection for them. He lived with them, and shared in all that befell them. He bore danger, heat and cold, and storm, with them. His interests were wrapped up in them. Now, Jesus says to his disciples, that his interest in his people is just as intimate as that of a shepherd is in his own sheep. He did not come as a hireling, but as the owner of his own flock. The Father had given them to him. He said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." And for their redemption from sin, death and hell, which were their deadly foes, he would willingly lay down his life. No other would do what he came to do. In the twenty-third Psalm, we have the heart-experience of one of the sheep described. And David but expresses the confidence of all who know the Lord in their souls' salvation. The sheep are the believing children of God, who have been chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and who are said to be given to him in the covenant of redemption. The hireling embraces all whose own the sheep are not. The rulers and priests of that old covenant were all hirelings, who sought their own interests, and not the good of the flock. All who in this day serve for reward, and who do not love the people of God and his cause, who are selfish in all that they do, and know not the love of God, would come under the same name. The difference between legal service, and gospel service, is set forth

here. Thus Jesus emphasizes his work for his people. Thus he declares that he does not render hireling service, but loves his people to the end.

Question second. Are other people called sheep, beside the people of God?

Jesus never says of any one that they are his sheep, but those who are chosen of God. In the hundred or more places where the word sheep is used in the Scriptures, aside from the texts where sheep simply are meant, there is no place where it means anything else but the people of God. In the Old Testament the people of Israel are often meant, but in the New Testament the word universally means the spiritual flock of his choice. The Lord calls his chosen ones sheep, and no others.

Question third. Did God ever commit his sheep to the care of hirelings?

In the sense in which our God calls his servants as undershepherds, we do not understand that he ever commits his flock to the care of hirelings; but hirelings assume to be called of God to this work, and so often deceive the people. And in his mysterious providence he sometimes has so dealt with his people, as to suffer them to learn by bitter experience the difference between the good shepherd, and all others who are not actuated by love to the flock, and imbued with the Spirit of the Master. Israel naturally had sore experiences of this kind. When they departed from God as their true Shepherd and Guide, he allowed false shepherds to rule among them, who did not feed them with the word of God, but rather filled themselves with the fat of the flock. We fully believe that in this gospel day there have been times when the true people of God have been ensnared for a time, and have forsaken the true Shepherd for the cry of false shep-

herds who cry, lo here, and lo there. At such times they by sore experience learn who is their true Shepherd, and are taught to not forsake him.

Question fourth. Are his ministers called hirelings when they flee if they see the wolf coming?

We do not understand that his ministers are here alluded to. We do think that the Savior meant those who were false shepherds under the old dispensation, and those who have gain in view now, instead of the good of the flock. Our Lord's servants are full of imperfections, and are often chided for many things in which they fail, and manifest a wrong spirit, but still they are not, as it seems to us, counted with hirelings in the word of God. There is with all their imperfections, a broad difference between them and all false teachers.

Question fifth. Jesus says, My sheep follow me, and a stranger will they not follow. Now Peter, writing of false teachers, says, Many shall follow their pernicious ways. Does this mean many of the sheep or people of God? The Lord says that they will not follow a stranger.

When the Savior says that his sheep will not follow the voice of a stranger, we understand him to mean one who is manifest to them as a stranger; and generally we believe that all who bring false doctrine, or who have no love for the truth, or the people of God, are meant by strangers. When such ones are made manifest as strangers, the sheep who have known the true Shepherd will not follow them. Those who have ever kept sheep, and watched their ways, know how timid they always are of strangers. If a stranger should come to them in the guise of one they knew, or of the shepherd whom they had followed, then they, so long as he appeared to them to be the

true shepherd, would follow him. But when he should become known to them in his true colors, then they would not follow him. This is what we understand the Savior to mean. His sheep know his voice, for they have heard it speaking peace to their souls, but when a stranger shall speak, they know not his voice, and they will not follow it. That voice which speaks what they have heard and learned is sweet to them, and they love it, and recognize it as the voice of him who has saved them, and called them. When the true gospel sound is heard, each humble-hearted child of God rejoices in it, for it is a familiar sound. The person may be so disguised as to deceive the sheep, but the voice they know. Some have tried to imitate the voice, but soon the sheep have detected the deception, and the voice of a stranger they would not follow. Now we do not understand Peter to say anything that would contradict this. These deceivers come as wolves, in heart, but in sheep's clothing. They speak plausibly, as the Judaizing teachers spoke to the brethren in Galatia; and sometimes they speak so plausibly that even the sheep do not at first detect the imposture. Especially the lambs of the flock may be deceived, for they have not yet learned wisdom in the way of experience; but even they, when the false teachers come in their true colors, will not follow them, for they know not the voice. Some of the many who follow their pernicious ways may be deceived, when they really desire nothing so much as to be the disciples of the true Shepherd. Some of the many no doubt are those who really know not the Lord, and who have only the profession of godliness. But after a time our God will sift out the precious from the vile. He will come to his own, and speak so to their

hearts, that they shall recover themselves from the snare of the wicked one. When the voice is understood, the sheep will not follow a stranger. From paths of sin, and from all that is evil, our Lord will lead his people out. Remember the parable of the wandering sheep. How comforting to the weak and trembling lambs, that the Lord knows them all, and that he will so speak to their souls that they shall know his voice. No matter how greatly they may be deceived by false teachers, or shepherds, he will cause them to hear his voice, and to know it, and to follow him. He watches over them all. How blessed their estate!

BROTHER W. J. Corzine wishes our views upon the parable of the unclean spirit, recorded in Luke xi.

Some two years ago, we think, we had something to say editorially upon this subject. At this time, therefore, we desire to just say that we have little doubt that the Savior in this parable referred to that generation among the Jewish people. At one time they were ready to take him and make him king; but there was no real love of God, and godliness, in them. The unclean spirit seemed to have gone out of them; there was an apparent reception of him and his word, but yet they were not subjects of his grace. Therefore we soon see the old spirit of unbelief returned, accompanied by spirits manifold more wicked, and we hear the same multitude which had spread palm branches before him, and cried hosanna, crying, crucify him, crucify him. We think that the Savior meant this in this parable. It also well presents the effects of the modern revival spirit of an intensely worldly religion. Men under the influence of some excitement, and of slavish fear, and an equally slavish hope

of reward, make a profession of religion, and depart from many bad habits for a season. But this is not the lasting, life-giving work of grace, and therefore we see them soon either becoming zealous opposers, and persecutors of the doctrine of grace, and of those who love it, or else they go back to their former state of ungodliness, and live more vilely than before.

AN unknown brother in Batavia, Iowa, asks for our views upon Matthew xiii. 24, 25.

If he will turn to the number of the SIGNS for May 1st, last year, he will find an extended editorial upon the subject. We do not know that we could add anything to what was then said. Sister Hollingsworth also asks some questions upon the same subject. She writes from California. To both we would say, we are fully convinced that the whole parable relates to the kingdom of heaven, which was never set up until the gospel day, and that therefore it cannot be understood to apply to anything whatever before the gospel day. It relates to the manifest kingdom of God now. This was what we tried to say when we wrote upon it.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

ERRATA.—In the letter from brother R. Scates, the word "controversy," on page 106, second column, sixteenth, line, should read conversation.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

MATTHEW VII. 7, 8.

"Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

These words are plain and emphatic, and sufficiently simple to be comprehended by the merest infants among the children of God, whose minds are unbiased by false teaching. But such has been the indefatigable zeal of the enemies of the Lord, to pervert the Scriptures of truth, that even these words of our divine Master, have been strangely misconstrued, and it is to be feared that some of God's dear children have been imposed upon by the enemy, in regard to their real meaning. To understand properly any Scripture, especially the text under consideration, it is indispensably necessary that we should observe who is the speaker, and who are the subjects of address, as well as the true meaning of what is spoken. The Scriptures generally are a communication from God himself. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and God spake to the fathers, the ancient patriarchs, by the prophets, so that their inspired communications to Israel were no less the words of God than that which he has in these last times spoken to us by his Son. The words of our text were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and therefore must be regarded as clothed with all the power and infallibility of the supreme and eternal Godhead. They are entitled to the sacred reverence which we have for him from whose lips they were spoken. No one, we conclude, who fears the Lord and trembles at the majesty of his words, would designedly pervert their meaning, or coun-

tenance their perversion by others. But so it is, as we shall presently show, this with the general tenor of the Scriptures is most awfully misrepresented, distorted, misinterpreted and misapplied, by very many who claim to be the children of God, and ministers of the gospel. By them it is generally, and perhaps we may say universally, applied to mankind in general, and to the unconverted or unregenerated, in particular. Those who contend for what they call "Free agency," offered salvation on conditions to be performed by men, human ability to repent and believe the gospel, to exercise faith in Christ, to love God, and to secure their own eternal salvation by their own wills and works, frequently repeat the words of our text, and other passages in the same connection, with an air of assumed triumph, as though they either believed themselves, or intended to make others believe, that these words were addressed by our Lord to the human family at large, and to the most ungodly in a special manner. They even go farther, and represent that the God of glory was in the act of expostulating with unrenewed sinners, and laboring to induce them to apply to him for salvation. As though the subject on which our Lord was speaking, was to show how possible it was, and how very cheaply every sinner might save himself. That if the sinner can be prevailed on to seek for religion, he shall find it; if they will seek for Christ, they shall find him; and if they will seek for justification before God, and eternal life and happiness, they shall find it. That if they will knock at heaven's gate, the portals of immortal glory shall on that condition be thrown open to them, &c. A careful examination of the Scriptures however, will show to those unto whom it is given to know the things of the

kingdom of Christ, that such a gross perversion of the text is a most presumptuous and blasphemous contradiction, both of the letter and spirit of what our Savior said, and also of the uniform testimony of all the record of the holy Scriptures on the subject.

Instead of addressing the words and assurances of the text to the world of mankind indiscriminately, or to ungodly sinners in particular, they were spoken exclusively to his disciples, and we have his own authority for saying that they apply to no other characters. At the commencement of the fifth chapter, we are informed of the peculiar circumstances of the occasion, when Christ delivered this discourse, or "sermon on the mount," as it is called, which is given in the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters, and of which our text is an important part. It reads thus, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying," &c. Now if he had intended this discourse to apply to sinners indiscriminately, why did he retire from the multitude and address it exclusively to his disciples? Why, if it concerned the multitudes, did he not address it to them? Can any mortal tell? Again, if he were only speaking to his disciples of things which were applicable to the multitudes of the unconverted, why did he address his words to them, in the second person, *ye* and *you*, instead of *they* or *them*? Will any one dare to charge that he did not know the proper use of words, or that he would say one thing, and mean another, and that, too, essentially different from what he said? If in our text he had been speaking of asking for, and receiving regeneration; seeking for, and finding pardon; knocking, and thereupon

having the doors of mercy, or salvation, or of eternal life, opened to them, then they unto whom the words were addressed, were those of all men, unto whom they had the least application, for as his disciples they were regenerated already, and he said they followed him in the regeneration, they had already received the forgiveness of their sins, and could, and did experimentally know, and unequivocally testified that, "The Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins." And in so testifying, Jesus said to the rulers of the Jews, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," &c. They had already been admitted into the kingdom of the Messiah; had already entered into life, and already stood freely justified in the Savior's righteousness, before the throne of God. Why then, we repeat the question, did he retire from the multitudes, and speak these words only to his disciples? If he had designed these words to express a conditional offer of salvation to unconverted sinners, is it not rational to believe that he would have availed himself of so favorable an opportunity as he had before he departed from the multitudes? How irrational then to suppose that with these words on his lips for the multitudes, that he who is too wise to err, should have deliberately left those to whom he designed his words to apply, and who, more than all others, were the most vitally interested in them, and without uttering one word of the kind to the indiscriminate multitudes, ascend a mountain, and when his disciples came to him, open his mouth, and deliver to them the message which he had intended for the very multitudes which he on that occasion purposely avoided.

Another equally conclusive and irresistible testimony in the Scriptures, against the heresy of the Arminian notion, that

God has offered salvation to all who will seek for it, is found in the words of our Lord in reply to his disciples, when they had asked him if there were many that would be saved. In this case observe the subject was salvation, and concerning the extent of salvation, Jesus said in reply, not to the world, but to his disciples, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek and shall not be able." Who can believe it possible that our Lord should at one time say that all sinners who seek for salvation shall be saved, and at another time declare positively that many should seek, and should not be able to enter in at the strait gate, which leadeth into life? To say nothing of the absurdity of the notion of blind men's seeking, and dead men's knocking, &c., it is enough for us to know that Christ is sought of them that asked not for him, and that he is found of them that sought him not. That Israel (that is carnal Israel) hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (Rom. xi. 7). "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone: as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."—Rom. ix. 31-33. God has bidden his Israel to seek, (not to procure their salvation by deeds of the law, or works of righteousness which their own hands have done, or can do,) but he has commanded them to seek his face. He said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face, in vain. It was not in vain that he has said unto his spiritual Israel, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the

ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." It is because none but God can save a sinner, that God commands his Israel to look to him for salvation, and to him alone; for in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. Not in themselves, nor in their resolvings, nor in their seekings or doings, for the Lord has made bare his holy arm, and the ends of the earth shall see his salvation. He shall say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back. He will gather them from the east and from the west, and shall also say, Bring my sons from afar, 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, &c. When he who is the good Shepherd putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. When dead in sins, they are made to hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. Who are the dead that shall hear, and that shall live? Christ has himself settled this question, "My sheep hear my voice;" because he has put them forth, gone before them, and called them by name. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand."

We have shown, by such testimony as men will not disregard with impunity, that the words of our text were spoken by Christ, and addressed to his disciples exclusively; that it is audacious presumption in those who labor to pervert his words, and to turn the truth of God into a lie. It remains now for us to show who are the disciples, and in what sense these words were applied to them, and the eter-

nal consolation which they afford to such as are his disciples indeed.

They only are recognized in the New Testament as his disciples, who deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him. To be born again, born of the Spirit, and born into the light and love of the Redeemer, affords evidence that we are the children, and heirs of immortality; but some of God's children walk in disobedience, at least for a season; but in their disobedience to him as their Prince and Savior, their Leader and King, they are not scripturally speaking, his disciples, though they be his children. The disciples who went to him in the mount, and who listened to his discourse, were those who had not only passed from death unto life, but they had forsaken all, and followed him; to them therefore his promises in his discourse were, and to such now, are applicable. "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." He had told them in a former part of his sermon, or discourse, of the special providential care which their heavenly Father had over them, that he feeds the ravens, and protects the sparrows, clothes the grass, and beautifies the frail lilies of the field, and that he would also provide all things needful for them. Although exposed to the rage of their enemies, disfranchised as citizens, cast out of the synagogues, and even driven from their houses and homes, they need not distrust the goodness and constant providence of their God, or say, What shall I eat, or what shall I drink, or wherewithal shall I be clothed? for their heavenly Father knoweth that they have need of all these things. They were directed to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto them. The kingdom of God, and

his righteousness, then, was that they were to seek, and our text assures us that they would not seek in vain, for they shall find. None but those who are born again, can seek that kingdom successfully, for except a man be born again, he cannot see it; and we cannot be qualified to seek for things which we cannot see. But Christ had said to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." To them it was given to know the things of the kingdom; but to them that are without, it was not given. Therefore he said to his disciples, apart from the multitudes, Seek, and ye shall find, as they were directed to ask, and it should be given to them. He had taught them to pray, and to ask God to give them their daily bread, deliver them from evil, protect them from temptation, and forgive their trespasses, &c., and in our text he assures them that they shall not ask in vain, for these things shall be given to them. If earthly parents knew how to give good gifts to their children, how much more should your heavenly Father? for he told some who claimed to be children of God, that if God were their Father, they would believe on him; but he said they were of their father the devil. To the children of God belongs the privilege to ask, with the assurance that they shall find the kingdom of God, and his, God's, righteousness; and to knock, and the doors of deliverance from all their fear shall be opened unto them. Of them, as the disciples of the Redeemer, it may truly be said, "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." What encouragement is here for the tried disciples of the Lord

Jesus, while well they know that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, yet amidst all their conflicts, their God is within hearing. He rideth upon the heavens in their help, and in his excellency on the sky.

May the kind assurances with which the new covenant abounds to them, be set home with power and grace to the heart of all who love the Lord, and may we be encouraged to trust in, and rely upon, him, constantly, firmly and forever.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 15, 1855.

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OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—It is with a sad heart I take my pen to write for publication in the SIGNS a notice of the departure from this, we fondly hope, to a better and brighter world, of three dear saints of the living God, two of them bearing a twofold relation to the unworthy writer. The third one long known and highly esteemed for the bright evidences displayed in his walk and conversation that he had received that Spirit which is of God.

My beloved mother, **Mrs. Susanna Eleanor Francis**, was called to her final rest at the house of her son-in-law, brother Franklin S. Terry, in Cheltenham township, Montgomery Co., Pa., February 7th, 1898. She was born in the village of Warrenton, Fauquier Co., Va., May 11th, 1814, and was at the time of her decease, 83 years, 8 months and 27 days old. She was married to my father, Robert H. Francis, Nov. 14th, 1838, and there was born to them thirteen children, eight daughters and five sons. Four children, two sons and two daughters, died in infancy. Nine, three sons and six daughters, were living at the time of her decease, besides twenty-five grandchildren and several great-grandchildren. Her family is scattered, her children living in seven different States, only one remaining now in the State of her and her children's nativity, Virginia. My mother was baptized in the fellowship of the church called Upper Broad Run, in Fauquier Co., Va., at the time the said church was constituted, the third Sunday in November, 1837, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, the founder of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, who at that time was living in Alexandria, Va., having moved there from New Vernon, N. Y., a short time previously, and had been supplying the little band who had withdrawn from the New School, and their abominable practices, in 1836, and who, at the time of her baptism, were constituted into a church, and called Elder Beebe to serve them as pastor. She continued a faithful and devoted member of that church until called from the militant to the triumphant state, a period of sixty years and nearly three months. She was in many respects a remarkable woman, but in that quiet and unobtrusive way, that did not bring her prominently into notice. One of her strong characteristics was her steadfastness, and unwavering devotion to the cause of God and truth, and her firm belief in the doctrine of the Old School Baptists. She was unshaken in all these years by the outward opposition and persecution, and the internal dissensions to which the church was subjected, firmly adhering to the principles set forth in the prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and which have ever been contended for by the editors and contributors, through all these years. She was not a writer, nor very much of a talker, but her walk was that of a meek follower of the meek and lowly Savior of sinners. She was of a vigorous constitution natu-

rally, and as far as my knowledge goes, never had a bad spell of sickness until she had an attack of "la grippe," a few years ago. I have heard her say she never had a headache, or toothache, but had lost all her natural teeth. After having "la grippe," we could see that she was failing rapidly. A little over a year before her death, she fell down stairs and broke her arm, the full use of which she never regained. On July 3d last, she had a slight stroke of paralysis, which partially disabled her, and affected her mind. Again, on the 1st of September, she had a stroke which further disabled her. She could not remember things that had just taken place, but loved to talk of the past, of her early experience, and connection with the church. She subscribed for the SIGNS at the beginning of the sixth volume, and her subscription has been kept up to this time, (with the exception of the four years of the civil war, when it was not accessible to her) though a few years ago it was transferred to the name of one of her daughters. Since the first of last September she has declined rapidly, though most of the time able to be out of bed, and to sit with the family. On Wednesday before she died, she was taken with a severe cold, and a dropsical tendency that had been noticed for some weeks, fully developed. Her suffering was great until allayed somewhat by the use of opiates. A few hours before her spirit took its flight, she drew her daughter Susie to her, and clasped her in a loving embrace, saying, "My dear, dear daughter." A few minutes afterwards sister Susie noticed a wonderful bright, almost ecstatic expression on her countenance, and she said, "Do you see what I see? Surely you can, surely human eyes can see it; there is a balm in Gilead." Those were her last audible words. About 3:30 a. m. she gently fell asleep in the arms of that Jesus whom she had loved, and trusted, and served so faithfully and steadfastly all those years. We mourn deeply the loss of a dear mother, that we shall see her face no more on earth; but though dead she yet speaks; her example lives in our hearts, and for her we mourn not, but rejoice that she is now beyond affliction and suffering. May we all live as she lived, and die as she died, in the faith, and in hope of that state of blessedness that our God has prepared for all his saints.

On the 10th inst., followed by sorrowing ones, she was gently laid to rest in the cemetery at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., after a very comforting discourse by our beloved brother Elder F. A. Chick, from the last words of the martyr Stephen, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

ALSO,

At the same place as the above, on the 14th of February, 1898, **Mrs. Susie Eleanor Terry**, wife of Deacon Franklin S. Terry, of the Southampton church, and daughter of the above. Sister Susie was born in Fauquier Co., Va., May 7th, 1853, and at the time of her

decease was 44 years, 9 months and 7 days old. She has been well and favorably known to the many brethren from different parts of the country, and Canada, who in their travels have been so kindly and hospitably entertained by her and her noble husband, at their home near Philadelphia, Pa., and no doubt they will be grieved to learn that she has been so suddenly cut off in the very prime of life. She was a devoted wife, daughter, sister, church member and friend, a bright, energetic woman, fully alive to a sense of all that might be required of her in the line of her various duties, nor holding back at all in the ready performance of them. She was baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, in the fellowship of the church at Upper Broad Run, in Fauquier Co., Va., about the year 1874, and continued a member there till after her marriage to brother F. S. Terry, in 1882. When she took a letter and united with the church at Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa., and continued there till a short time ago, she with her husband asked and obtained letters of dismission to unite with the church in Philadelphia, but had not presented her letter, and was therefore yet a member of Southampton. She had not enjoyed good health for years, though at times quite comfortable, at others was a great sufferer from a complication of diseases, but mostly heart trouble. During the last illness of our mother, she was most assiduous in her devotion to and care of her, and somehow took a deep cold, which developed into a severe attack of pleurisy on the 12th. Doctors Coulter and Wentz were sent for, and did all that medical skill could devise, and loving hands administer, for her relief, but all to no avail, the time had come, her life's work was done, and at 11:10 a. m. on the 14th inst., her glad spirit took its flight to realms of endless day. About 9 o'clock p. m. on the 13th she said to her husband, who was tending over her, "The end is not far off;" and about midnight there came a glad light in her eyes, and with a lovely smile she said, "Thy will be done." She suffered much from difficulty of breathing, and could speak only one syllable at a time after this, and that in a low whisper, but was fully conscious until near the moment of her departure.

She was laid to rest at Southampton, by the side of the dear mother whom she had so sorrowfully helped lay away just one short week before, after a comforting discourse by our dear brother Elder S. H. Durand, (who was absent in Canada at the time of mother's funeral) assisted by Elder F. A. Chick, who also spoke words of sympathy and comfort to the bereaved ones. Providential circumstances prevented all but two sisters and one brother from being present, but there were many sorrowing and sympathizing friends, whose tears and sorrowful faces attested their sympathy for the grief-stricken husband, and sorrowing brother and sisters. After the funeral of our mother, she told her husband that as she looked into mother's open

grave, the gloom of the grave, and the fear of death, was all taken away. She leaves her husband, our sorely afflicted and desolate brother, Franklin S. Terry, one stepson, three brothers and five sisters, with numerous other relatives, and many warm friends, with the church, to mourn, but not as those who sorrow without hope.

May the Lord bless the dear bereaved husband, and administer to him everlasting consolation, is the desire of one who feels this loss as next to that of the dear mother, his first friend, whose love knew no abatement in all these years.

ALSO,

At his late residence in Wicomico Co., Md., Jan. 5th, 1898, **Deacon George Lowe**. Brother Lowe was born March 4th, 1807, and was at the time of his decease 90 years, 10 months and 1 day old. He was born and had always lived in the vicinity where he died, and besides his two sons, two daughters, and numerous grandchildren, had a large circle of relatives and friends, by all of whom he was held in the highest esteem as an upright man, an honorable citizen, a true, faithful and consistent church member, a good neighbor, and kind and affectionate friend. He and his wife, who preceded him to the better land a little over three years, united with the church at Salishury, Md., at the same time, about forty years ago, and were baptized by Elder George W. Slater, who was at that time pastor of that church. Both he and his wife took high rank in the esteem and fellowship of the brethren, and continued true and faithful to the last. Their places were never vacant at any of the meetings of the church, except for the best of reasons. Brother Lowe served as deacon for many years, to the satisfaction of the church, using his office well, and surely he obtained a good degree, and great boldness in the faith. His general health was good, and in earlier life was an active, industrious man, making a good living, and raising a large family, besides showing great liberality in assisting the church in defraying expenses, and helping the ministers on their way. The last few years of his life he was afflicted with rheumatism, so that he was somewhat of a cripple, but never made his ailments an excuse to avoid any duty, and until his last illness was prompt in attending meetings, the last time being at the association that was held in Salishury last October, which he attended during the entire session. On the last day he was taken sick, and after that was not out from home. He lingered along, gradually growing weaker till the end came, old age being the chief cause of death. Elder Ker and myself were to see him not long before he died; he could not talk much, but when I asked him about his hope, said, "That is all I have; I am a poor, weak sinner, and my hope is that I am saved by grace." We have no doubts regarding him, and are sure that he is far better off than he could be in this world. We mourn not for him,

but for ourselves, for the loss to us here of a dear precious one, who was profitable to us in our faith and hope. To his children I would say, you have lost one of the best of parents, but may you receive the unspeakable gift of the same precious faith through which he was kept, to keep you all your journey through, and at last to land you safely in the heaven of eternal rest, where storms shall beat no more; and may the good Lord minister to you sweet consolation in the evidence that your loss is his eternal gain. Amen.

On the 7th of January he was gently laid in the Old School Baptist burial ground at Salisbury, by the side of his life companion, after a funeral service conducted by Elder H. C. Ker, and the writer, to await the summons that shall bring all the blessed dead forth in the glorious likeness and image of our blessed Savior.

Yours in deep affliction,

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Delaware, Feb. 19, 1898.

Elder F. Odom was born to Reeching and Elizabeth Odom, in the State of Illinois, in what was then Franklin, but now Williamson County, on the 23d day of November, 1826; moved with his parents to Texas, and settled below the falls on the Brazos River, in 1833; moved to near Larrissa, in what is now Cherokee Co., Texas, in 1835. When the war between Texas and Mexico broke out, the family with others refugee from the Mexicans and Indians, and settled in the eastern boundary of Texas, in 1837, where brother Odom grew to manhood, and was married to Miss Eline Hatcher, Jan. 10th, 1850. To this union ten children were born, five are dead and five are living. He joined the Primitive Baptist church at Boggy Bayou, in Caddo Parish, La., and was baptized by Elder Washington Rogers, in 1850. He, with his family, moved to Smith Co., Texas, in 1859. He obtained a letter of dismission from Boggy Bayou church, and went into the constitution of Mill Creek, now Big Springs church, in Smith Co., Texas, in 1868, where he commenced preaching, and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry by a presbytery composed of Elders R. T. Webb, (deceased) R. T. Polk and F. Loden. Obtained a letter of dismission from Big Springs, and went into the constitution of the Lindale church, where he was a faithful and consistent member, and associate pastor with the writer, at his death, which occurred Dec. 26th, 1897, at his residence in the town of Lindale, Smith Co., Texas, after forty days of suffering from cancer of the stomach. All that medical skill, and faithful nursing by family and friends, could do, only gave temporary relief, until his race was run, his mission filled, and the Lord sent the messenger death, saying to him in a silent whisper, Child, your Father calls, come home. I was with him much during his sickness; he told me that death had no terror for him. At another time he said that

death would be a sweet messenger to him. He frequently said, "O, if I could only fall asleep never to awake." His suffering was great, but he bore it all with christian fortitude and patience; acknowledging the justice of God in his afflictions, and relying on his grace and mercy for salvation. He left the wife of his youth, their children, and grandchildren, a host of friends, together with the churches of his acquaintance, to mourn their loss, but may we all be enabled by grace divine to adopt the language of one of old, and say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The bereaved sister and her children have our heartfelt sympathy, and prayer that they may be enabled by the Spirit and power of God to bow in humble submission to his will, and that God will give them grace according to their day, time and trouble, and that he will fill the absence of the departed husband and father, with his Royal and peaceful presence. Brother Odom was a sound, consistent preacher, an able and uncompromising defender of the truth, a good disciplinarian, and we shall miss him much in our assemblies. As a citizen, he was highly respected. He was thrice elected to the office of Justice of the Peace, once to the office of County Commissioner, and once to the office of tax Assessor. He was several times solicited by his friends to allow his name to go before the people as a candidate for the State Legislature, but would never give his consent. His funeral was largely attended on the day after his death, when and where the writer read the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and tried to comfort the bereaved with the thought that the narrow confines of the tomb, is not our eternal home; sung a hymn, and offered a short prayer, after which all that was mortal of brother Odom was laid in the grave, in the old Bethel graveyard, to await the coming of the Lord, when he 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. Amen.

F. LODEN.

LINDALE, Texas, Jan. 18, 1898.

DIED—At St. Petersburg, Fla., Jan. 17th, 1898, our brother, **Deacon B. F. Flagg**, of Woburn, Mass. He was born June 13th, 1825. Our brother related his experience of the grace of God to the church at Woburn, May 22d, and was baptized May 29th, 1856, by Elder Cox. His future wife, then Rebecca Parkinson, was received and baptized at the same time. He was united in marriage to her Nov. 19th, 1856. A son and daughter now survive, and mourn their loss in the death of both mother and father. Sister Flagg departed this life April 7th, 1894. Since the death of his beloved wife, brother Flagg's health declined, and

though everything conducive to health was resorted to, he obtained no permanent benefit. The winter months he spent upon the Pacific coast, or in Florida, and the summer months he spent among the White mountains. But his sickness (brights disease) continued its destroying work, till the Lord released him from the tenement of clay. In his last sickness, at St. Petersburg, Fla., he had with him his daughter and his brother, William Flagg, to lovingly minister to his needs. His remains were brought back to Woburn, Mass., and his funeral took place Jan. 25th, 1898. Elder Hiram Campbell, pastor of the church at Woburn, was present, and took part in the funeral services, and the writer preached from Psalm xlv. 15, "They shall enter into the King's palace."

Deacon Flagg was a man very highly respected in the place of his abode. Few men were held in as high esteem for kindness of heart, and honorable dealings among his fellow citizens. He was a man diligent in business as a vegetable farmer; his numerous hot houses, and the high state of cultivation in which his farm was kept, were quite a sight to behold. By God's blessing, (Deut. viii. 18,) he accumulated considerable wealth. But it is in spiritual things that our brother was best known to us. He was a man well established in the doctrine of Christ, and in his behavior among the household of God, a meek and lowly follower of our dear Savior. To know him was to love him, for the Spirit of Christ so manifest in him. He took much comfort in conversation with the children of God upon experimental matters. For many years he has attended the yearly Conference held at North Berwick, Maine, and he was beloved by the church here. We shall in days to come miss him, and his genial companionship in the things of Christ.

Brother beloved, from us thou art taken,
Far from all sickness, temptations and pain.
Face now to face, with Jesus in glory,
Loud in sweet praises to him that was slain;
Among the blood-washed in beauty immortal,
Grace has now brought thee to glory above.
God grant that we also, through heaven's portal, may
enter, and evermore dwell in God's love.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder T. M. Poulson, Jan. 26th, 1898, in Wicomico Co., Md., John G. Mathews and Miss Rittie M. Mitchel.

By Elder A. B. Francis, Feb. 2d, 1898, near Pitts-ville, Md., Mr. Michael J. Hastings and Mrs. Mary E. Wimbrow, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1898. NO. 6.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW.—REV. XXI.

NUMBER THREE.

“AND had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.” The first strain of the song which was to be sung in the land of Judah is, “We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.”—Isa. xxvi. 1. Again, addressing Zion and Jerusalem, the Lord by the prophet says, “Thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise.” This holy city is the people of God gathered together in him who is their dwelling place; not the dwelling place alone, nor the people alone, but both contemplated together. Naturally there may be an empty city, that is, houses and streets, but no people. Thus it is said of the legal or worldly dispensation, “How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people?” But spiritually this cannot be so; the new Jerusalem cannot

be contemplated as houses without people, for the people are the city. The holy Jerusalem is the bride of Christ, and she is the church of God, and the church is composed of all the people of God in their dwelling place, dwelling together in Christ, in whom they are new creatures. The perfect workmanship of God, by which they have been prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, is now apparent in all the special things that are presented in the description of this descending city; and while the church, the bride, for which Christ gave himself, that he might cleanse and purify her, and present her unto himself a glorious church, holy and without blemish, (Eph. v. 27,) includes all for whom Christ died, and while comparatively few of that innumerable company, perhaps, ever become members of the visible gospel church, yet in the gospel church as presented in the New Testament, in her doctrine, and order, and ordinances, and gifts, and grace, appear to the eye of faith all the fullness and perfection and glory of the works of God. It is in the gospel church that God's glory is seen. Those who know the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge,

are filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. iii. 14-19.) It is the "churches of the saints," in the little companies, the "twos and threes" gathered together in gospel order, and striving together for the faith of the gospel, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," feeling their weakness and ignorance and unworthiness, but looking to the Lord as their Guide, and taking his word as the rule of their faith and practice, and trying to walk in Christ, according to the teaching and example of the apostles, that we shall see all that is to be seen by faith and love in this world, of the blessed reality of this glorious vision of the apostle. It is only in the flesh that our God is manifest, and that his perfect work is seen, and his glory and surpassing beauty felt. And nothing can be more glorious than that "perfect love" felt in the heart which is able "to cast out fear," and that hope that holds the frail vessel securely in the most raging storm, and that faith that is itself "the victory that overcometh the world." Even the wonderful things of beauty and grandeur that were shewn to John by the angel, can only compare in faint measure to what is revealed and felt in the soul, of the beauty, and blessedness, and glorious power of the Lord, when he brings salvation, and "makes us joyful in his house of prayer." It is therefore of gospel things that I shall speak, as I try to follow on and get some glimpses of the meaning of these wonderful things that the inspired apostle saw while in the spirit he stood upon the great and high mountain of God's holiness.

The "wall great and high," is salvation. In this world walls are built for the purpose of salvation, to save a city from enemies without, and also to keep all the inhabitants in a place of safety, prevent-

ing any from wandering abroad into places of danger. In the church of God salvation is absolutely secured through the eternal purpose of God, and the finished work of Christ, and this precious and glorious truth is expressed in the scriptural figure of a wall whose material is salvation itself. The effect is put for the cause, to express how absolutely that effect is secured. Instead of a wall needed for salvation, the salvation of God is presented as the wall. This figure would not apply to the doctrine of a conditional salvation, for the least condition makes the salvation uncertain; therefore no salvation at all to make a wall of. This wall is great and high. It incloses a great multitude that no man can number. Its immense extent no mortal intelligence can estimate, nor can it be expressed by the terms used in the measurement of distances in space, except in a figurative way. It reaches far enough to embrace in its ample and secure dimensions all of the redeemed, from the beginning to the end of time, and rises high enough to hold them safely in the peaceful heavens of God's eternal love and blessedness. Concerning the exact measurement we may speak more particularly hereafter. The twelve gates signify the entrance into the manifest favor of God. In one figure the inhabitants of this city of Zion are said to be born in her (Psalm lxxxvii. 5, 6.) In this figure we are now considering, there is an entering into her through gates. So many and varied must the figures and patterns be which express the fullness of all this inexpressible subject. We are now contemplating the wall of salvation as it appears in the order of the gospel church; and the first thing presented is the openness of the city to every nation, and kindred, and tribe, and tongue, under the whole heavens; not to the Jews

only, but also to the Gentiles. There are three gates on each side, which "are open continually." So the Lord said by the prophet, looking forward to the gospel day, "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."—Isa. xliii. 5, 6. As these are gathered by the hand of the Lord, coming from far, even from the ends of the earth, and each one feeling that he was farther away from God and holiness than any one else, they find an open gate before them, each one at the place where he approaches the wall of salvation. No one has to go around to another side to hunt a place of entrance, but wherever the wall first appears to him, there in that very place he will see an open gate set before him that no man can shut. But at each gate there is an angel, for all the entering into the church is carefully guarded by the appointment of our King. It was said of old, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."—Isa. xxxii. 1. And our dear Savior said to his 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."—Matt. xix. 28. These I understand to be represented by the twelve angels. The apostles do not make laws for the church, but they set in order and direct concerning those made by the King. When he gave them commandment to teach all nations, Gentiles as well as Jews, he said, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;" and that nothing should be omitted through frailty of their memories, he said, I will

send the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, "and he shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."—John xiv. 26. These gates into the gospel church are through the wall, salvation. Not that the apostles control salvation, to either give it to, or withhold it from any one, but they tell authoritatively what its evidences are, and how it is manifested, and give judgment as to how it is to be "worked out" in the life and walk, and they set in order all the duties and privileges which the King has enjoined upon those to whom he has given salvation. Inclosed within this great and high wall of salvation, is the church of the living God, which is "the perfection of beauty." The perfect workmanship of God is seen here, in her doctrine, her order, her ordinances, and the experience of her inhabitants. Those who do the commandments of the dear Savior, manifest thus that they are the "blessed of his Father," and that they have right to the tree of life, and thus they enter in through the gates which are attended by these angels, the apostles, into all the blessings and privileges of the church.

These gates are called praise (Isa. lx. 18.) The doctrine is all to the praise of God's grace, and his blessed name is praised by every poor sinner who believes, and openly acknowledges that doctrine. The ordinance of baptism, which is enjoined upon all believers, sets forth in a figure, as one of these angels declares, (1 Peter iii. 21,) the death and resurrection of Christ, by which work the law was satisfied, sin ended, death abolished, the grave destroyed, and salvation secured, and thus especially declares the praise of God. So every commandment of Jesus, and all of the order established by him, is to the praise of God; and thus

the entrance into this glorious city by an experience of obedience to these blessed commandments, may well be called praise. I intentionally use the word "experience," with reference to obedience, for I thus understand it to be. The whole of salvation, from the first manifestation of divine life in the sinner, causing him to know the pain of sin, and to hunger after righteousness, through all the varied exercises caused by that life, the felt depravity, the hope through grace, the trembling joy, the wanderings, causing cries and tears, the repentance, the restoration to joy, until the final crown of righteousness is received in the great day, I understand to be an experience. Of late we have heard of some differences of view in regard to what is called time salvation, some speaking of it as conditional. I once spoke of myself as a believer in conditional salvation, inside of the church, instancing as an illustration the children of Israel within the land of Canaan. It was predestinated that they should enter the land of Canaan at a certain time, and that was unconditional; but I used to say their comfort and well-being after they crossed Jordan, was left dependent upon their obedience to the commands of God. While there is a sense in which this is true, I became confident that to speak of the salvation of God's people as conditional in any sense, or in any part of that salvation, was to speak incorrectly, and was liable to convey an understanding that is not true. We are to remember that in the case of national Israel, the result proved the truth of what Joshua said to them, "Ye cannot serve the Lord." They never did get the favor of God by keeping the conditions. The result proved that they could not serve him, because he would not forgive their sins. Justice must be satisfied before there can be for-

giveness. They were already condemned, and the law manifested it; and so "by the works of the law no flesh could be justified in his sight." It is true that the joys of salvation, and the peace of God, and the answer of a good conscience, cannot be enjoyed while one is consciously walking in disobedience; and it is further true that every transgression of a child of God will be punished. But it is not true that our obedience is left dependent upon our own will; it is not true that the joys of salvation, though conditional upon obedience, are in any degree uncertain or contingent. Grace has secured to every child of God what is best for him, so that in the whole experience of suffering and joy, of punishment and release, of repentance and forgiveness, of self-abhorrence and of rejoicing in the Lord, he shall be to the praise of God's glorious grace. He cannot be deprived by the devil, or by himself, of one jot or tittle of the inheritance which belongs to him through the finished work of Christ. And this, instead of causing a living soul to desire to "continue in sin that grace may abound," makes him as humble as a little babe before so holy and merciful a God. Some speak of reward for obedience, and say that if obedience has not been left with the creature, and dependent upon our will, then we could not have a reward for it, as it is not our work, but the Lord's. But if obedience is our work, and we enter into God's favor as a reward for it, then those gates must be called praise to man, instead to praise to God. But all who feel true obedience, "the obedience of faith," know that it is the work of God in them, and they are lost in wonder that he should be so kind and loving to them.

"He works salvation in our hearts,
And forms a people for his praise."

He gives repentance. We can easily wander into by and forbidden paths, but we then sadly learn that we cannot come back. "I went out full," said poor old Naomi; but she did not say, "I came back," no; but, "The Lord hath brought me home again empty." Dare any poor, penitent soul say, "I have repented and obeyed, and have thus restored my soul?" No; the Bible furnishes us with the truthful language of the soul, "He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation." "Turn us, and we shall be turned." "Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as streams in the south." The Lord works in his people not only to will, but to do of his good pleasure. We may easily get into a wrong track upon this subject, by trying to make it consistent with human wisdom; but let us come before the Lord with our own conclusions, and they will soon fade away before his brightness. Let any one who has concluded that our obedience is left in our hands, and that it, and the gospel blessings which are dependent upon it, are all dependent upon our will, come to the Lord to ask for those gospel blessings upon the ground that we have now returned from our transgressions, and are walking in obedience; what would be the result? Before we had opened our mouth unto the Lord with such a plea, shame would cover us, and we would shrink into nothingness in his sight.

The names of the twelve tribes of Israel were written on the gates. Why there were twelve tribes, and why twelve apostles, I do not know; but the number twelve is one of the features of the type which shows its integrity preserved in the antitype. The Savior speaks of the whole gospel church, Jew and Gentile, as the

twelve tribes of Israel whom the apostles are to judge.

"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." If there has been any doubt in the mind of any one as to the correctness of the thought that the angels at the gates represent the apostles, there is left no room for such question here; and I therefore call attention to this as an additional proof that this city is emblematic of the gospel church; for in the world of eternal glory, the final and eternal state of the saints, there is no pre-eminence of one saint above another, as in the order of the gifts here; no apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, and the like, for then and there all shall be like Christ, and shall be one with him, as he is one with the Father (John xvii. 21, 22; 1 John iii. 2.) Then in some way impossible of comprehension by us now, the Son shall have delivered up the kingdom unto the Father, and shall himself "be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—1 Cor. xv. 24-28. "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!" "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 26, 1898.

FREMONT, Neb., Feb. 12, 1898.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—The last number of the SIGNS is at hand, and my attention was especially called to a communication from sister Joie Wickham, of Delarare, Ohio, pertaining to the Sabbath question, and as we have not written anything for the SIGNS in a long time, and this subject being one on which we had hoped we had

some understanding of the newness of the letter, we felt perhaps it would not be amiss for us to say something in addition at this time. My object in doing so is not to oppose anything therein written, for she has, to my mind, written clearly and with understanding. Plainly dividing the wheat from the chaff; the precious from the vile. My object is rather to add my testimony as a witness with her, in confirmation of the truth which she has so ably proclaimed, and to add something further as it has come to my understanding. It will be remembered the evangelists in setting forth the order of the gospel, and the things pertaining to it, do not use the same language precisely, but vary somewhat in words, yet as to the real meaning and substance it is the same. The one only indorses what the other has said, so it is at this time, one may use different language in describing an event, yet it sets forth the same great truth, which must ever remain; that salvation is of the Lord, and not by deeds of righteousness which we have done, for all our righteousness is as filthy rags. Some time since, the clergy of this place combined their efforts, and sent in a protest to one of the daily papers against the propriety of issuing a Sunday paper, claiming as their reason for so doing, that it was a desecration of the Sabbath, which God had commanded to be kept holy; which was a divine institution, and of permanent obligation; which was binding upon all men, and for all time; that man was endowed with a spiritual nature; that he should so exercise this nature, which was the crowning work of the Creator, that it would bring tranquillity and peace of mind to him while here, and, of course, at last usher the same good, pious old man, into the realms of eternal bliss, notwithstanding what God has said to the contrary.

Of course such an assertion being publicly made, we felt it was our privilege through the same medium to denounce such an assertion as being unscriptural, and without foundation. With weapons, we hope that were not carnal, we opposed them, and we do feel that for once at least they heard the truth, whether they believe it or not. One thing we were sure of, that by so doing we would not gain the approval of the popular religionists of these days, no more than did the Savior, when he told some the truth, and they reasoned among themselves, and said, these are hard sayings, who can hear them? It is not our intention to repeat what we then said in full, but we do hope we may be enabled to follow along the same line of thought, that we may not be in error, but rightly dividing the word, not presuming to force a mixture of law and gospel, after the commandments of men, and not after Christ. The first thought is, if man was made spiritual, as some affirm, why with all their boasted knowledge, do they not tell us why it becomes necessary that man should be born again, in order to understand the things of the Spirit of God? Would there be a necessity for man having the Spirit of God to again be born of the Spirit of God? Of what would man having the Spirit of God need to be born of, to enable him to see the kingdom of God? Is there anything higher or greater and more powerful than the Spirit of God, which is God? What a dilemma these wise men work themselves into. Surely they are hard to be understood. Contrary to this, the Scriptures plainly affirm, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The natural man understands not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The first

Adam is of the earth earthy, and it is impossible for the stream to rise above the fountain. The second Adam is a quickening Spirit, and is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, so are they that are earthy, and as is the heavenly, so are they that are heavenly. Not one word said to encourage us to try and fix over this old Adam-man, and thereby produce a spiritual man of him. The psalmist said, "What do we see in the Shulamite? As it were a company of two armies." The old man, and the new man; the natural man and the spiritual man. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural? Some would entirely set aside the necessity of man being born again in order to see the kingdom of God, and thereby set aside the words of the Redeemer to Nicodemus as being of no avail, and untrue. I have often wondered if they have ever given these things a thought, and considered where their own manufactured ideas would lead them to? They surely must have read them, yet it must have been with their eyes beclouded by the law; with the veil of Moses upon their faces. Again, has it occurred to them that if man had been born spiritual, as they say, it would have been impossible for him to sin, as God cannot sin, neither would he have the least inclination to sin? There was no sin prior to that one transgression of Adam. By that one act sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Has it ever occurred to their wise souls, that without sin Adam never would have multiplied; he never would have had a posterity; but would ever have remained alone? Just simply good, moral Adam; yet by no means a spiritual, immortal man. For God only hath immortality. To pursue this still farther, had Adam not sinned, there never would have been a need of a

Savior. O wonderful thought! That which God in his infinite wisdom and foreknowledge had planned in eternity, should be thus set aside. Is there any consolation, or even any common sense, in these assertions? I say nay.

There are so many things coming in my mind that are leading me away from the subject on which I had intended to write, so I will leave them, and return to the question under consideration. To the law and to the testimony; if we speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in us. In considering this, it is well for us to bear in mind the difference between the Jewish Sabbath, literally, which was so strictly to be observed under the legal dispensation, and the day which is now being observed and erroneously is called the Sabbath day. In keeping this day holy, they do not keep any Sabbath at all, but rather, profess to keep holy a day for which in reality they have no divine authority, but which in fact is a day substituted by graceless men. Are we under the gospel dispensation to observe the literal Sabbath of the Jews? We claim we are not. Why not? Because the whole of that legal covenant, of which this precept is a part, was but a shadow of heavenly things, or the gospel which was to come, when the former things should be done away, and no more to be brought into remembrance. They belonged exclusively to the Jews as a typical people, to be observed throughout their generation, and we all know that the Jews no longer have an abiding place as a nation, or generation, but are dispersed among the Gentiles, and as a nation have become extinct, and with them their laws also. It would be just as inconsistent for one to attempt to enforce the laws of Great Britain, or any other nation, upon the people of the United States, as to try

to force the Jews' laws or religion, upon us; for really their law was their religion. By its obedience or disobedience they lived or died. It has seemed to me that this question should be settled in our minds by asking the question, Are we Jews or Gentiles? Are we under law or under grace? I know all will profess to say, We are not under law, but under grace. Then why do they not prove it so, and manifest their faith by their obedience to the law of faith? and faith is not of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. Certainly none can deny that the Sabbath is a precept of the law, as much so as circumcision, or any other of the ordinances. Why are they not as strict in demanding circumcision of the Gentiles, as they are of keeping the Sabbath? It is remembered that Paul, when laboring with the Gentile churches, allowed none of them to be brought in, or practiced by them, but labored hard to keep the churches pure from such idolatry, and fell out with one of the other apostles for trying to urge one of the law ordinances on the Gentile churches, and rebuked him sharply. The churches which Paul served, were composed of both Jews and Gentiles. They who were of the Jews, sometimes felt inclined to cling to the traditions of the fathers, and he sometimes found it necessary to chastise them for it. As he was an apostle of the spirit of the law, and not the letter, he sometimes found it necessary to magnify his office and urge upon them to not again become entangled in the yoke of bondage. How hard did he labor to impress on their minds that Christ is the end of the law to the believer; that Christ had fulfilled its every jot and tittle; taken it out of the way, having abolished the handwriting of ordinances, the law of commandments; broke down the middle

wall, or partition, between Jew and Gentile, so that the law had no more dominion over them. The law of God, or the spirit of the letter, made them free from the law of sin and death. Could Paul, or any other man, be more concise or explicit, than he was when writing to the Colossian brethren? exhorting them to steadfastness of faith, in this language, "Let no men 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." And asks them if they be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why are they yet subject to the ordinances? We would do well if we would take heed to the words of so faithful an apostle, and touch not, taste not, handle not, the things that are so hurtful to us. In the face of this testimony, who can deny what we affirm: That free born Gentile christians are not under the law of a carnal commandment? There was an annulling of that law because of its weakness, and unprofitableness. It only served for a shadow of heavenly things; but the body was of Christ. Our spiritual High Priest was a Mediator of a better covenant, established on better promises. There was no spiritual life promised under the old law: it was a natural law, with natural people; if they were obedient, they were to be favored with natural blessings; the common salvation, in which God displays his protecting care to-day, over all the works of his hands. But after those days, saith the Lord, I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, not according to the covenant I made with the fathers, when I led them out of Egypt. But this is the covenant I will make with them, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts. I will be

to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. They shall no more teach every man his brother, and every man his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more forever. In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old. The law of the Sabbath belongs to the old covenant, and is not of faith. It is true the Redeemer came under the old law, and remained under it until he had accomplished all that was written in the law and the prophets concerning him, and in fulfillment of that law bowed his head in awful agony, and we hear him say, "It is finished." He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. The law and the prophets were until John. John preached, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The Savior taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come." In fulfillment of all this, in his resurrection life he opens up the new and living way, and brought life and immortality to light. The prophet Isaiah in speaking of the dissolution of the old Jewish heaven, says, They shall be rolled together as a scroll, and as a vesture shall be laid aside. The prophet Joel in describing the passing away of the old heavens, says, The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood. John the revelator saw this when in the Spirit on the Lord's day (not Sunday). He saw a wonder appear in heaven, a woman (the church), clothed with the Sun (Christ), the moon (the law) under her feet. The old legal heaven has lived its appointed time. The Sun of righteousness has arisen to set no more. The promised land is reached. We have turned our backs on Moses. The Lord has buried him, we know not where, and

we have no desire to find his grave, to this day.

It has been said by one in this place, that God gave the law to be obeyed. If so, why was provision made in eternity for such an event as did transpire? Does not Moses plainly show at the mount, that God knew that they would be broken, when in his anger he dashed the first tables to the ground? It has also been said by one, that the breaking of the Sabbath to-day, was the cause of the crucifixion of Christ. These words confirmed the idea in my mind, that he was not an apt Bible student, or he would have seen that it was not the breaking of the Sabbath law that sank the whole human family down to death and despair. That law was added because of the transgression in paradise. For how long? Until the seed should come, which is Christ. Is he a Jew? Does he deny that Christ has come? What a parody! And again, I have wondered if the professedly strict Sabbatarians have ever noticed how very rigid was the law that was given to the Jews? It showed no leniency to those who were under it. The soul that sinneth it shall die. If one failed to keep it perfectly in every point, he was guilty of the whole law. Abide ye every man in his tent on the Sabbath day. Let no man go out of his tent on the Sabbath day, was the strict demand of that law. It was strictly to be observed as a day of rest. They were not to kindle a fire in their habitation, or even to have their own thoughts. If one of these strict demands, with many others equally as binding, were broken, the penalty was sure death. How many of them do they keep, I wonder? It is the prevailing idea among the so-called christians of to-day, that the seventh day is to be observed as a day of hallowed rest, and is sanctified,

because God rested from his labors on that day. It was not commanded to be observed until Israel came out of Egypt. It is also claimed that the Lord sanctioned and approved of it by himself appearing in the temple on that day. Was he not still under the law? He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. It is nowhere said that he did so after his resurrection from the dead. He was seen of his disciples for at least forty days, which certainly was plenty of time to have done so, if it was of so much importance. We know of no higher authority for observing the first day of the week, than a decree that went out from the heathen Emperor Constantine, in the year 321, A. D., after his professed conversion to christianity, which he called the venerable day of the sun, in reference both to the sun god, Apollo, and to Christ, the Sun of righteousness, as a day of rest, and thereby compelled the Jews to observe a day which was contrary to their belief and practice. We believe the apostles did meet on the first day of the week, for prayer and breaking of bread, but we do not read of any compulsion or stress being laid upon it. It is true according to the Scriptures, that the Lord did arise on the first day of the week, but I have considered that to be the beginning of a new time, the gospel day, when old things had passed away, and all things had become new. If so, would not this lead those born of the new creation, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, to observe every day alike? Let every day be holy unto the Lord. We will do well if we take heed to ourselves, and not be found doing on any day of the week, that which we could not consistently do, either on the first or last day. It is our earnest daily prayer, that we may be enabled to walk as children of the day, and not of the night; knowing

full well that they that walk in the night stumble and fall. May the Lord keep and preserve us all for the crowning day. As we have been somewhat lengthly we will close. Yet we feel that we would like to say a few words more to sister Wickham. For a long time after we had united with the church, if we gave this subject a thought at all, it was with the idea that the first day, or Sunday, was the day to be observed and kept holy. We had not yet learned how impossible it was for any to keep this day as it is taught. But what was it that had taught us to try and observe this one day as being more holy than another? I will answer, tradition, my sister, tradition; for the mouth of the Lord hath not spoken it. To me the first dawning of a better day was as but the shadow of a hand, or as the planting of a mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds, though when nourished and cherished by the Master of the vineyard, becomes a great tree, unto which the weary and heavy laden run and find shelter. I will not take any more space.

Yours most unworthily,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

STUCK, Wash., Feb. 3, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—By request of dear brethren I send brother Coulter's letter for publication, for the comfort of the little ones.

In fellowship,

M. E. CARTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 20, 1897.

MRS. M. E. CARTER—DEAR SISTER IN THE HOPE OF LIFE ETERNAL:—I have had a desire to write you for some time past, but my letters are of so little worth to the spiritual minded children of my Father's house, that I have to be very

strongly impressed, in order to decide upon writing. Of myself I can say nothing, because there is nothing in me that would interest you, unless I were to give unto you a reason of the hope that is within me, or to relate to you my travel from darkness, into the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. The dear Father of mercies has not vouchsafed unto me, however, the gift to unfold to others in a coherent way, the travel and exercises of my soul. When I attempt to tell the way I hope the dear Lord has led me, there seems to me to be so little evidence in it of the exercises of a child of grace, that I grow sick at heart. Even such an attempt condemns me, and Satan whispers, You are trying to make yourself out something when you are nothing; and I have to hang my head and answer, Yes, that must be so. When I remember the words of the apostle Peter, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear," I can say of a truth that my whole heart's desire is to sanctify the Lord God in my heart by a well ordered walk and conversation, in true humility. But "my leanness," and my depravity, come up before me in such appalling array, that I can only cry out in anguish of soul, Lord, undertake for me, for I am unstable as water, and dare not so much as even look toward thy holy temple. I can say, too, of a truth, that I am always ready and willing to tell my brethren the reason of my hope; but I am not capable, for I am slow of speech, and of a stammering tongue; although I am aware it is not required of the saints of God, that they must tell with their lips all that the Lord has done for them. When they walk with meekness, and in the fear of

God, and manifest a fervent love for the brethren, esteem all others better than themselves, then do they show a readiness in presenting a reason of the hope that is in them. By faith alone are we enabled to show forth the praises of him that loved us, and gave himself for us. The sacrifice of a broken heart, and a contrite spirit, is well pleasing to the Lord; and this, with the offering of thanksgiving, is an open book to the eyes of faith, of the expression of our hope. Every pang of suffering, every trial in tribulation, brings us by faith into a sweet fellowship with the sufferings of our gracious Redeemer. If we have an eye single to his glory, he does reign in our hearts, at which time being stayed upon him we have perfect peace. I often think of you, dear sister, in your seclusion and isolation from all of your kindred in Christ, for many weeks (and perhaps months) at a time; and I feel to know that Jesus is round about you, upon every side, and within you. He is a light to your feet, a constant friend, a sure protector. He is not confined to time, or condition, or place. He never slumbers nor sleeps; therefore is his watchful eye ever upon you, anticipating your every need. For is it not declared, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear?" Since I have had my name on the church books, I have always been in the midst of my brethren, with the privilege of going to meeting every Sunday. The brethren have borne with me these fourteen years, and I am not yet cast off. I sometimes wonder how it would be with me if I were, as you are, away from them. Sometimes I fear we get to depend too much upon our brethren, forgetting for the time the great fountain source of all our help and

strength. Yet we, too, are made to realize that we are solitary travelers in the highway of the Lord; and although we may be in a large company, in the house of our friends, yet we feel to be one alone in our dreadful straits. Our heart cries out in deep sorrow, Is there any one like me? Like the lonely dove in the spring-time, cooing, calling for its mate, so the lonely, tried soul, cries out for his heavenly lover. There are times in our experience when nothing, nor nobody, can help us, save Jesus alone. Because of disobedience in the weakness of our flesh, and our deceitful lusts, we go astray; we turn our face toward the world, and our bellies to the fleshpots of Egypt. We walk by sight, and not by faith, and we fall by the wayside, among the thieves of the darkness. No human arm can save us; we die to the comforts of Zion. As the good Samaritan, Jesus comes to our deliverance. We hear a voice behind us, not from the direction we are going, but out of Jerusalem. We turn about to see the voice that spake unto us; there is sweet music in the voice, to our benighted souls. It points us to the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem, and it says, "This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Then is "the wilderness and the solitary place made glad [for us], and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Even in her best estate the church is always found in the wilderness. There the Lord found Jacob, and there he led him about and instructed him, and established his goings. The sojourn of the saints of God in this world is a wilderness condition. The poet well expresses the wail of every christian heart, in the words,

"This world's a wilderness of woe;
This world is not my home."

Truly our hearts can echo the apostle's

assertion, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable." For in this life tribulation awaits us at every turn. The pride of life, and the lusts of the flesh, with a consciousness that we are sinners, and a knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, cause groanings that cannot be uttered, and except our High Priest had entered into that within the veil, we would be lost indeed. Our deceitful heart is a wilderness overgrown with thorns and thistles, a place of darkness and of forests, from whence the beasts of prey come forth, by which the poor pilgrim is sorely tried. I get so low down sometimes, and so tormented with doubts of all kinds, that I wonder, and almost conclude that my profession is a hollow mockery, and an empty phantasy of a deluded and imaginative brain. But even at those distressful times there is an inner consciousness, the power of which strengthens my weak arms, and confirms my feeble knees, and impels me to press toward the mark for the heavenly prize. And my hopeful heart must answer, that only the exercise of the power of faith could work such wonders. We must continue to learn the lesson day after day, over and over again, that the abundant grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficiently bestowed for every time of need. But we must each time realize through experience the need of sustaining grace. In our destitution we hunger and thirst after righteousness, and we find the blessing to be in the hunger and thirst, as well as in being filled. We could not have the one without the other. Therefore can we, with the apostle, "Count it all joy when ye [we] fall into divers temptations. Knowing this, that the trying of your [our] faith worketh patience." For we cannot have the peace of God which we find in Christ Jesus, unless we also have

the tribulation which we find in the world. Had we not been entangled in the yoke of bondage by the wicked works of our sinful flesh, we would not know the joy of deliverance. He that is born blind cannot know anything about darkness, until he has been given eyes to see the light, although he was in darkness all the time. So also in our experience, we cannot know the darkness and blackness of our deceitful heart, until the light of divine grace shines in, and reveals our dreadful, lost condition by nature. Jesus has told us that, "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." How wonderfully true is this! But the light reveals the hidden things of the darkness, not to the darkness, but to the eye of faith. Consequently it is our faith that comprehends the hidden evils of our heart, through the light of divine grace. Our gracious Redeemer is the mirror which reflects ourself, just as we are, with all our blackness laid bare. And now we see the contrast. The mirror, clear as crystal in its purity, fair and spotless as the "rose of Sharon," and the "lily of the valley." We look into his lovely face, and behold his beauty—the beauty of the only begotten of the Father, and we are satisfied. "Our cup runneth over." But the same light which reveals the beauty, the glory and the majesty of our glorious Lord, as we stand upon the "sea of glass mingled with fire," also reveals by reflection our own vile and corrupt nature. Yet how comforting are the gracious words of inspiration, which come as it were out of the "sea of glass mingled with fire," saying, "But if we walk in the light, as he [Jesus] is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, [all that have gained the victory over the beast, &c.,] and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

I am just now wondering what you will

think of this long, incoherent letter. But, dear sister, when you unfold your mantle of charity, just conclude in your mind that it is the very best I can do; and if I could have done better, I certainly would, for the sake of my natural pride at least. I do not want you, however, to accept it for its value, either intrinsic or spiritual, but put on your extra glasses (faith's eyes) and read between the lines, and there I hope you will find the esteem in which I hold you, and the fellowship I have for your experience. My wife joins me in christian love to you.

Sincerely your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

PALMER, Texas, Dec. 4, 1897.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—DEAR BROTHERS IN CHRIST:—I feel some impressions in the way of writing to you, brethren, and to those who may read, if this shall be published. I do not know whether this will be of any benefit or comfort to any of the saints. I can say as one has expressed it,

"Surely there was never a heart so base,
So false as mine has been;
So faithless to the promises,
So prone to every sin."

Brethren, I feel my weakness and my unworthiness to be called even the least of all the saints of God; but if I can be only one of the least of all the saints, I think that I shall be of all most happy. For some six or eight years I tried to do a great work for the Lord. I joined the Missionary society, and tried to live there, and thought I was doing a great work, helping with his work in saving poor, fallen humanity. I tried for years to get religion. I tried to work myself into favor with God. I attended a series of meetings, and found myself no better. After the last meeting had closed, it seemed that I was worse than at first. I

then felt for the first time that I was a poor, lost sinner, wholly undone. I gave up all hope of ever being a christian. The more I felt my condemnation, the less I felt that I could do, until at last I gave it all up to the Lord, and though alone at the hour of midnight, I felt, I suppose, as the apostle did when the scales fell from his eyes, and all was bright. The night seemed to me so beautiful. Everything was praising the Lord. I went home and told my parents what the Lord had done for me (not what I had done for the Lord). I had found that it is all of the Lord. I was with the Missionaries all this time. Then my eyes being opened, I was made to see the truth, and receive the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. And like the prodigal son, I went home where I belonged, to the church of God, the Old School Baptists. If I am not with them I feel out of place. Let them call me what they please, for the apostle said that they called it hard doctrine in the days of the Savior, and said, Who can hear it? I live among the do and live class, and they tell me that my doctrine is dangerous. I believe the Lord has shined in the hearts of all his people, that they may be made to see eye to eye, and speak one and the same thing. If I am saved it is of the Lord, and of grace alone. I believe the Lord works all things after the counsel of his own will. Salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. Paul does not leave us in doubt in these things, for he says, "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." Here we have the whole plan linked together.

Then, like the apostle, we can say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." The apostle declared that he preached Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them who are called, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. For, he adds, the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved the power of God. In Isaiah we read, "The Spirit of the Lord 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 comfort all that mourn." And Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And Paul again says, "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 by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," and not by works of righteousness which we have done. And this is all so, that no man should boast. But after the new birth the soul is delivered from the law of sin and death, and is under the law of grace. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." And, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." And again it is written, "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 Lord says, "I will make a new cove-

nant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; for this is the covenant that I will make with them, saith the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts, and they shall be to me a people, and I will be to them a God."

Yours in hope,

JAMES H. DAVIS.

WORTHINGTON, Minnesota, Oct. 6, 1897.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—

DEAR BRETHREN:—May I address you so? Truly I do not feel worthy to do so. I feel that I am unworthy of the light which I see that all the writers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have. It seems that I can see the Spirit of the Lord Jesus in all of you so plainly, while for myself, I stand condemned every day before that holy law which was given to Moses, on Mt. Sinai. I cast my eyes within, and I find fears and doubts, and unbelief, so much in possession of my heart, that it makes me feel unworthy to call you brethren. My Bible says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Now there is something within me which says, How can that Spirit dwell in your heart? Can that Spirit rest among doubts and fears, and unbelief? It does not look reasonable. It is said within me, you see that you are not like this people, they are so much better than you, you can have no part nor lot with them, your case is an outside one, you differ from them all. Now my dear friends, I have shown why I am not worthy to call you brethren.

I know if such a sinner, with such a heart as mine, is saved, it must be by the grace of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. If he did not pay my debt upon Calvary, then I am lost. There are times when I feel that if he should send my

soul to hell, I must praise him there, for I know his law approves it well. Now when these doubts and fears assail me so that I seem to lose all hope, yet still a little spark is left in me. It seems so small and so weak that I am almost ready to give up, and yet it is worth more to me than all the world. When I have been down in the valley so long, and afterwards the light of Jesus breaks through the clouds, and shines in my heart, and bids me be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world, then my dear friends, I see through another glass, and I can see his tender mercies toward me, and his hand in all things, and he shows me how all things work together for good to them who love God, and I can see his hand in all my undertakings, even in things relating to this world. He has said, "Without me, ye can do nothing." O what an all-wise God he is! May my prayer ever be, Lord, guide, guard and direct me, according to thy will, and not mine. Brother Beebe, I have not written what I meant to when I began. I am not able to edify any one. It seems to me that I can only write complaints about myself, but God knows my heart, and when I read the able writings in the SIGNS, I believe that I can see the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Through it I hear from many whom I knew and heard preach while in Maryland. I heard Elders Rittenhouse, Francis and Durand, by whom I was baptized at Fishing Creek. I cannot tell the day and date of my baptism. Perhaps Elder Durand remembers. I have always taken the SIGNS since then. Dear brother Chick, I feel that I ought to tell you now that you preached the first gospel sermon that I ever heard, at Fishing Creek, Md. The text was, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." That was about

twenty years ago. When last I heard you, and I seemed to see the work of the Lord in you, and that he had made you a pillar of the gospel. How I then desired that he would bless me and make me profitable. I still see the same Spirit in your writings.

I do not mind the dress that the SIGNS is clothed in; the important thing is, what the Spirit of my Lord and Master sends me in the paper. It contains all the preaching that I can get, only when I can see brother Murphy. His preaching is so much like brother Purington's. I love to hear him, and we have some sweet conversations when we meet. I feel thankful that the Lord has blessed me with such privileges. It is all the comfort that I have in the world. I want to say to all that know me, that I have lived here fourteen years, and have never in all that time stepped inside of one of the churches here. The Lord has placed something in me that does not want to hear his power limited by man. I want no conditional work with me. I do believe that Jesus Christ paid all the debt for his children, and that they are his, and all the powers of hell can never take one of them from him. He is my all and in all. He is God, and there is none like him. Now I must say to all who know me, this may be the last time I shall ever write for the brethren. I feel the marks of time upon my natural body, but the Lord knows best. I look to my future home sometimes, and think, O, shall I ever reach the place where Jesus is? I shall be satisfied when I meet there among the dear saints. I watch for the love of Jesus. The fellowship of saints is love, and Jesus is love. So shall I see him there.

Remember us in your prayers. Our love to all. Your brother,

HENRY JAMES.

[THE members of the church at Fishing Creek, Md., will be glad to hear once more from brother James. They have always held him in loving remembrance, as well as many others. In this we speak from personal knowledge. We are glad that our God has kept our brother from being carried away with the errors of the day. Some have seemed to think, that because they were so situated that they could not attend the meetings of the people of God, that they were excusable for attending the worship of those who know not God. We have always felt that if we were so situated that we could not hear the truth about God, we did not want to hear what was false concerning him. If there be a famine of the word of the Lord in the land, falsehood is a poor substitute for it. We are glad that our brother James feels to shun that worship, which honors the creature more than God.—ED.]

WICHITA, Kansas, Dec. 9, 1897.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have much enjoyed reading the SIGNS. I believe in salvation by grace, independent of the works of man. Man never did anything to save himself or any one else, although the child is blessed here upon earth in the act of obedience. The dear Lord meant just what he said, when he said, "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 of heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls." No life is promised in this act of coming to Christ, but a rest to the poor soul which has been burdened and distressed. No doubt the Savior meant the very one who has so often thought it cannot mean me, for I am so sinful that the people of God would not want me to

come among them and offer myself to the church. No, it cannot be for me, but for my friend who is so much better than I am. Still I can see no other way that such a one can be saved, but by the blood and righteousness of the once crucified, but now exalted Savior, who sitteth at the right hand of God to make intercession for his saints, according to the will of God. But such a poor worm of the dust will say, this cannot be for me, it is for the saints only. Poor soul, remember the words of Savior to his disciples, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." How are they blessed? They are blessed with eternal life. It is this that causes you to feel so poor and cast down in spirit. The apostle says, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. He also says where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. It is an evidence that one is in possession of eternal life, when they are cast down, and troubled on every side, by sin. The hope may be so little that such a one at times may think they have no hope. Let some one go to extolling creature works in order that God may save him, then that one with his little hope, will see how untruthful such talk is, and that such an one does not speak as the Bible teaches. This is so, because he who thus teaches, does not have that knowledge that comes by revelation of God, but is going about talking what he has been taught by man. The poor soul must say, I do not believe anything like that, for I believe that Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father, accomplished the work of redemption when he died upon the cross. Yes, I believe that he came to save his people from their sins, and that he has done the work which he came to do. Then, dear soul, you are one of that number for whom he died. For he says, He

that believeth on me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. The apostle also says, To come unto God we must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. So we see that this coming unto Christ, is for the believer. It is a coming in order to find rest to the soul. If it is the duty of one to offer himself to the church, he will feel that duty impressed upon his mind, so that he cannot rest until he performs this duty. Then they find rest to the soul, as Christ has said. It is just so in all obedience, not only in coming to the church, but in all church duties, speaking in public, and all others. I had not expected to write thus, but have followed the impression of my mind. I trust that I fear God, and know that anything that I may write, is liable to be mixed with evil.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,
E. S. GRAVES.

NORA SPRINGS, Iowa, Jan. 7, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—
Another year has passed, and still I live. I wonder sometimes what I am here for? It seems that I am no company for myself nor any one else. This is when I am cast down, and the iniquity of my heels compasses me about, and when the sins of my youth are before me, so that I can hardly look toward the holy temple. I am made to wonder whether there is any one like me. I want to be reconciled to the will of God, although he has laid his afflicting hand upon me heavily. He gave me five children, and he saw fit to take them all away, and leave me, a poor, miserable sinner. It seems that I cannot have my mind upon the things that I would like to think of: I have such a wretched heart. It did not use to be so

with me. There was a time when I did not see things as I do now. I am well aware that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and for the purpose of his own glory. And he can work, and no man can hinder; he rules supreme. Blessed indeed are the people that know the joyful sound, for they shall walk in the light of his countenance. What a blessed people are those who have been taught of the Lord. O, what a glorious Redeemer is this, who gives them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, all in their glorious Redeemer. Why should we not exalt his glorious name, which is above every name? for we have all been compelled to bow before him, and acknowledge that he is King of kings, and Lord of lords, to the glory of God the Father. He has promised to never leave nor forsake his people, for his eyes are ever over them, and his ears are open to their prayers. He will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear. He knows us altogether, and remembers that we are dust, and that in our flesh there dwells no good thing. If we have ever been born of the Spirit, born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, it is Christ in us the hope of glory. This is that which gives one evidence, and produces faith; and faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. We hope that we have received this evidence, which is eternal life. He says that his sheep hear his voice, and they follow him, and he gives unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. He has the power to protect them, and bring them off more than conquerors through him that loved them, and gave himself for them. He gave himself, the just for the unjust. O, the goodness and mercy of

God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. We cannot understand the Scriptures spiritually, unless we have been taught by the Spirit. We need the Spirit to lead and guide us while passing through these low grounds of sorrow. We are an afflicted and poor people. If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. We read of a people who are not in trouble as other men. Truly the reason is that they have but one nature, and they are not the Shulamite, in whom we see the company of two armies. The spirit strives against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit, and we cannot do the good that we would; but thanks be unto God; which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, where sin abounded grace did much more abound; showing that grace is the stronger, and that by grace, through faith, we shall be saved. The work is his, and the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, shall all be his. We are his creatures, made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. And it is declared that we live by hope, and that hope that is seen is not hope, since 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. It seems at times that I would like to fly away and be at rest; lay down this tabernacle, and be with the Lord, as Paul says. Then, at other times, I think, Can it be possible that the Lord has ever spoken to poor, unworthy me? The promises look all right for my brethren and sisters. It seems that they are so much better than I am. I look on them as the excellent of the earth, and if they could see me as I can see myself, they would not allow me to try to speak comforting words unto them. But we cannot see each other's

inbred sins. And O, what wisdom the King has in concealing these things from one another. But every heart has its own sorrow, and God knows the secret thoughts of the heart, for he knows all things. There is nothing new nor old with him; he is God, and changes not. How thankful I desire to be that God rules instead of man, for God cannot err.

Now I will say, love to all of the household of faith, wherever they may be, the world over, and a goodly portion for yourselves.

From your unworthy sister, if one at all,

M. L. JACKSON.

WOODSTOCK, Mich., Jan., 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—
DEAR BRETHREN:—If indeed this unprofitable one can claim any relationship to so royal a line of ancestry, or to the family of God, who are the saints of the living God; their head being Christ Jesus, the only begotten of the Father; who are called of God, begotten of God, and kept by the power of God, unto salvation; who are loved with an everlasting love, and are heirs to an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for them, by the great Judge of all. It is secure in him, and his decision is one that knows no appeal. He is the great Judge of his creatures. May one, who is as unworthy as the writer of these lines feels to be, dare call his dear children by the loving name of brother or sister? It causes me many a heart searching, and self-loathing tear. Am I inclosed in this family? Can I join in a heartfelt union, when this great family shall take their places around the family circle above? Shall I meet them there? I remember that they are gathered from every nation, tribe and tongue.

Truly, it is a great family. And their dear and reverend Father presides over this union. All his dear ones are known to him, and none shall be missing. And he has called them all. Has he ever called me his child, and called me from the world to follow him, as he did the disciples of old? And have I done his bidding? Am I his or am I not? Ah, this is the great summing up of the whole matter. Sometimes I feel that I can say with the poet,

"A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace,
I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race," &c.

Many times I find myself musing upon and feeding on the rich manna contained in these beautiful lines. Then again I find myself saying, How can these things be truly mine? Surely they are not for such as I am. I find myself often in great straits. If at times I think that things are a little smooth, and get a glimpse of the Sun of righteousness, and feel its enlivening rays, I am soon again sighing for his presence, for the light so soon vanishes. I was greatly privileged to attend the reunion meeting at Nashville, and while I beheld with joy the beloved faces of so many, as I do hope, of my Father's family, and saw the love and sweet fellowship, and the loving greetings of so many, and heard the old gospel bell, telling the sweet story of the cross, and heard Jesus crowned Lord of all, and saw in their dear faces that the children were well pleased with the bounteous repast, it was to me truly a feast of fat things. On Sunday, the precious rite of commemorating the last supper of our Lord and Savior, was administered, and as I thought of the great family of God, I wondered greatly why the kind Father had been so good in sparing my unprofitable life, and why I was spared to journey so far amid ten thousand dangers, seen and unseen, and why he had given me a

comfortable place in the sanctuary, and above all the privilege of greeting so many of the dear servants of the cross. Some dear old soldiers were there, who had been crippled and wounded in the late war between the north and the south, and now many of them were soldiers in Immanuel's army, and I felt to take them by the hand, and to my heart, wishing them God speed. The church at Nashville is greatly blessed of heaven. Their pastor is indeed one of the humble servants of the living God. They opened their homes, and entertained the dear people who came together. I did feel to thank my heavenly Father for giving me a place in his courts. It was with a sad heart that I bade them farewell. My visit will be long held in sacred remembrance. And now, in conclusion, I would say that I see by the SIGNS, that the pen of our dear gifted brother Cox, is laid aside, and the battle fought, and I believe the victory won, and the crown given him, with many more of the writers for our family paper. Who will fill their places? May God raise up able writers; and may the dear old SIGNS be heralded far and near, and God honored, in this dark and truly trying time. What will the end be? May God give grace, and enable his children to walk in the old paths, ever looking to him who is the author and finisher of their faith. Thanks be to God who giveth the victory.

With love, I remain the least of all,

M. P. LEWIS.

CLINTON, N. J., Jan. 10, 1898.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I herewith inclose two dollars for another year's subscription for the SIGNS. I cannot think of doing without them. They do seem more precious to me, as my age and the

cold weather, prevents me from driving twelve miles to meeting. I have read the SIGNS for fifty years, and, so far as I can understand, they contain the same doctrine that the late editor, Elder Gilbert Beebe, staked out. Our editors are able, and they do not fear to proclaim the truth as it is. Brother H. Cox is no more. He was a dear writer to me. I often think, Will I be spared to subscribe for the SIGNS another year? I am traveling in my eighty-third year. But the Lord knows the number of my days, and I am satisfied that I will live them out.

From yours with regard,

M. HULSIZER.

MARCH, Mo., Jan. 8, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am now over eighty years of age, and have been taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES over seven years, I want to express my grateful thanks for the paper. I am nearly helpless, and nearly deaf, and unable to hear preaching. The good Lord, in his tender mercy, has spared my eyesight. I find great consolation in reading the SIGNS, and in hearing from the brethren through its columns. We have no congregation near by, but we have preaching occasionally. Nearly all the brethren who were in the church with me in former days, have passed on to their reward, where there is no more pain, sorrow nor death. I, too, am waiting the Master's call. I hope that you will all pray for me, that I may run with patience the race set before me, in my declining years. If you think best, you may publish these few lines.

Yours fraternally,

MRS. SALLY BENNETT.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1898.

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

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

*All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.*

TRIALS OF THE SAINTS.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE AND CHICK:—

I would like to have it in my power to meet with you brethren, that I might ask you some questions face to face; but as this is impossible, I shall have to resort to this medium. I am myself growing old, and in the place of growing stronger in my belief in a God, I find it utterly impossible for me to have any evidence satisfactory to myself that there is a God. I am told to look about me, and behold the many evidences of his existence, but I have done this repeatedly, and it is not enough. I am unable to see any mention of any one in such a condition. Can you refer me to any one who was ever in such a state of mind? For two years I have had two of my dear children in the asylum for the insane. One has died. Our troubles have been great indeed. This strange state of mind seems to abide with me in my sore trials. How hard it is to bear such sadness without the felt presence of the Lord. While I seem to realize a fixed fate, I cannot feel a resignation to it. I do not want to worry you with my trouble, but would like to know if you ever knew of any one who once thought that they knew something of Jesus, who found themselves utterly unable to believe? Arminians say that it rests with us to believe just as we choose. If I could extricate myself from the state of mind that I have known for some time, I am sure that I would do so.

Yours in despondency and sorrow,
M. B. WEEDON.

FORT SCOTT, Kansas, Dec. 26, 1897.

REPLY.

As we read the epistle of which the above is a part, we felt a deep sympathy for our brother, because in former years we passed through a similar experience of doubt and unbelief, to our great sorrow and shame. We would gladly speak to the comfort of our afflicted brother if we could. As we thought of the trials expressed in the above letter, the thought of the constant warfare of every believer, came up. The doubt of which brother Weedon speaks concerning the very being of a God, is but one of the many by which Satan seeks to rob the people of God of their rest. As the testimony of the Scripture is that he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them who diligently seek him, so it is the effort of the great enemy of souls to cast doubt upon this faith of the believer, and so keep him from coming to God, who is his rest and salvation. Temptations of every sort and kind assail the child of God, but temptations are full evidence that one is a child of God, since it has never been heard that any other ever complained in that way. Our brother's distress under this assault of the enemy, shows that the root of the matter is in him, since if it were not, the doubt concerning the existence of a God would not distress him.

We recall that at an early stage of our own experience, not long after we had been baptized in the fellowship of the Lord's people, we were one day engaged in meditation concerning the glorious privilege which had been vouchsafed to us, that we should be numbered with the people of God on earth, when the question came with peculiar force, How do you know that you are a child of God? In an instant the answer came, Because your experience agrees with that of the people

of God. Then the question followed at once, How do you know that they are the people of God? At once the answer came, Because their experience agrees with that recorded in the Bible. But at once the question came with awful force, How do you know that the Bible is true? And again we were given to answer, Because it is the word of God, who cannot lie. But now at once arose the question, which came as a blow, beneath which all our confidence seemed to wither and fade away, How do you know that there is a God? This question found no answer. We can never forget the terrible experience of the next few hours, lasting until the next day. It seemed as though one were out on a trackless sea, without chart, rudder or compass, and no sun shining in the heavens, and drifting at the mercy of winds and waves, with no assurance that there was land to be found anywhere. The solitude seemed awful. We felt to be alone. We tried to call up the evidences of christianity which we had read, such as our brother refers to in the above letter, but in this there was nothing to which we could come with confidence. Reasoning from these things might satisfy a mind which merely desired to argue about these things as the question of the moment, but there was no strength to the weak, nor help to the helpless, nor light for the blind. After thinking all these things over, we were as much in the horror of a great darkness as before. But the next day deliverance and comfort came. It came as it always has come to us, with the experience of help, and the assurance of deliverance, which only an almighty power could work. We then knew that there was a God, because he was himself with us, and we heard his voice, and we felt his presence. To us deliverance and assurance always come in

this way. With the putting away of this doubt and fear, all other fears also departed. We do not think that we have ever told this experience in print before, although we have sometimes alluded to it in conversation, but we felt that our brother might derive some comfort from the evidence that he is not alone in his temptations. We have published the extracts from his letter, because we felt that some other doubting ones might find their own trials in it, and so come to know that they are not alone in the conflict. It is to say the least in close connection with the great cloud of witnesses around us, that we are enabled to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race which is set before us. There is encouragement in knowing that we are not alone in the hour of weakness, and temptation and trial.

How constant is the christian warfare, and how manifold are the forms in which the faith of the believer is assailed. It is a warfare from which there is no discharge while we remain in this state of trial. The warfare may change its form; different enemies may assail at different times; one foe may give place to another; but it is still the same warfare, and the enemy under any form is the enemy still. The world, the flesh and the devil, constitutes a threefold host, against which the child of God has no might. But the world and Satan could not do so much harm in the strife, were it not for this inward foe, this traitor in the camp, who is ever ready to open the gates of the city of "mansoul," as Bunyan calls it, and let the outward foes in. Each soul has to learn that the seeds of all ills are in his own nature. It was said by the suffering Son of God, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." There-

fore he was not overcome in the strife, but overcame. But when the prince of this world comes to us, he finds much in us that welcomes his coming, and that belongs to him. These things are called the works of the devil, which the Son of God came to destroy. When the enemy thus comes in like a flood, we are told that the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him. In this truth is the assurance of victory. We cannot fight, and we do not need to fight in this conflict, for the Lord fights for us, and in him is the victory. Even in the presence of this threefold host, the people of God are bidden to sing, and play upon instruments. And to sing and rejoice in the presence of the foe, is the victory of faith. This is to walk by faith, and not by sight. But until this word of the Lord comes to us, we shall always fear, and dread, and feel that we know not what to do. Brother Weedon has not known what to do. The attack has been right in the stronghold of that which he must rest in, and the foe has been stronger than he; but the Lord has triumphed gloriously, and the victory of faith is secure. Some day, in the valley of blessing, will he gather the spoils of the victory. Always the Lord has triumphed, and never have we triumphed, except in him, as faith shows us his victory.

Our brother has learned in this experience, what he has no doubt learned many times before, that he cannot do the good that he would. He that has not learned this, has had but little experience of the christian warfare. We would not know what to think of one who should say that he could do the good that he would, and believe at his own option, except that he did not know the plague of his own heart, nor the nature of the foe which contended with him. Paul expressly said, that the

warfare was of such a nature that we could not do the good that we would. We have never felt like making the warfare a theme for discussion, as though it were a theory. We would not thus speak or write concerning any principle of divine truth. If the word of truth does not come to us with the Holy Ghost, and with power, no mere theory of it will ever do us any good. Discussing the warfare as a theory, has tended to the alienation and division of thousands of the people of God; and we have known of many instances in which brethren seemed as far apart as the poles, when they were engaged in setting forth, and disputing, some theory of the warfare; but when each began to speak of that which his own soul daily felt of the warfare, that would not let him do the good that he would, each could respond with a hearty amen. Why should those who are experiencing a common trial, and have fellowship in that affliction, go to disputing as to the way in which the affliction comes to them? It is enough that both are afflicted. If both cannot do the good that they would, this is the true ground of fellowship, because each are living in this trial. What is the theory to the fact? In saying this we are not saying anything against holding fast the form of sound words. Bible words are not the causes of dispute. The theories of men are the causes of all the trouble. The expression of Paul, "We cannot do the good that we would," needs no explanation, when one who has been sorely tried, as Paul was, comes to it in his reading of the Bible. It is perfectly plain to his experience, for he daily feels the same. In like manner when he reads, "I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind," or, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh," he knows

at once that the apostle is saying just what his own heart says. In the hour when the conflict is felt, he finds no difficulty in the inspired words which describe it. They are to him indeed sound words, which cannot be condemned. But at such times as the mind is carnal, and the warfare is not felt, because the mind is carnal, then questions may arise which will gender disputes among the followers of the Lamb. When Paul said we cannot do the good that we would, he was giving utterance to that which every child of God admits to be true in his own case; and the case is such with him that he feels condemned, because he cannot do the good that he would. He is condemned because it is sin, his own sin in his own heart and life, that hinders him. Yea more, if he commits sin, he says, and says truly, that it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Still the charge is against himself. He is sold under sin, and neither is his will nor his desires free from its bondage by nature. And now that he is redeemed, and hopes in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, he comes to feel the warfare after such a fashion that while he would now do good (which was not formerly the case) yet he finds that he cannot do the good that he would. So it is the sinner redeemed who cannot do the good that he would, and who sins, but yet he can say, It is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me. It is I, and yet it is not I. On the other hand, Paul says, I labored more abundantly than they all, and yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. It is I, and yet not I, but grace. In all this there is positively no difficulty, when we talk of our own experience. We shall always talk in this same way when we tell what we know and feel. When we go to dissecting the language, and the-

orizing upon it, we shall always drift apart, and find ourselves in a maze of difficulties. Brother Weedon says that he finds that he cannot believe at his own option. Neither can we; neither can any other man. Paul did not say, nor mean, that the child of God cannot pursue a consistent line of walk as a believer, in all the ordinances of the Lord's house, neither did he mean that he could not keep his body under, so as to avoid immorality, as we commonly call it, but he meant that in spite of what might be right outwardly, in his walk, he found a law in his members, which continually injected wrong motives into his best works, so that they were imperfect, and sinful, instead of pure. For instance, it is the work which God has commanded of his ministers to preach the word. This they are to do, and this they do, as providence opens the door. This is a good work in itself, being such as God has commanded, but where is there one who has been thus called, and who has gone forth to the work, who will claim that he has not been hindered from doing the good that he would, because of sin within him? While he has preached the word, and has seemed perhaps to those who heard him to have been raised above all temptation and sin, yet he has himself been humbled within himself, because he detected some selfish motive within him. Perhaps the people of God have engaged in some service of charity and mercy, and have seemed to those who saw them to have done the thing that was right, and yet they themselves have found that the work was not good, because they were under the influence of some motive other than to glorify God. Sin is indeed mixed with all we do. It seems to us that it is in this sense that we cannot do the good that we would. We cannot eradicate pride, selfishness.

and vain thoughts from our hearts; yet we hate these things, and ourselves for them. It is because it is given to each one to see the evil of the heart in himself, while he can see but the outward act in others, that each says of himself, "I am the chief of sinners." Thus the Lord's people are kept humble by this very inability to do the good that they would. A worldly religionist said once in our hearing, You cannot help your thoughts, and therefore you need not be troubled about them. How little he knew that this was the very ground of the trouble of the Lord's people. If they could help vain thoughts, how soon they would do so; but the thoughts which they cannot help must proceed out of an unclean source, a fountain of evil within; in other words from their hearts, and this is what gives the soul trouble. The thoughts of the mind are the index of the heart which is within us, and we can neither help our thoughts, nor cleanse our hearts. But the victory is in the work of the Lord. When by faith we can see this finished work, we can and do rejoice in the Lord and in the power of his might. As faith beholds him, we have the victory. Not by our own care and power do we overcome even one bad habit. But when the soul is at rest in Jesus, and in his salvation, from the conflict, then even bad habits are broken, and we are not carried captives of the devil at his will. Thus the victory is his, and the praise shall be his to all eternity.

We leave these thoughts with the dear brother, and with our readers. May God bless them to the comfort and upbuilding in hope, of some troubled one.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

GENESIS I. 26.

"AND God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

The plural form of the personal pronouns used in this text imply a plurality of personality engaged in the creation of the world. That God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, was in the work of creation, as the one only living, and the true God, to us appears abundantly demonstrated. We are expressly told, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," and God said, "Let there be light," &c. That Christ as the Son of God, and mediatorial Head and Life of his church, was there, is equally certain, from the declarations, John i. 3, and Col. i. 16-18, and that the creation and formation of man, was designed especially to set forth Christ in a figure. We have never understood that man was to be like his Maker in every particular; God was to be the Creator, and man the creature, and consequently subject to the government, power and providence of the Creator. If man had been in the likeness of God, in relation to his eternal perfections and peculiar attributes, he could not have fallen, for he would have been immutable. His fall proves to us, then, that it was not in that sense that he was made in the image of his Maker. That he came from the hand of his Creator, a pure, sinless being, and a perfect specimen of the workmanship of his God, is sufficiently clear, and that he remained in a state of spotless innocence until he sinned, is beyond dispute. But we must remember that no creature or created perfection can compare with the uncreated perfection of the eternal God.

We are told in our text that "God said,

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." In the next verse we are told that God created man in his image, in the image of God, created he him, male and female, created he them. And in chapter iii. 22, the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil," &c. From all these, and many other portions of inspired truth, we infer that the image and likeness of God, in which Adam was created, consisted in his being created and formed, "the figure of him that was to come," which is Christ, according to Romans v. 14. To create Adam a figure of him that was to come, namely, a figure of Christ, was to create him in the likeness of Christ, so far as the figure is applicable; for Christ is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. (Heb. i. 3). Paul declares to the church of God, that, "We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature."—Col. i. 14, 15.

There are many things in the person and history of Adam, which fully justify Paul in declaring that he is the figure, or image of Christ. Let it be remembered that there can be no image without a figure, and that wherein a figure delineates its object, or prototype, is that wherein the imagery consists. Thus the image of a man may be made of a block of marble, by dressing the marble in such a manner as to fashion its form to the figure or likeness of a man, and yet the man is an animate, and the marble an inanimate, substance. Although the whole ceremonial economy abounded with images, or figures of the Messiah, yet Adam is emphatically the figure of him that was to come, which is Christ. Time and space will not allow us to trace even the outlines of this important image, but we

will briefly notice a few of the most prominent of them. First, as being vested with universal, temporal dominion, over all the animal creation, he prefigured him that was to come, whose spiritual dominion should be from the rivers to the ends of the earth, who should have all power in heaven and earth, and power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. The manner of his creation, "Male and female, created he them," teaches us the important doctrine of the creation of the church of God, in Christ, and her standing in him from everlasting. Not only Eve, the bride of Adam, but all their posterity was created in Adam, were embodied in him, and their manifestation are the multiplication, or development, of Adam, and in this he was a very striking image or type, of our Lord Jesus Christ; for Paul says of the church, "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. 10. Adam said of his bride which was created in him, after her distinct formation, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man."—Gen. ii. 23. Paul says, "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."—Eph. v. 29, 30. Again, Eve and all the human family were created in him, for, "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. So also it is written, "For this cause I bow my knees unto

the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.—Eph. iii. 14, 15. As the married wife is known by her husband's name, and as all legitimate children have an inheritance in the name of their father, so all the members of Christ are interested in his name. It is only in his name they can approach the Father, receive the Spirit, or inherit the promises of the new covenant. His name is a strong tower, into which the righteous flee and find safety. In his name they trust; in it they preach, pray, sing and exhort, and in that name is all their hope, and all their salvation.

We have thus briefly given our views, on the question, of wherein consisted the image and likeness in which Adam was created. How far any brother may be able to form his conclusions as to what man was, and what he lost by the fall, we cannot say; but among all his losses, we are nowhere in the Scriptures told that he lost the image in which he was created. But after the transgression of man the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become as one of us," and if he has lost the image, and ceased to be the figure of Christ, it must have happened subsequently to the date of Paul's epistle to the Romans, for up to that time Paul used the present tense, in declaring that Adam is (not was) the figure of him that was to come.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 15, 1855.

HEBREWS XII. 16, 17.

"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."

The birthright of Esau, as the first-born of the patriarch Isaac, was only that

which entitled him to a temporal inheritance, which consisted in earthly dominion, and worldly possessions, and in its figurative import, set forth the spiritual privileges of the saints, in the house of God, under the gospel dispensation, these privileges and rights which belong to them in the gospel organization of the church, by virtue of their spiritual birthright, such as church membership, and the fellowship, and communion of the saints, as belonging to the household of faith. Esau, as we are informed, despised his birthright, and sold it to Jacob for a mess of pottage. Of course we are not to understand that the eternal inheritance of the saints in glory can be by them either bought or sold; for that inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away, because it is reserved for them in heaven, and they are kept for the possession and enjoyment of it, by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. (1 Peter i. 4, 5.) The apostle's admonition in our text, implies that there are, or may be, among the saints in the christian church, while here on earth, some, who, like Esau, will barter away their spiritual privileges in the church, for carnal gratifications. This they can do to a limited extent. Those who are born of God are commanded to take Christ's yoke, and learn of him, to deny themselves of all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously and godly; and they are assured that in this course, they shall find rest to their souls. This is their peculiar birthright, so far as concerns their privileges in the Zion of God, here on earth. But if to gratify the lusts of the flesh, they will walk disorderly, in rioting, drunkenness, or in any other manner of disorder, they sell at a cheap rate, the social, substantial and spiritual privileges of their birthright,

for the momentary gratification of the flesh. So also when the children of God forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, they sell a precious birthright privilege, for the accommodation of some worldly lust. It may be their desire to accumulate worldly gain, or to gratify a lazy inclination; but in all cases it is only for pottage. If our carnal natures were, as some have contended, born again, or made spiritual, there would be in us no such wicked propensities to please; but we find by experience, that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good; while with the mind we serve the law of God, with our flesh we serve the law of sin. There is in our depraved nature, a strong craving something for a certain kind of red pottage, as near as we can describe it, like this; to build up a sort of reputation by magnifying the faults of our brethren, in the gratification of which, we are inclined to make a brother an offender for a word; to thrust with side and shoulder, by disparaging the reputation of our fellows, so that we may be ourselves considered the largest fish in the pond; but the privileges of birthright dictates the better way, to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. We have not time or space now to show in how many ways christians may exchange their most valuable birthright enjoyments for carnal gratifications.

We are requested to dwell more particularly on the seventeenth verse, wherein we are told that Esau could find no place for repentance, though he sought it with tears. The blessing in which Jacob supplanted Esau was pronounced in these words, "God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people serve thee: and nations bow down to thee: be

lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee."—Gen. xxvii. 28, 29. How diligently Esau sought to rescind the transaction of his foolish bargain will appear by the account given in the same chapter. But his sorrow and tears were unavailing, he could find no place for them, or for repentance; he was held strictly to his bargain; though very much against his will. Isaac said, I have blessed him (Jacob), yea, and he shall be blessed. "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry." But alas, all was unavailing. His appetite had been gratified with the coveted red pottage, and his birthright was irrecoverably gone. Is it not even so in the application of the figure to the saints? If they live after the flesh, shall they not die? When christians have been drawn away from the high and holy vocation wherewith they are called of God, by their carnal lusts, do they not lose the fellowship of their brethren? That fellowship and confidence is their birthright; but when sold for pottage, how hard it is to be regained. When the adversary has hailed thee to the judge, and the judge has delivered thee to the officer, and thou art cast into prison, thou shalt in no case come out thence until thou hast paid the utmost farthing. The minister, who in preaching, yields to the morbid craving for the red pottage of popular applause, and for a little taste of popularity, keeps back part of his message, or countenances that which is contrary to the word, will sink in the esteem of his faithful brethren, and finally lose the fellowship of the church of God. He may be employed as a preacher for antichrist; but his birthright has gone for red pottage. Paul

does not say that the saints shall never find place for repentance, or by repentance, restoration to birthright privileges; for some wicked prodigals have been reinstated in the family; but there have been others, not a few, who have had to mourn with "exceeding bitter crying," that they, for the gratification of their carnal propensities, have irrecoverably lost the confidence of their brethren, and birthright privileges in the church of Christ. May God grant us grace, to keep our bodies under, to walk circumspectly, and to enjoy the blessed privileges of the house of God, until we shall be delivered from the corruptions of the flesh, and awake with the likeness of our glorious and glorified Redeemer.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., August 15, 1855.

BIBLES WITH COMPREHENSIVE HELPS.

WE are so highly pleased with the comprehensive helps, connected with the new list of Bibles advertised, that we wish to call special attention to them, feeling assured that all who purchase one of these Bibles, will be equally pleased. They certainly contain the most complete and systematic set of helps yet published. The table of contents, together with the general index, enables one to readily turn to any part of the helps, for such information as they may desire. For further description, and for prices, see pages sixty-three and sixty-four, in No. 2, of this volume. In ordering please be sure to give the *number* of Bible you wish, for there are many Bibles of the same price. but no two of the same number.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Martha Baker was born in Woodford Co., Ky., March 18th, 1802; died in Liberty, Mo., Feb. 25th, 1898. She was married December 22d, 1822, by Elder John Taylor, of Kentucky, and was baptized by him. A mother in Israel has gone to her reward.

Her son-in-law,

JAMES R. LEITCH.

Emily Ann Dunlap was born in Allen Co., Kentucky, May 12th, 1824, and came the same year with her parents, James and Jane Brown, to Sangamon Co., Ill. She was married Dec. 10th, 1840, to John Ray Dunlap, deceased. Mrs. Dunlap united with the Primitive Baptist church, Nov. 22d, 1846, and was a faithful member until her death. She died Jan. 25th, 1898, aged 73 years, 8 months and 13 days, at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Ollie Holsheiser. She leaves eight children to mourn their loss. Sister Dunlap was a woman of marked character, and was very devoted to her meetings, and her absence will be sadly felt at Bethel church.

The funeral was preached at the residence where she died, by the writer.

JOHN L. SCOTT.

Maria Jane Matthews, youngest daughter of J. J. and Sallie A. Matthews, died at her home near Salisbury, Wicomico Co., Md., July 1st, 1897, aged 1 year, 6 months and 7 days. What ended her young life was, about two months before her death she was taken with the whooping cough, and then the bilious dysentery, which terminated in death. She was patient during all her illness. "Little Maria" sounds sweet to us all, because of the one that was thus called. She was a sweet and intelligent little girl, and pet of the family. This makes two little ones that they have lost inside of six months. May the Lord who gave, and who also hath taken away, sanctify the heavy stroke to the good of the bereaved parents, and enable us all to realize that it is of God, and that he doeth all things well, and may we bow to his holy will and say, "Thy will be done."

Her cousin,

ONE WHO LOVED HER.

DIED—Oct. 18th, 1897, *Mr. Loren Akerly*, aged 60 years and 9 months. He was born, and lived all his life, in Lackawanna Co., Pa., Abington township. Cause of death was heart failure. Deceased had been a lover of the truth for years, hence had no use for error. Related a good christian experience, but was not given strength to come to the church and be baptized. His experience was published in the SIGNS several years ago; sent by Elder Bogardus. We believe that he is now at rest with Jesus. He leaves a wife, sister Helen Akerly, and two daughters, with

many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, which is his eternal gain. May the dear Lord sustain our dear sister, daughters and friends, who mourn on account of this dispensation of Providence, with his rich, sovereign grace.

The funeral was held at Abbington Old School Baptist meeting-house, where the writer spoke to a large congregation of attentive listeners.

D. M. VAIL.

DIED—At his home near South Gilboa, Dec. 26th, 1897, **David Warren Parsons**, in the 81st year of his age. He had been in feeble health for a number of years, and for the last year was mostly confined to his home. He was a faithful member of the Gilboa church, and was also a deacon in the church. He united with the Primitive Baptists over fifty years ago. I think he was baptized by Elder William Choate. Our brother has been much missed by the church since his confinement, he was so prompt in attending the meetings of the church, and elsewhere, when he could. He was strongly attached to his brethren; he was a good neighbor, kind father, and loving husband. He was twice married, both wives were members of the same church, and were happy unions. Five children were born to him by his first wife, three survive him. Those living near, with his devoted companion, kindly administered to his comfort during his long illness.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder John Clark, using as his text the words of Job xiv. 14, "If a man die, shall he live again?" After which his remains were interred in the Stamford cemetery. Surely a good man is gone, but we sorrow not as those without hope, for we believe for him to die was gain.

May the Lord sustain the lonely widow, and give her reconciling grace in her declining years.

C. M. H.

STAMFORD, N. Y., Feb. 16, 1898.

CHURCH NOTICES.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, 152-154 West Thirty-sixth street, New York city, have meetings at the above address every Sunday a 3 p. m. On the second and fourth Sundays, meetings are also appointed for 10:30 a. m. A cordial welcome is assured all lovers of the truth.

R E C E I P T S .

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CHURCH LETTER.

IN the providence of God, the Beulah church met in the schoolhouse, in the township of Brooke, according to appointment, on Saturday, the 31st day of July, 1897. The weather was fine; a goodly number assembled to listen to our brother, Elder Wm. L. Beebe, proclaim "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." That unto us is born in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Not only that he was born, but that he died for our sins, and rose again the third day for our justification, and now sitteth at the right hand of God, pleading our cause before his and our Father's throne. Is there any wonder that the apostle John, in an ecstasy of joy, proclaimed, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God?" Glorious thought, that we, sinful, poor, ignorant and helpless creatures, should have such hope, which reaches within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered.

On Sunday morning we met again. The schoolroom was filled to its utmost capacity, with anxious and attentive hearers. Our brother, though weak in body, was strong in spirit, and preached unto us the glorious gospel which he received, not of man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. We felt that the Lord was in our midst, to open our understanding to feed upon the truths proclaimed by his devoted servant.

In the afternoon we again met. A full house gathered, and we listened to the same joyful sound of salvation by grace. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." All of grace, first, last, and all the time. After the services were ended, the church, with some members of our sister church of the Covenanted Baptist, remained to commemorate the death and resurrection of our dear Lord and Savior, and after singing a hymn, went out.

Peace and fellowship reign within our borders, for which we desire to thank the Giver of all our blessings. We miss our brother J. W. Clark, who went to California for his health, but rejoice to learn that he is improving. We often feel to say with the prophet Isaiah, "My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me." But as the Lord of old has "been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." Let us rejoice in what the Lord doeth. "Lo this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." May the Lord of hosts keep, guide and preserve us, in the prayer of

Yours in the love and fellowship of the gospel,
ARCHIBALD McALPIN, Clerk.

J. C. MACDONALD, Assistant Clerk.
ABERFELDY, Ont., August, 1897.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1898.

NO. 7.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW.—REV. XXI.

NUMBER FOUR.

“AND the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” The first in the order of the gifts of Christ to the church, is that of the apostles. I have already referred to the important position assigned to them in prophecy, as princes who shall rule in judgment, (Isa. xxxii. 1,) and to our Savior’s declaration that they shall sit upon twelve thrones in his kingdom, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. I now refer to his words to Peter: “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. This clearly includes all of the twelve apostles, for it presents in another form the same responsibility and authority devolving upon them as in Matthew xix. 28. By their ruling in judgment the church of Christ is loosed from all the ordinances that were bound upon the Jews, and from all the traditions

of men; and all of the laws and ordinances of Jesus are bound upon her, and set in order. This eminent position assigned to the apostles by our glorious Lawgiver and King, is set forth in this book of revelations in the emblematic figure of “a woman [the church] clothed with the Sun, [Christ] the moon [the law] under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.”—Rev. xii. 1. These stars are the apostles, by the light of whose judgment the church is directed in doctrine and order. Again are they presented in the figure we have just considered of the twelve angels at the gates. And now most comprehensively is the eminent position and authority of the apostolic gift presented by their names being in the twelve foundations of the wall of the city. The Lord God said by the prophet Isaiah, “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”—Isa. xxviii. 16. The apostle Paul says, “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereupon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth

thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 10, 11. Again, he says to the Gentiles, that they through Christ are now "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."—Eph. ii. 19, 20. There is therefore but one foundation upon which salvation rests, and that is Jesus. Each prophet was inspired to present that foundation, and so was each of the apostles; therefore it is called "the foundation of the apostles and prophets." In the organization and establishment of the gospel church, the twelve apostles were appointed to especially represent that one foundation as judges; and thus we have the twelve foundations ministerially or officially laid. They were all present on the day of Pentecost, as was necessary, when the gospel church first appeared under their ministration as the perfect workmanship of God. Some of the apostles wrote no letters, and of some no sayings or acts are preserved; yet they are all of equal authority, it would appear, for there is an apostle's name in each of the twelve foundations, or rather a foundation for each of the twelve apostles. Judas was one of the twelve called by our Savior, but was not intended to be one of the apostles, for Jesus knew him as a devil when he chose him, (John vi. 64, 70,) and the Scriptures had foretold concerning him, and also how his place should be filled. Jesus, before he left the apostles, "Opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures." He also told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high (Luke xxiv. 45, 49.) This they did, "And were continually in the temple, praising

and blessing God." "In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples," and spoke of Judas and his fall, and fate, and then referred to the Psalm in which it was written that another should take his bishopric, and stated that one of those who had been with them from the baptism of John, must be ordained to be a witness with them of the resurrection of Jesus. Then they prayed unto the Lord to shew whither of the two he had chosen, that he "might take part in this ministry and apostleship." "And the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." He was present as an apostle when the church was organized on the day of Pentecost, and he was also present when the seven were appointed to serve tables, and attend to temporal business of the church. (Acts ii. 14; vi. 2.) I have been thus particular in my reference to this subject, because it has been thought by some that the apostles were not authorized to make this appointment, and that they committed an error in doing so. I received the same view from those I very highly esteemed for their gifts and graces, and held it for some years. But I became convinced that I had no right to condemn any act of the apostles, unless I should find a disapproval of it in the Scriptures. It appears to me that if the apostles made a mistake in so grave a matter as this, that mistake would have been pointed out to them by the Lord, and acknowledged by them. If they whose understandings had been opened by the dear Savior to understand the Scriptures, and who prayed to the Lord to direct them, were at fault in this thing, the fault must be discovered by some competent authority. The command to tarry in Jerusalem, was not disobeyed. They tarried there till the Lord sent the Holy Ghost upon them, but they

did not cease their prayers and supplications. If their prayers were not answered, and the answer understood by them in so important a thing as this, it would certainly have been signified to them, so that they would have left some word to that effect before their apostolic work was done. And in that case I do not think the twelve would have been distinctly spoken of as together when most important apostolic work on two occasions required the presence of the twelve. If Matthias was properly appointed, then what place does Paul occupy? Certainly not the place of one of the twelve. It was never intimated that he was appointed to take the place of Judas. He was especially the apostle to the Gentiles, and labored more abundantly than all the others. The authority of his work as an apostle, was recognized by the twelve apostles when Barnabas brought him to them, (Acts ix. 27,) and by Peter in his second epistle. But even if we should be at a loss as to the place of Paul among the apostles, unless we count him one of the twelve, I cannot think that to be a sufficient reason for setting aside an important work done by the eleven, after prayer to God for direction, against which we find no word of fault from the Lord. I submit these thoughts for the consideration of the brethren.

The number of saints from the Gentiles, undoubtedly very greatly exceeds the number from the Jews, and the work of Paul exceeds that of all the twelve apostles, in setting in order the rule and judgment of the apostles concerning the doctrine and order of the church. He, more particularly and fully than any other apostle, named and directed concerning the doctrine and ordinances, and concerning all the gifts, and their order

and use, and concerning the mutual obligations of brethren, and concerning their experiences, and hopes, and trials, and the province of faith, and the power of love. And all of his apostolic work, by the recognition and fellowship of the twelve apostles through the Spirit, belongs to each of the twelve foundations. It is not because each one taught or wrote something that is left in the inspired record, that he was entitled to have his name in the foundations, nor is the eminence and authority of each greater or less according to the amount and value of his teaching or writing. In that case some would have no name or authority at all as judges. It is simply because Jesus appointed them to that office. By whomsoever their decisions are expressed or written, it is the name and office of the twelve apostles appointed as judges by the King, which gives them validity. It was the judgment of the twelve that James expressed in the council. (Acts xv. 19.) Whatever any teacher, at any time, would set before the church as binding upon them, must have the sanction of an apostle's name, or it cannot be received. No matter by whom brought, nor by what array of learned men supported, nor how good and valuable it may appear to us in itself, if it cannot be shown in the teaching of the apostles, it is surely not in the foundation, and must be rejected as having never been commanded by our King. He commanded every needed thing, and told the apostles to teach the observance of all that he commanded, and insured against possible failure by sending his Spirit to bring it all to their remembrance at the proper time. There can never be any improvement in that church which Jesus built, for "He is the Rock; his work is perfect," and nothing can be put to his work, nor anything taken from it.

(Eecl. iii. 14.) For this reason all institutions, and societies, and schools, of a religious kind, not expressly commanded by Jesus, and particularly taught and set in order by the apostles, are rejected by all churches who are walking in the order of the gospel. They are not in the foundation, and they cannot therefore belong to the building of God. While the name of an apostle is in each foundation, each apostle's authority is in every one of them, and the names of all are necessary to assure each as a true foundation. All of the ordinances, and gifts, and doctrine, and all of the directions and exhortations and admonitions of the apostles are represented in this wall; for it is the salvation of God which the apostles set forth and manifest in all their apostolic teaching and work. This wall, salvation, which is so clearly and gloriously discovered and displayed in the New Testament, is of the utmost importance. It is only in the New Testament, in the teachings of Jesus and his apostles, that it can be seen. The wisdom of man could never discover it, nor the most vivid imagination reach to it. It surrounds, and limits, and defines the holy city of God, the only true refuge and resting-place of his people, in whose palaces "God is known for a refuge." Outside of this "wall great and high," is the desert of the world. Outside of it "are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and idolaters, and murderers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Outside of the apostles' teachings and judgments, there is no true religious teaching—no true understanding of righteousness—no lasting peace and comfort. Without is the wisdom of the world, which is earthly, sensual, devilish; within is that wisdom which is from above. Without are wars, and emulation and strife, and all wickedness and unrest;

within are "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Within is experienced the effect of righteousness, which "is quietness and assurance forever."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 5, 1898.

THE TWO OLIVE TREES AND TWO WITNESSES.

"WHAT are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof? * * * What be these two olive branches, which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? * * * These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."—Zech. iv.

"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth."—Rev. xi.

It is by special request that I, with fear and trembling, am moved to write upon the meaning of these wonderful Scriptures. Unless the Lord Jesus is pleased to open my understanding, I must fail to write unto edification and instruction; therefore my prayer is for divine illumination.

The fact that godly men of ability have differed upon these Scriptures, and whose writings upon them have rather confused me, tends to make me the more fearful that I may only obscure their divine and precious meaning. Rather than this would I, as a child, be still. When the request came, it seemed impossible for me to comply; but the subject was impressed upon my attention with deep and prayerful interest, and also with comfort; so now my spirit moves me to write, trusting in the Lord to give me to see light in his light, and that the children of Light may rejoice in the light. It is true that the sacred Scriptures are their own best interpreters; therefore the inspired servants of the Lord "compared spiritual things with spiritual." Following their divine ex-

ample, and the Spirit taking the things of Jesus and showing them unto us, we may hope to understand the divine meaning of the texts.

The two olive trees and the two witnesses are the same, or they represent one and the same divinely glorious realities and personages. The divine angel so stated to the apostle John. Both the two olive trees and the two witnesses stood by the Lord God of the whole earth. The two olive trees were upon the right side and the left side of the candlestick of pure gold, with its golden bowl upon the top of it, and its seven golden lamps. So it is seen that both the candlestick of gold and the holy God are between the two anointed ones, and these two anointed witnesses stand by the Almighty, both to execute the will of God and to testify of him. First, let us consider the beautiful and wonderful candlestick, with its bowl and seven lamps, all of gold, and seven golden pipes, uniting the lamps and bowl and candlestick, all in one. Yea, also the two olive trees were united with the candlestick of gold, by two golden pipes, and through these, the two olive trees and two olive branches, emptied the golden oil out of themselves, into the golden bowl, and thus supplied the seven lamps of this candlestick. The mere statement of these things suggests a fullness of beautiful meaning. The two olive branches show that the two olive trees are living, and sending forth life and light. How complete and wonderful was all this! Without might or power of man, here was perpetual and living light, united with durability and perfection. What, then, did this glorious vision represent? "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. * * The hands of Zerubbabel

have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also finish it." Thus spoke the angel of God to Zechariah, to whom was given this vision of spiritual realities. This candlestick of gold, then, represented the house of the Lord, the church; the golden bowl upon the top of the candlestick, ever filled with pure oil from the two living olive trees and branches, shows the abounding fullness of the new covenant of grace; and the seven golden lamps, all of which received the ever-flowing golden oil from the golden bowl, and burned with the light of life, beautifully presented the fullness and glory of the completed church, the house and temple of the living God. "And he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it." This was said of Zerubbabel, and he was a type of our only Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. His hands laid the foundation of the ever-abiding spiritual house of our God, and his hands shall also finish it. His word is, "And upon this Rock I will build my church." "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." "For through Christ Jesus we both [the Jewish and Gentile church] have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 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 whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." —Eph. ii. Now these words of the Lord Jesus, and of his servant Paul, reveal the divine meaning and glory of the candlestick of gold, and its bowl and lamps, oil and light.

As in the heavenly visions shown to Zechariah and John, both the candlestick of gold and the glorious God were between the two olive trees, and the two witnesses and anointed ones, to whom the candlestick was united in living union of life and light, so is the church "in God the Father," and it is his dwelling-place and temple. To the church Paul says, "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."—2 Cor. vi.

As the church is in sacred union with God the Father, so also is it united with both the Son and Spirit, from whom the entire church receives all its life and light. The two golden pipes made the candlestick one with the two olive trees; so the church of God is in everlasting union with the Son and Spirit in the two-fold golden bond of the everlasting covenant and life eternal; the covenant of life and peace. It is in virtue of this two-fold and sacred union that the church was redeemed and is sanctified by the two anointed Ones: the holy child Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

The golden oil, that flowed spontaneously and freely, lighting up the candlestick in all its seven lamps with living light, beautifully represents the freeness and preciousness of abounding grace. As the candlestick and its seven lamps had no power to supply themselves with oil and light, but were dependent upon the two olive trees for this unfailling supply, so likewise is the whole church dependent upon our Lord's sufficient grace for all her spiritual life and light. For all spiritual blessings are in Christ, and they flow to the church from him only, and by the Spirit. Therefore, now and evermore, all the praise of salvation is "to the praise of the glory of his grace;" and it is in

the grace of God only that the church is accepted in the Beloved, whether on earth or in heaven. To say and teach otherwise, is to ignore and deny all the meaning and force of the golden candlestick and the two olive trees. Its divine lesson is: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Now, coming to God's two witnesses, to whom he gave power, he says, "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." How remarkable that here two candlesticks are mentioned, and these two are identified with the two olive trees and the two witnesses of God. That the candlesticks represent the church there is no doubt, as already shown, and as is also expressly explained by our Lord in Revelation i. John here records that he saw seven golden candlesticks. These answer to the seven golden lamps of the one candlestick of gold: the one church in all her complete fullness. The two candlesticks may fitly represent the Jewish church, and the Gentile church, two, yet one, as the seven are one completed candlestick, all of gold. Of itself the candlestick has no light, yet its excellent use is to bear and shed forth the light that is bestowed upon it as the instrument or vessel of light. "Ye are the light of the world," said Christ to the body of his chosen disciples.

Let us now specially consider the two witnesses, of whom God said he would give to them power, or authority, and they should prophesy twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. Let us remember that, in the two texts, the two witnesses of God are identified with the two olive trees, the two anointed ones, and the two candlesticks, and these two anointed ones shall prophesy. Here please read what more is said of them in

Revelation xi. They have power to shut heaven, that it rained not in the days of their prophecy; power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. "And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies." From this it is evident that the two witnesses are divine, and possess the power of God himself. Therefore, Christ, the Redeemer, and the Spirit, the Sanctifier and Comforter, are the two witnesses. They testify of God the Father; they have authority and power to execute and do the will of God: they are officially and pre-eminently God's two witnesses, and by them he is revealed and made known to the church. This revelation is through the inspired prophets and apostles, as represented by the two golden pipes. For the apostles and prophets are next to Christ and the Spirit of anointing, and through them is ministered to the church and house of God the golden oil of grace and gospel light and peace. (For oil-olive is the symbol of light and peace, and it ministers healing and comfort.) The apostles and prophets are in and of the household of God, and they are also in the Lord Jesus and in the Holy Spirit. So the apostles and prophets and the entire church, Jewish and Gentile, are all united to Christ and the Spirit in one purified, anointed and living body, receiving and giving light, the holy, heavenly light from the Sun of righteousness, shining with divine glory in all the temple of God.

Two witnesses are required in both the law and the gospel. That the holy Son of God is one of his divine witnesses is plainly declared in the holy Scriptures. In Revelation i., Jesus is called "the faithful witness;" and in Revelation iii., "the faithful and true witness." Malachi

spoke of Christ as "the messenger of the covenant;" and he is called "the minister of the sanctuary," and the Anointed. As the Anointed, Jesus is pre-eminently the Prophet, and God gave him power to open the seven-sealed book and reveal the wonderful things therein. He is on the right hand of God; and in this Jesus are all the treasures of divine wisdom and knowledge; yea, in him is the fullness of truth and grace and glory, and he is the Head of all principality and power, the Fountain of holiness and salvation, life and light, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. As one of God's two witnesses Jesus had power over all flesh, all power in heaven and earth, and power or authority to do all the great and mighty works ascribed to God's two witnesses.

The Holy Spirit, too, has all this authority, power and glory. And the Spirit is also expressly mentioned as God's witness. To each of the seven angels of the seven churches Jesus said, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." When the Son of God was baptized in Jordan, the Spirit abode upon him in bodily form as a dove (symbol of peace), anointed him with the fullness of the Holy Ghost, and thus witnessed that he is the Son of God. To the apostles Jesus said, "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. * * * But the Comforter, 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.) "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (John xv.)

"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." (John xvi.) Thus we see that the Spirit is equally with the Son, God's witness, and that by these two the Father, and his truth, and power, and glory, are made known and witnessed to the church and in his people.

"And they [the apostles] were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Please read Acts ii. The apostles said, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." At this time great grace was upon the apostles, and all the church. Thus the oil or grace of life flowed freely from the two olive trees, and the holy light of heaven burned brightly in the candlestick of gold. And all this glorious work and testimony in the church was not by might, nor by power of men, but purely by the Lord's Spirit. So the apostles testified of the Lord Jesus, saying, "Him 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 we are his witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God," says Paul. Again, speaking of Jesus, Paul says, "For through him we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit unto the Father." "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are

called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph.) Our apostle here shows the fullness of the visions in the two texts at the head of this writing. The apostle John also says, "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. * * * He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John v.) So then the Son and the Spirit are essentially and pre-eminently the Father's witnesses to the church and people of God. The power of the Almighty Father is in the Son and Spirit, and they execute and fulfill all the will of God. The power given to them, as recorded in Rev. xi., resides not in men; therefore in this primary and real sense, the prophets and apostles were not the two olive trees and two witnesses, neither were any of them, as Moses or Elijah, Peter or Paul, because they were not as the two olive trees, the two anointed ones, having life and light-giving power in themselves; neither did any of the servants of God inherently possess in themselves the authority that God gave to his two witnesses, to kill, and to make alive, "And to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." If this divine power were vested in men, then they might send forth life and light, and be the efficient agents in salvation. Men may vainly claim such power, but the symbol of the two olive trees sending forth the golden oil out of their own life, to give light to all the candlestick, and the word of the Lord, saying, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit," forever veto the claim.

"These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth," said the angel to John. Therefore, as we have seen, the church is

blessedly united and identified with the two living and light-giving olive trees, the two life-testifying witnesses, the Son and Spirit; and their divine and saving power of grace and truth are freely ministered in and made known to the church. Jesus and the Spirit are with the church and in it, for it is the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. So then the two candlesticks, (showing the Jewish and the Gentile church) the two olive trees, the two olive branches, and the two anointed ones, all represent and personate God's two witnesses; and hence the two-fold church, as represented by the Old Testament prophets, and the New Testament apostles, embodies the two witnesses. For in truth Christ and the Spirit dwelt in the martyred prophets and apostles and saints; and the testimony of those who spoke in the name and faith of Jesus as the Spirit gave them utterance, was and is the testimony of the two witnesses.

It is certainly true that the candlestick of gold, the sons and daughters of Zion, comparable to fine gold, are one with Christ, who lives in them, and one with the Spirit, who quickens and comforts them; therefore whatever is done against the members and body of the Son and Spirit, is also done against God's witnesses. Thus did those who killed Stephen resist the Holy Ghost; and so Jesus said to Saul, "Why persecutest thou me?" "Your bodies are the members of Christ," wrote Paul to the church. Thus and in this way the two witnesses prophesy, clothed in sackcloth, until they finish their testimony, and thus are they put to death. "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." This is

done in making war against the saints, and in overcoming and killing the servants of God, in whom is manifested the sanctifying power of the Spirit and the life of Jesus. For whatever is done against the members and body of Christ, is done against himself. In the unity of the Godhead, Father, Son and Spirit, Paul did truly say to the ministry, "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." This was the blood of God's covenant with his people, the blood of the crucified body of the man Christ, the Mediator of the New Testament. For by virtue of his personal unity with God, the words and works, the life and death of the suffering Man of sorrows, were truly attributable to God, and all that Jesus did and suffered in his body truly possessed all the divine dignity and excellence, authority and infinite merit of the only blessed God himself; for God sent forth his Son, and was with him and in him. And so Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." In view of this truth John says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us;" yet it was the body of Christ that died. So it is in this manner, as united with and personated by the two candlesticks, that the two witnesses shall be overcome and put to death, when they shall have finished their testimony. How precious the divine assurance that not until they have finished their testimony shall the beast overcome them, and kill them. Then, even after they have thus resisted unto death, and have sealed their testimony with their blood, how glorious shall their final triumph be! For the context says, "And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, [into

their dead bodies] and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." Thus did the anointed man Christ ascend up to heaven in his own quickened, risen, living body, "and become the first-fruits of them that slept," "the first-born among many brethren." "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." (1 Peter iii.) Thus shall it be with all in whom dwells the Spirit of life, who "have an unction from the Holy One," and who are put to death in the flesh "for the testimony of Jesus Christ." For dying with him they shall also live with him; suffering with him they shall also reign with him

It is certain that all those wonderful things prophesied of the two witnesses, have not yet been accomplished, but at the time appointed the vision will speak, and all things written shall be fulfilled; for God hath spoken. Vain is the power of the beast, which makes war against the witnesses of the living God; vain the rage of the heathen, and the strivings of the people against the camps of the saints; for the Lamb, who sitteth upon the glorious high throne, shall overcome them. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." "Then cometh the end." Great and marvelous events shall yet be before the time of the end, which are sealed up to us now; but they shall be seen and known in their time. For many things written in the book of Revelation are prophetic, symbolic and future. And so after the

witnesses shall have finished their testimony, and been killed, their dead bodies shall not be suffered to be put in graves. "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet." That is, entered into their dead bodies, and as thus made alive from the dead, "they ascended up to heaven in a cloud." But when the three days and an half shall be fulfilled, is not given to us to know. Just before the risen and immortal Christ went up to heaven, he said to the apostles, whom he left as the witnesses of his resurrection, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." John writes, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Rev. vi.) These are solemn things, and true, although figurative, and the time when they shall be fulfilled is with God, and he will then righteously judge them that dwell on the earth, and avenge his own elect, who cry unto him, and his Spirit of life shall quicken, sanctify and glorify them. Until then the anointed Son and the anointing Spirit shall continue to give the light of life to the candlestick of gold, the precious body

of Christ, and these two prophets shall prophesy in the ministers of the Word and the Spirit, clothed in sackcloth— clothed in affliction and mourning. So were the prophets of old, John the Baptist, Jesus and the apostles. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves," is the solemn word of the Master;" and, "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." His witnesses have ever found it thus. May we not learn from the wonderfully solemn text, that a time of fearful persecution and tribulation shall come upon the church in the close of the gospel dispensation, and that those who keep the faith of Jesus and the testimony of God shall be killed, as their brethren of old were?

"And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves." It is hard to truly understand what is here intended or meant, and our writers have presented various opinions, yet like all the inspired prophecies, it has a definite and true meaning. But it is not really necessary that we should understand it before the time; but we are sure that the great Prophet knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, and that he as our Advocate with the Father maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. We are comforted in the blessed assurance that the time when the witnesses of God shall be overcome and killed is limited, and that all the wars and calamities which shall come upon the militant church, to try the saints as gold in the fire, shall come to an appointed end in the triumphant victory of the two witnesses and their dead bodies. The merry making of the peoples of the earth over these two prophets that tormented them shall be short, as signified

by three days and an half. The dead bodies of these two prophets may mean that they are judicially or officially dead, dead as to the influence and weight of their testimony, so that they are no longer in the way of, nor a torment to the religious peoples of the earth, but are made a byword and jest. This is very much so in our own time. "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world," says the Lord's Anointed.

Your brother in the kingdom and patience of Jesus,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Feb. 14, 1898.

HEBREWS XIII. 16.

"BUT to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

It would seem but a reasonable service for one who has been exalted from a pauper to a prince, to endeavor by every means to please him by whom he was chosen and lifted up; and the inducement would be turned into a joyous and happy privilege when it is made known to us that our benefactor did all things for us (not because we deserved it,) but because he loved us. And again, the incentive to please would be greatly enhanced when we also find that our whole soul is bathed in love for our invisible lover and benefactor. When our whole heart's desire goes out in love to a natural object, we are made willing to sacrifice all minor affections, that we may attain unto the object of our love. Much more does this hold true in the love which seals us as heirs to a kingdom inexhaustible in riches, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Our benefactor and Redeemer, Jesus, is in every respect lovable to all whom he has raised to newness of life. "Unto you who believe [says the apostle] he is precious." He is "the chiefest among ten

thousand," and the altogether lovely one. By faith we behold him as "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The apostle, in this closing chapter to the Hebrew brethren, is presenting to them, and to all saints, the law of life in Christ Jesus concerning their walk and conversation. When he tells them to "let brotherly love continue," he does not appeal to them as to men who have the motions of brotherly love under their own control, but he shows unto them the way of life more clearly, that seeing (by faith) they may put on the whole armor of God. For the earthen vessel is weak, and loves to take honor unto itself. The vessel regards not the treasure that is in it, but is made subject to it. He is speaking to them who have brotherly love already in their hearts, and out of which there is a spontaneous coming forth from the springs of eternal life, by the mighty working of the Spirit of grace. In the midst of trials and tribulations, encompassed with sorrow and dire distress, love worketh her perfect work, and Jesus is exalted in our hearts a Prince and a Savior. Therefore the apostle continues to say, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifices of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." The sacrifice acceptable to God from a poor sinner, is a broken heart and a contrite spirit. The deepest humility in a consciousness of indwelling sin, bears fruit to the praise of God, and to the glory of his name. From the ends of the earth his people cry unto him. He hears their cry; he inclines unto them. He takes them up out of the miry clay, sets their feet upon a rock, gives them a new song, even praises unto God.

"But to do good." This language can only be applied to the subjects of God's grace—to them who dwell within the

gates of Zion, who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. For Christ is made unto them wisdom, by the light of which they walk in the path of the just. They walk by faith, and not by sight. "Wisdom is justified of her children." They manifest the goodness of the Lord (in the flesh there is no good thing) in a well ordered walk and conversation. They offer sacrifices of thanksgiving in the spirit of wisdom and of love. The words of the prophet Micah bespeak the wisdom of God in the children of men, and the insufficiency of man when he says, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sins of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." The rod of the Lord is our teacher of knowledge. Through suffering we do learn obedience, and to do good. Never by sight, but always by faith. Man cannot learn from his neighbor the things that belongeth to God. They are revealed unto him through the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, in a daily experience. The psalmist could well say, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." And the apostle also, "Now 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." Surely this is the good to be enact-

ed, and the work to be performed, which the apostle would call to our mind, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to look steadfastly into the mirror of his perfect righteousness, by which power of the Spirit in us we shall be enabled "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with [our] God."

"And to communicate forget not." Does the spring upon the mountain side forget (when it is full) to send forth its stream of running water to communicate with the greater streams below? Does the heart when it is full, and the cup when it runneth over, forget to communicate the things which permeate all our being, and with which our soul is sweetly exercised? It cannot help it. It is spontaneous. We do not have to be urged to proclaim the riches of God's grace. If our lips are closed because of a fear that we might be deceived, and deceive others, it will manifest itself in our trembling, our humility, our consciousness of our own nothingness and vileness in the sight of God, in all our walk and deportment, and in our love for the brethren (the body of Christ). The hindmost little one who follows meekly and tremblingly in the footsteps of the flock, communicates the desire of his heart in his following. His voice is not heard in the streets, neither in the assembly of the saints, but his whole demeanor is an open book, telling in the pure language of Canaan, his fear of the Lord, and his love for the brethren.

"For with such sacrifices God is well pleased." The exercises of an humble spirit all betoken a broken heart, and the sacrifices of a broken heart are at all times acceptable to God. Because God searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins of the children of men, and when they follow the precepts and whisperings of the Spirit of truth within them, serving

with the mind the law of God, the old man with his deeds is made subject to the higher power. And a willing obedience to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," makes itself manifest in all his walk, with the voice of thanksgiving he offers sacrifices of praise to the holy one of Israel. It is not a hardship for him who feareth God to hate evil. The love of holiness causes hatred of sin. The light of the knowledge of the truth of God makes manifest in the darkness the hidden evils of the heart, and although we once loved them, and cherished them, now we hate them, because they are enmity to the great object of our love. It is no hardship for the exercised child of God to obey, to covet righteousness, to desire the courts of the Lord, to give of his substance, and to make all worldly interests subservient to the interests of the church, and the welfare of his brethren. He delights to walk uprightly, and his footsteps are in the path of the just. It is a pleasure and a privilege for such an one to "do good and to communicate" all the desires and longings of his heart, all of which are acceptable offerings to the God of his salvation. When the trembling little child presents himself at the door of the church, showing his authority from the Head thereof, in a broken heart and a contrite spirit, those within do not wait to search the Scriptures for authority, but with one accord the right hand (and the heart, too,) go out in fellowship. And when the pastor of that church baptizes him, and receives him publicly into the little family, extending to him his right hand, he but expresses in the act the kindly, loving feeling of all the brethren. The light shines from within outward, and when the heart acts in the Spirit of Jesus, we will be pretty sure to find the testimony for it in the Scriptures of truth.

May the God of all grace be with us,
and sustain us in every time of need.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb. 23, 1898.

MT. ROSE, N. J., Feb. 4, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR PASTOR:—At your request I will make the attempt to write some of the Lord's dealings with me. I was brought up a Presbyterian. My parents were of that denomination. We had to go to Sunday school, whether we wished to go or not. We were never allowed to play, or do anything of that kind, on Sunday. I was deeply impressed in my mind upon spiritual things, when quite young. I felt myself to be a lost and ruined sinner, and was deeply grieved for some time, and formed resolutions that I would live a different life, but found to my sorrow, that I only grew worse. They told me that I must pray to God for a new heart, and he would hear my prayer. I found no peace for a year or more. Then they held a revival meeting at Pennington church. I went, with my parents, night and day, but while others were rejoicing in their Savior, I felt that I was an outcast. One evening when alone, Christ spoke peace to my troubled soul. At that time I had never heard an Old School Baptist preach, nor had seen any one baptized. I was received into the Presbyterian church the day that I was fifteen. A few years after I was married, my husband also joined the Presbyterians. My children all became members of that denomination in their early youth. But the time came when their preaching no longer reached my case. I did not feel satisfied. I was hungering for the bread of eternal life, for something to comfort and strengthen me. I did not know what the matter was, until the

Lord directed my steps to go and hear Elder Purington preach, at Mt. Rose, N. J., from the Song of Solomon, second chapter, fourteenth verse. He spoke about the redeemed being in the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs. It was then, that I heard as I had never heard before. It appeared as if every word was intended for me. He told me my experience better than I could have told it myself. I then thought, Can it be that I am one of them? How it humbled me. I felt as if I wanted to get right down upon my knees, and thank the Lord for his love and mercy. Such words of comfort and consolation I never heard before. Here then was comfort in a finished salvation, wrought by the grace of God, in our hearts, not by our own works, but by the renewing of the Holy Ghost. I was lost in wonder, love and praise to the giver of every good and perfect gift, which cometh from above. In two months, I went to hear the Elder again. After the meeting, I told him that although I had been a member of the church thirty-two years, I had never heard preaching as I did when I heard him two months before. He said it was an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty. I told him that I had often wondered why there was so much love among the Old Baptists, but I understood it now, for I loved them, as I had no other people, and that I was bound to them by ties which could never be broken. Now it was my desire to be baptized, but I kept all these things to myself as long as I could, for I feared to make it known, because there would be so much opposition. Finally I had to tell my husband. He sent right away for his minister. He came and talked and prayed until I became so nervous, and felt so badly, that I was glad when

he went away. I went up stairs and fell upon my knees and tried to pray, but not a word could I say. I felt as if I was forsaken both by God and man. I cried in my anguish, "Was there ever sorrow like my sorrow?" Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? But alas! like Peter I denied the Lord, and remained with the Presbyterians two years more. I felt that I was no longer one of them, and did not feel at home, and there was nothing in their preaching for me. In the spring of 1883 I attended the association at Hopewell, N. J., the first time. Such preaching I never heard before. They all appeared to be of one heart and mind. They spoke with demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. How much I longed to be one of their number. I never went to Pennington but very few times after that. How anxiously I prayed to the Lord to show me, or make known to me, the way that I should go. Two weeks before I was baptized, all at once, everything was made plain to me, so that I could no longer doubt what was the way for me to go. Before this I had pondered these things over in my heart, at home and abroad, the Lord had spoken so many precious promises to me, and I had felt that his presence was near me. I was thinking one day of the fact that my husband and children were all members of another church, and how hard it would be for them to have me leave them, and go to another church, when the words came to me so forcibly, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." How these words comforted me. At another time these words came, "I will be thy God and guide, even unto death;" and many others at different times, which I could not now speak of. I sent word to Elder Purington that I intended to come before the church on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in July,

after the Association, and that nothing would hinder me, but sickness or death. But could or would they receive me? I was so unworthy. If they did not where could I go to hear the words of eternal life? But they did receive me, and need I tell you, how happy and peaceful I felt. The next morning, as we stood by the water, I thought of my husband and children. If they could only see and believe as I did, when these words came to me, "For I say to you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." I have rested upon that promise. You know how gracious the Lord has been unto me, in bringing two of my children to follow in the footsteps of their Savior, by being buried with him in baptism.

"Am I called? O, can it be?
Has my Savior chosen me?
Has he named my worthless name,
Among the followers of the Lamb?"

Hymn 679, (Beebe's collection) tells my experience better than I can tell it. I soared above the world. I thought I would never have anything but sunshine. But in this I was mistaken.

"Little of myself I knew,
Little thought of Satan's power."

For all along my pathway I have had my doubts and fears, my joys and sorrows, but I still have a hope that I may be clothed in the robe of Christ's righteousness. It is by the grace of God that I am what I am. If I am one of the chosen, it is through his love and mercy, and not by works of righteousness, which I have done. It is by the renewing and sanctifying of the Holy Ghost which he has shed on us abundantly, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. I fear that I shall weary you by this long letter, so I will close. Please excuse all mistakes.

EURE A. DRAKE.

[By permission we publish this interesting narrative of experience. Those who, like Paul, have been brought out of a religion which, while it satisfies the strong and the righteous, yet cannot satisfy the poor and weak and needy, can but be settled more firmly in the truth, that salvation is by grace alone. Creature power and creature merit and rewards of merit, when preached, will please the self-righteous, but such teaching can but wound still more deeply, those who are without strength. What a comfort it is to them, when the gospel's joyful sound of full and finished salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, first falls upon their ears. This is made plain in this letter of experience. We believe that it will be a help to others also.—ED.]

WESTON, Mich., Jan. 16, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—
Inasmuch as I have to write to renew my subscription to the SIGNS, I thought I would tell you of my love and appreciation of the principles and doctrine that they so ably advocate. I think that I can say of a truth, that in all the editorials of the past thirty years, even down to the present, they have not departed in doctrine from the original prospectus, put out by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, over sixty years ago. I can truly say that your late editorial on the predestination of all things, was, and is, sweet to my soul. It is that which strengthens and establishes me, and is my sure passport to the realms of eternal joy and love. Therefore, it was declared by the angel of God, "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." This people who shall be saved, are none more nor less, than those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Why was this

order set up by God the Father? Simply that this people should be holy and without blame before him in love. Now dear brethren editors, I feel that my very heart and soul are in love with these principles. These things are my meat and my drink. The SIGNS is my first choice among all religious periodicals with which I am acquainted, and I will say from my heart, dear editors, may the dear Lord be with you, lead, guide and fill your heart, and soul, with the good things of the kingdom, and enable you to set them forth in the SIGNS, to the comfort and edification of all that are called of God to be saints. I feel that I know by experience that I cannot declare the blessed truths of the word, to the comfort and edifying of the saints, except the Lord indite the matter in the heart. I have been trying to preach these blessed truths for over twenty-five years, and I have now to say, that I am just as dependent upon the Lord as ever I was. O how weak I have been; and yet I have never been so weak but that I could cry and mourn. So much of my time is spent in darkness, doubts and trouble of soul; yet the Lord in his own time, remembers mercy, and then my poor soul is made to rejoice. O how sweet it is to be delivered from distress of soul, and again realize his love and grace, in the heart.

I wish to say through the SIGNS, that my respected and aged father is yet alive, and enjoys reasonable health for one of his years. He is now almost eighty years of age. He has taken the SIGNS from the time of their commencement, nearly, and he wishes to subscribe to them until the end of his journey here below. His eye sight is much impaired, and therefore he can see to read but little. Also, my dear old mother is yet alive, and enjoying quite good health. She is now past eighty, and

can read without spectacles quite well. She reads the SIGNS to father all that she is able. Her voice is weak, and she can read but little at a time. Truly the SIGNS OF THE TIMES have been a welcome visitor at my father's house for nearly sixty years. They remain firm and unwavering in the principles advocated from its commencement. Should these few lines be published, they will be read with interest by many inquiring brethren, relatives and friends, throughout different parts of the country.

THOMAS J. WYMAN.

[SUCH testimonies as the above are a source of gladness to us. These aged pilgrims during their lifetime have covered all the time since the SIGNS began to be published. We feel glad for the testimony that they have not departed from the principles then advocated. It is our prayer, that as long as they shall endure, they may be found steadfast to the truth. May the last days of these aged pilgrims be their best days. His people "Shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing."—ED.]

SCHOHARIE, New York, Jan. 19, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—A desire to indorse the sentiments of our paper, and your work, has followed me for some time. But the ability has never been given me to write for its interesting columns. I well remember my dear old grandfather Webb, reading it to the family, time after time, years ago. The writers then seemed a peculiar people, but I had no idea that they were a royal priesthood, or a holy nation. This fact was most forcibly made manifest to me some three years since. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise," (Matt.) came to me; and the birth of a hope in

his grace and mercy was made known to me, on this wise. The need of that mercy was first felt by me during an attack of scarlet fever, when I was eight years of age, when death seemed near, and my unfitness to meet it, was very evident. Father read the Bible at my request, and the story of Joseph and his brethren, seemed to comfort me. Joseph seemed to me such a good man, and I wished to live and be like him. But I must say that this wish has not yet been gratified. After I was restored, my wishes and resolutions were forgotten, or if they ever came to my mind, they were put away until a more convenient season. And when my conscience charged a wrong upon me, and brought conviction of guilt, it was silenced with a promise to do better; but after going on in this way for years, these promises got to be an old story, and it began to seem to be about time for some good works to show themselves. While looking for good work, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and the Independent Order of Good Templars and A. P. A's., were tried by me, but all these failed to satisfy me. Work was wanted, more work, until it seemed that the very best of work could not satisfy nor appease the wrath of a just and almighty God, toward a lost and ruined sinner. It is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Now, at this time, when I was thirty-three years of age, the distress of my mind became unbearable. I sought relief through the advice and prayers of friends; but, cursed is man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm. I was advised, that the Lord had done his part, and all that he could do, and had made it possible for all to be saved, if they would only accept it, and it simply remained with me to take the first step. By my request, I was prayed

with, and prayed for, and tried to pray myself, yet with all this gone over, day after day, the burden of sin grew greater and heavier. My friends said that joining any church would surely bring relief. So at last I resolved to do this, or anything else, to be rid of this terrible load. So I started out to find a church to suit. It took some time, but as a New School Baptist church in Albany (where I was in business at that time) came nearer to my mind, and as this was accompanied by the assurance of my councilors, (not unlike Job's) I united with them, for I thought that baptism by immersion, was the baptism of the Savior. If I was in distress and trouble before, it became misery now. But I must not weary you with the details of the six months that followed. The relief and reward that was promised did not come, and my condition seemed worse than ever, until one afternoon everything grew dark, and I told my wife and sister that I was lost, and that they must pray for me, or help me in some way. So we knelt down, and they both prayed, and then I tried to pray, but could only cry, and say, "Lord, have mercy upon me." I had a dreadful feeling of sinking in a dark and terrible pit, and then all was dark, and it seemed that all was over. At this moment words like these, which seemed to be really spoken, came to me, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." At that instant all was changed. I sprang up. The burden was gone. Everything was bright. And I cried, O Lord, I am saved, I am saved, and if I ever prayed and praised God for his mercy, it was then. Those with me seemed shocked and grieved with my actions. I started at once to go to the minister, and those with whom I advised, to tell them of this

wonderful thing which just happened. Strange to say none of them understood it, but wept over my insanity, while I felt like shouting and praising God. The dear brethren at Albany, who are now known as the Old School Baptist church at Albany and Troy, understood me, having also been taught that salvation is of the Lord. So, after all these crooked paths, it pleased God to lead me to his banqueting-house. The duty and privilege of meeting with a church built upon the apostles' doctrine troubled me, till I was made willing to follow the Master. So I united with the church at Schoharie, and was baptized by Elder Clark, in the Schoharie Kill, in February, 1895.

Wishing you God speed and divine guidance, I remain yours in hope,

EVERETT R. KINNEY.

OPELIKA, Ala., Feb. 14, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Again I write a few lines. God's mercies are renewed day by day, and I trust I feel brought under renewed obligations to thank him, and praise his holy name, for he is good; he is a stronghold in the day of trouble. He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and the unjust. His tender mercies are over all the works of his hands. I feel impressed with the duty of prayer, and a sense of our obligation to pray for each other. Samuel said, May God forbid that we should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for one another. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Pray without ceasing. Paul often reminded the brethren of his anxious solicitations and prayers, in their behalf, Jesus prayed for his disciples and apostles. O that we could have and hold that prayerful frame of mind and heart, that becometh saints! When the Lord told Ananias that Paul

prayed, he was satisfied. An humble, loving and prayerful heart is a boon from heaven. God grant it unto us. The Lord give us grace to be humble, loving, kind, forbearing and thankful, in view of all his mercies and blessings that we receive from his gracious hands, day by day, and enable us to be wise and faithful in our day and generation, is my sincere desire.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

WAVERLY, Pa., March 3, 1898.

TO THE READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—We desire again to give a little account of our condition or welfare as churches once composing the Chemung Association. Since I last wrote concerning our condition, which was a little more than a year ago, there has been several deaths in the thirteen churches, and several additions; leaving the churches numerically about the same as in 1896. Elders Bogardus, Bundy and myself, serve them. The several two days' meetings in 1897, were fairly well attended, and general interest was manifest. Elders Beebe, Hubbell and Durand were with us at these meetings. We expect to continue, the Lord willing, to hold these meetings, as we believe that they are profitable to the brethren generally. We desire, and hope, that our brethren at a distance will come and visit us. There were several with us last year, and it did us good. Brethren, come and see how we do, and what we do. We will try and make you comfortable and welcome. We still contend for the doctrine of grace.

D. M. VAIL.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

ANSWERING CORRESPONDENTS.

SINCE republishing the editorial of our father, the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, in No. 4, current volume, headed "Absolute Predestination," and the remarks appended by ourself, we have received so many letters of indorsement and encouragement, that it is impossible for us to answer them individually. We therefore make this general acknowledgment of our high appreciation of the expressions of approval, and fellowship received from so many of our brethren. We are painfully aware of our weakness, and it is with much fear and trembling that we attempt to write anything, in a representative way, as the views held by our brethren, and when we venture to do so, it affords us great consolation to receive their sanction.

Many of these letters have been extended to quite a length, in arguments and proofs, in defense of the doctrine of the predestination of all things, but as there must of necessity be much repetition in the line of argument, and the ground having been all so recently gone over, it would rather tend to monotony to publish the many good and sound letters we have received from all over the country.

What is published in the SIGNS is read mostly by those who are in full accord with the doctrine advocated by them, and know for themselves that these charges against them are false, and in order to reach many who are deceived about the position of the SIGNS, on this fundamental principle of truth, we have printed several hundred copies of the editorial above mentioned, in a leaflet, and any one who can distribute them among those who have been deceived by these false and wicked charges against the SIGNS, and its supporters, by informing us, we will mail a supply to them free. B.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

*All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.***JOB I. 9.***"THEN Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for naught?"*

As Satan is presented in the Scriptures as the embodiment of all that is opposed to God, the embodiment of all evil, and of all falsehood, the author of lies, and the father of them, so this question embraces all that skepticism which exists in the hearts of all evil beings, regarding the existence of true godliness in the world. The question implies an assertion. The assertion is, that without reward no such thing as the service of God would exist. Without stopping to present any reflections regarding the book of Job in general, or concerning the narrative preceding this question, we will just call attention to the question which was asked of him in the first place: Hast thou considered my servant Job? A just man, and one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? This is the statement of him who searches the hearts of men, concerning Job. It must be accepted by all who believe in God as correct. But Satan at once suggests that Job does not serve God really; that he has not the love of God in his heart, but rather the love of self, and selfish gain. In substance his question implies that there is no such thing as free

loving service of God, in the world. He says that men do not serve as sons, but as slaves. Job is selected as one whom God approves, and with whom he finds no fault. He is presented as pure in the judgment of the Almighty, so far as his fear of and service to God are concerned. None among the sons of men could take higher rank than this. Now Satan asserts that even this man is not unselfish in his service, and that he loves himself rather than God. If Satan would make this charge against a man whom God approves, he would certainly include all others who professed to serve God in the same charge. Thus we have the two statements, the one from the God of heaven and earth, that there is such a thing as free, loving, childlike service of God among men, and the other from the arch enemy, that no such thing exists, but that all profession of religion, and service to God, are necessarily selfish. He says in substance, that the only righteousness that can be looked for in the world, is that form of godliness which men will keep up when it is for their own interest to do so. He asserts that God is not first in the heart of any man; that the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled in the man; that pure and undefiled religion does not exist. It is not Job therefore that is on trial, but the whole system of grace. Satan denies vital godliness in toto. He says that men can be constrained to serve God, and deny self, only by a slavish fear of loss, or an equally slavish hope of gain. Put forth thy hand and touch him, take away his riches, and his children, and it will be seen how false is his profession of godliness. Then, when this trial had failed, and Job still held fast his integrity, when he still showed no rebellion against God, and no disposition to forsake his service, he says,

all that man has will he give for his life; put forth thy hand and touch him in his body, and he will then deny thee. And this was done, and yet Job did not charge God with any fault; he still remained his servant, and acknowledged his right to rule over him, and that he did rule in him. Thus it was apparent that Job did really fear God, and not loss or punishment, and that he did really eschew evil, and did not follow good for the hope of reward. Job was tried by loss and suffering.

In the New Testament we read of a greater than Job, who was also tried, and tried in the same way, at the same hands. One of the temptations hurled against the blessed Savior, by the art of the devil, was this: "All the kingdoms of the world will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Job was tried by taking away all his possessions, but our blessed Lord was tried by holding out before him all the treasures of the world. Affliction and loss was heaped upon one who was already rich, in the case of Job, but in the case of our Savior the prospect of all riches and power was held out to one who was poor, and had not where to lay his head. But in each case the substance of the temptation was the same. The meaning was, that all that can be appealed to in men, is that which is selfish. Satan would suggest that even the blessed Son of God did not find it his meat and and drink to serve God, but that he was actuated by the sole desire that he might gain exaltation at the hands of God. And he that serves God professedly for gain, will also serve Satan, if he shall hold out greater gain. As through the grace of God, and the power of living faith, Job was a conqueror over the trial, and maintained his steadfastness through all the loss and affliction, so our

glorious Leader conquered in the strife, and overcame his enemy by the power of the word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit. "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." This means, not only was this command written upon the sacred page of the Bible, but it was written, which was the most important of all, in the heart of the blessed Lord. Thus, moved by the same great enemy, false apostles came down among the churches of Galatia, and the provinces round about, and taught them that legal service, and not the free gospel of a finished salvation, was their true safety. The underlying principle in this legal teaching is always service for reward, or to escape punishment. It denies that there is any such thing as joy, or that there can be any true willingness in the service of God. It denies that love to God shed abroad in the heart, is the motive of service, but asserts that the only motive which men can feel is that of reward to themselves. It says that God will not save men from perdition unless they are good, and therefore it holds out to men that they should be good, in order that they may receive salvation at last. Thus all legalists take the position that Satan has championed, according to the record of both the Old and the New Testaments. Arminian legal worship and service, is all that the devil knows anything about. Satan judged Job by himself. He judged the dear Redeemer by himself. His apostles judged the Galatian brethren by themselves. They knew nothing better, and they preached as they knew. But, blessed be God, Job knew of a better way. Jesus knew of the one way of life, and the prince of this world, when he came to him in the temptation, found nothing in him. The children of God know a better

way, and yet because of being still in the flesh, and subject to its weaknesses, they may be forgetful of what they have been taught, and so be ensnared for a season by the wiles of the enemy. Thus it was with the brethren at Galatia. And so Paul would carry them back to their first experience of the grace of God, and asks them if, having begun in the spirit, they are now to be made perfect through the flesh?

Here is a conflict between the flesh and the spirit, between the powers of darkness and the power of light. All that the natural man, all that the power of evil, ever can know, is the service of bondage. They can hope for reward, and they fear punishment, but there is no service which God will recognize as Christ-like service in all this. The service is outward, and the rewards are outward, and the fear of punishment, which is involved in all this system, knows nothing of the love of God, which sums up all true obedience and service. This is all set forth in the conversation of the friends of Job. It has seemed very strange to us that men who know what language means, and who do read the Bible and study it much, should ever quote the language of the friends of Job as the truth. At the end of this wonderful trial of Job, it is recorded that the Lord himself twice said that they had not spoken the thing that was right of him, as had his servant Job. This language shows a contrast between their testimony, and that of Job. That the words do not mean that they had not spoken as nearly right as had Job, of God, but that while he had spoken right, they had spoken altogether wrong, is shown by the fact that he commanded the friends of Job to bring sacrifices, and ask the prayers of Job, while he commanded no such sacrifice at the hands of

Job. Had the difference between them been only one of degree, this difference would not have been made. Job had complained much. He had shown the weakness which is in all flesh, as he replied to his friends from time to time; but he had shown that the root of the matter was in him, and that he did love and fear God, and served him because he loved and feared him. In him was proved the truth and power of religion—that religion which has its root in vital godliness.

The story tells us that his friends continually asserted that his afflictions were the result of great wickedness in his life, and that if he would return and do good, God would bless him. The appeal was in substance this: God is good and just, and he rewards the sons of men according to their deeds. Your afflictions show that something must have been grievously wrong in your life. What it may have been, is hidden from us, but not from God. He has found you out, and his judgments therefore are fallen upon you. Now take warning and repent. Seek him again, and thereby good shall come unto you. They speak of temporal good, because the trials which appear to them are temporary. This is their theology. They were no doubt good men, as the world judges men. They must have had much self-satisfaction while they talked with Job. We are prosperous, and therefore we are happy and blessed, but thou, what shall we think of thee? Job has been very strict in his religion, as has been said in the first chapter of this trial. But his religion must have been a cloak for his sin. They knew nothing better than this. They did not know the deep work of the Spirit, which had set the heart of Job to love God first, and which had made him more strict in the service

of God than is recorded of his friends themselves, who thought that all good must come to them according to their righteousness. It has been always so. They who have not trusted in their works for blessing and salvation, have ever been the most exacting upon themselves, in their service of God, and most careful to obey the very letter of the word, while those who have thought that a reward awaited them for their service, have always minimized the service required, and minimized the law of God, to adapt it to their desires. It seems wonderful, and at first sight almost incredible, but yet the history of the world, and observation of men, shows it to have been so. To-day, in our own land, we see the great multitudes preaching and believing that a man shall have as much happiness in this world, and as much glory in the next world, as he lives for, and yet it would seem from what we see, that they must believe that the things with which God is most pleased, are dancing, card playing, theatre going, and all sorts of worldly amusements generally, for the most of those who profess this religion, spend more time in, and manifest a greater love for, the pleasures of the world, than they do for the things of God. The fearful charge of the apostle certainly applies to the majority of the religious world to-day, "Lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God." These serve God through fear, or hope of reward, and have no love for the service, and therefore they minimize the service which they think will be required, just as a child will slight an unpleasant task, that he may have more time to play.

On the other hand, those who confess themselves such sinners that they cannot trust in any obedience of their own, and who love God in truth, and find it their meat and drink to do his will, and who

expressly disclaim any hope of salvation, or of reward of any kind, for serving God, and who claim that their salvation has been secured to them beyond possibility of failure, so that their own crooked lives even, cannot separate them from the love of God to them, have ever been found most exact in their lives. So much has this been the case, that the world has ever thought them unhappy, gloomy and unsocial. The world has ever thought it strange that these would not run to the same excess of riot with them. How little has the world, or worldly religionists, or the ministers of Satan, or Satan himself, understood the true religion of the Bible, and which lives in the hearts of all who love God. True spirituality cannot follow carnal things, any more than carnality can ever love or follow spiritual things.

But is there no reward for well doing? We answer, there is no reward for doing well. There is a reward however, IN doing well. Why should there be a reward FOR well doing? The Lord has expressly taught us, that if we have done all that is required of us, we still have only done our duty, and are yet unprofitable servants. We have not added anything to our Lord. We have only returned to him what we have received, as the springs send back to the ocean only what they have first received from the ocean. Here is no room for the reward of debt. "What have we, that we have not received?" is the inquiry of an inspired apostle. Even the spirit of obedience, and the obedience itself, we have received. We have received these things when our blessed Lord has, by his holy Spirit, come into our hearts, and walked and lived in us. Our God has never been in our debt yet. There has never yet been a time when he has been under any

obligations to us. All that we receive is the gift of grace. The grace of God, and the gift by grace, covers the whole matter. There is a reward in the service, but this reward we find in our own hearts, and in the answer of a good conscience toward God. This reward never comes to us in any such way, that we can boast over another who has it not. No one led by the Spirit ever feels that he deserves any more good than the vilest sinner. He says in the secret communion of his soul before God, "I am not worthy, it is all to the praise of thy grace; I, a poor sinner, have been wondrously favored of thee, in having this joy, this peace, this desire, to love and serve thee; I am not better than any other one who has not been so favored; I praise thy free grace alone, that I am what I am." The reward is right here in the service. It is not a reward to be received in coming years for the service, as a reward of merit, but it is a blessing that is found right along in the way. The Savior had this. He said, It is my meat and my drink to do the will of my Father in heaven. The hungry man finds his pleasure in the eating of his needful bread. The thirsty man finds joy, that he cannot express, in the water that quenches his thirst. So Jesus says that he is hungry and thirsty to do the will of God. To do his will therefore, is a joy to him. If we possess the Spirit of our Master, we also shall find this to be our meat and drink. The joy will be in the service.

We feel constrained to combat one theory, which we fear has gained some ground among those who have once experienced the liberty of the gospel of Christ. It is this, that we shall have just as much joy as our obedience as believers calls for. We have seen it stated that our happiness here depends upon our obedience. This may have a root of

truth in it, but it is not so as a universal rule, to say the least of it. Such assertions as this savor too much of the theology of Job's friends. This is what in substance they told him, "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee." They spoke of natural blessings it is true, while some to whom we refer, speak of what they call spiritual blessings, but the principle is the same. Job's friends said, in substance, Acquaint now thyself with God, and thereby natural good shall come unto thee, while some now would say, Acquaint now thyself with him, and thereby spiritual happiness shall be thine. The principle is the same, only a different reward is promised. Observation will convince any one that the good are not always happy. Some, who have in our sight, walked closest to God, and who have fulfilled every obligation in the church, and the world, with the most scrupulous carefulness, have yet been men of sorrowful spirit all their days. They have felt themselves fartherest short of what was right, and have deplored their failures most of all. The nearer one lives to God, the more sensitive will the conscience become. A sin which one far off will not notice, nor see cause for grief in, will to that one who is of a sensitive conscience, seem most grievous. There are indeed blessings vouchsafed to the willing and obedient, but the blessedness is not always happiness or joy. Sometimes this blessedness is of such a sort that it brings them to more self-loathing, and more utter abhorrence of themselves, instead of a feeling of satisfaction at the attainments which they have made. As a rule, we believe our experience among the people of God has been, that those who have lived nearest to the Lord, have lamented over their imperfections most, while those

who have been farthest away have seldom been heard to condemn themselves. We should suspect that happiness, which we might find in ourselves, if we could think that we had it because we had lived right. If in our happiness, we should think that we had lived better than our sorrowful brother, we should know that this happiness was carnal, and not of God or from his grace. This has been our chief objection to much that has been said concerning what is called, in some sections of our land, "time salvation." There are injunctions which are laid upon believers; and there are blessings in the way of obedience; but it seems to us contrary to the gospel to make these things the motive. Rather, let us speak of the love of God in the heart, and of its fruits. Let us say, Live out, because God lives in. Work out, because God works in. Let us not put such a wide difference between this present salvation daily experienced, and that consummation of it which shall be ours in the other world. If we become used to the idea, working out our time salvation by our own obedience, we shall insensibly come to attach the same thought to our final redemption. The people of God are not only redeemed from hell to heaven, but they are redeemed from all iniquity, and from their sins, by the blood of Christ. This applies to this life as fully as it does to the future life. Let this never be forgotten. This will lead him who believes and loves it, to obedience here, as much as it will when he is secure on the other side of the borders of death. The glorified in heaven need no incentive to worship God, save the perfect love that fills them. Even so, the perfect love of God, shed abroad in the hearts of his people here, is all that can induce true obedience.

Let us beware saying with the friends

of Job, "Acquaint now thyself with God and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee," lest we also shall extort from the lips of some man of faith, who is being tried to test his faith, "Miserable comforters are ye all, physicians of no value." The admonitions of the New Testament to the people of God, are all right along in line with the obedience of love. The Lord's people are continually exhorted to obedience, but never upon legal grounds. They are never told that they shall have all the happiness that they live for. They are so led that they find that the wages of sin are death, while they never find any wages of obedience, but they do find that the gift of God is eternal life, all along the way. Much of what has been said about our time salvation, it has seemed to us, has been calculated to cause those who accepted, and acted upon it, to feel that they must have been better than their troubled and afflicted brother, and this is to be pharisaical in feeling, and in a certain sense, to cause that one should esteem himself better than others, rather than others better than himself. It is this feeling in it, that has caused us to object to much that has been said upon the matter. We are persuaded that the brethren have not, as a rule, meant this, but thus it has come to our feelings. We have desired to do no one injustice, and we do not think that we have been hasty to condemn, but we wish that all would avoid saying things which sound so much like the doctrine of the friends of Job. We have in our writing, and in our ministry, ever felt the obligation laid upon us, to exhort, and reprove, and rebuke, as those who know us will bear witness. We have never hesitated to urge upon the people of God, the necessity of maintaining good works for all necessary uses. But we have never felt to make happiness

the motive to which we could appeal, or to which the people of God should look. This, it has seemed to us, (to say the least of it) a far less worthy motive than to urge upon the people of God what he has done for them, and his continued mercy toward them. We leave these remarks.

We desire to say in closing, that we are in full accord with what was said in the SIGNS of February 15th, 1898, by brother B. L. Beebe, in his comments upon the former editorial of his father.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN XIV. 2, 3.

"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."

We submit to the consideration of our brethren generally, such views as we have upon the passage proposed. To our mind it appears to present one of the most interesting, instructing and joy-inspiring passages contained in the New Testament. The subject embraced in the figure, and so beautifully illustrated, is one of the most vital interest to all the saints while in the house of their pilgrimage. The shattered tenements of mortality in which we now dwell, are polluted with sin, large spots of leprosy are seen and felt upon the walls. Infirmity and mortality are wasting it away, and soon it must be dissolved and fall. How cheering then to know that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and to be informed on such authority, having the assurance from the lips of Jesus himself, that mansions are provided for the final and everlasting habitation of all the heirs of God!

The occasion on which these words were spoken, give them additional interest. Jesus was about to die and suffer on the cross of Calvary. The Shepherd of Israel was about to be smitten with the sword, and the sheep to be scattered. The hour of his enemies, and the powers of darkness, was at hand, and their faith in him as the true Messiah, the Son of God, and Mediator between God and his people, was about to be put to a most trying test; but he says to them, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Though they should witness his sufferings, his agony and his blood, though they should see him suffer, in the flesh, in the likeness of sinful man, let this not impair their confidence in him as the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. They were still to believe on him as they believed on the Father, that he and his Father are one; that he is in the Father, and the Father is in him. He then adds, "In my Father's house are many mansions," &c. Without stopping now to define the relationship of Father and Son, as involving the Mediatorial Headship, and life of the church, we pass to the consideration of his Father's house, its mansions, its locality, its preparation, and its inhabitants.

When the patriarch Jacob in vision saw the mediatorial inter-communication between heaven and earth, and the angels ascending and descending upon the ladder which he saw, he said prophetically, Truly the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not. This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. The figurative design of the Ladder is settled by our Savior's words, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." He who is the Son of man, is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man

cometh unto the Father, but by him, nor can any blessings flow down from the Father to the saints through any other medium or channel, for God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3, 4.) He is therefore the antitype of that ladder, of which Jacob by the Spirit said, "None other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven." That Christ is the house of God, and the gate of heaven, is manifested from the assurance that the Father is in him, and in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And not only that God the Father dwells in him, "And ye are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power."—Col. ii. 9, 10.

By the many mansions in this house, we understand the places in the spiritual building for every child of God, or member of the family of God. Not that they are divided by partitions from each other, but rather that they are all members in particular of his body, or to keep in view the figure of a house, they are built up in him, for an habitation of God, through the Spirit; a building of sufficient capacity to shelter, secure and contain the whole family of God. The terms in our text, "mansions," and "a place for you," appear to be interchangeably used by our Lord, and to our mind signify the ample provision for the eternal abode of all the people of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A brother desires us to say, where and what place Jesus said he was going to prepare. We can attach no other locality to this house, or place, than was expressed by the inspired apostles: it is eternal in the heavens, and this is locality enough for us. But let us observe the plural form of the word heavens. Three, or a

third heaven, is spoken of by the apostle Paul, and from the account he gave of his being caught up into the third, and of the unutterable glory which he saw, we understand it to be that heaven from which Christ said he came down, when he made his advent to this world, and where he had existed in his Mediatorial relation to the church from everlasting, in view of which the enraptured psalmist exclaimed, "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 art God."—Psalm xc. 1, 2. The first and second heavens, we understand refer to the two distinct dispensations. Under the old, it is said of Christ, "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."—Isa. lxiii. 9. Of Christ as the dwelling-place of his people, Moses said, "The eternal God is their Refuge."—Deut. xxxiii. 27. And concerning the gospel dispensation it is written of Christ, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."—Isaiah xxxii. 1, 2. That this house stands as the dwelling-place of his people, under the gospel dispensation, is settled beyond all controversy, by the testimony of John, Rev. xxi. 1-3, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I

heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." These references are deemed sufficient to prove that this building of God is not only in heaven, but in the heavens.

These Scriptures do not, in our understanding of them, refer to his flesh, and blood, which he took on him, when he was made of a woman, for in that flesh and blood, he was not with his saints under the old, nor in flesh and blood is he now with them under the present dispensation. But the angel of his presence is with them, as their life, their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is in them, and they are in him, and they abide in him as the branch abides in the vine, and from his fullness they derive all their vigor, health and comfort. Lastly we are to consider the import of his words, "I go to prepare a place for you," &c. There is a sense in which the kingdom of glory was prepared as an inheritance for the saints, from the foundation of the world. But their human or Adamic bodies were created in Adam, and constitute now the earthly house which is soon to be dissolved and fall; from this house of their pilgrimage they are to be removed to their house which is in heaven. In this, the earthly house, we groan, being borne down with infirmities, and we earnestly desire to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. "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 selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit," &c.—2 Cor. v. 1-5. The preparation of

the place designated in our subject, appears to us to be for the bodies of his saints. Their spiritual life had already existed in that eternal building from everlasting, but our flesh and blood have not inherited the kingdom, neither can they, because corruption cannot inherit incorruption. But we are assured that the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. This resurrection has not yet taken place, neither is our mortality yet swallowed up of life, but God has wrought us for the selfsame thing, and he has given unto us, in confirmation of the blessed reality, the earnest of the Spirit. This spiritual earnest, is the evidence of something still in prospect. For after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that 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; see also chapter iv. 20.) Paul says, "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Romans viii. 22, 23. That new life within the saints is not groaning and waiting to be adopted, for it is already in Christ, and never was out of him. He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life, for this is the record that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Adoption can add nothing to the interest of a home born child; the work of adoption is to bring in the purchased possession the field wherein the priceless treasures of his members were hidden. This is the purchased possession,

and they are to be quickened with resurrection life; their mortality is to be swallowed up of life, and they are to be brought by adoption into that place which Jesus went to prepare.

The question returns, What preparation was necessary for the reception of this purchased possession? We conceive, the first to rise from the dead; that the body in which he suffered and died, being the first begotten from the dead, should be the first to arise from the dead, as the first fruits of them that slept. For in all things he must have the pre-eminence. That body which was born of the virgin, though holy and immaculate, was a mortal body, or it could not have died, but it has now passed the portals of immortality, and in it holds the keys of hell and death. Now the way is open into the holy place, and by the personal presence of the Lamb that standeth upon Mt. Zion, who says, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." The place is ready. The heavens have received them, that where he is, there they may also be.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself." Blessed promise; in like manner as the disciples saw him ascend, shall we also see him descend again, upon the cloud of heaven, with power and great glory, in that crucified, but risen and glorified body in which the heavens received him. He shall come to raise the dead, and judge the world at the last day. He will raise them up in the likeness of his glorious body, and abide in the house which is eternal in the heavens.

Such, brethren, are our views of the passage. Try them by the word of truth, and if they accord not therewith, reject

them; but if any of you should dissent from them, do it in a spirit of kindness.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., September 1, 1855.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, on Saturday p. m., Feb. 12th, 1898, at the bride's residence, Emil T. A. Behre, of New York city, and Miss Joanna N. Hunt, of Mt. Rose, N. J.

By the same, on Wednesday evening, March 2d, 1898, at the bride's residence, Mr. Jacob R. Hill, of Pennington, N. J., and Miss Rachel E. Drake, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DECEMBER 11th, 1897, at the residence of her son, Mr. George Horton, in Brooklyn, N. Y., Mrs. Millicent J. Horton departed from this mortal state, after some weeks of intense suffering, under which she was sustained by divine grace, and manifested childlike resignation, until in perfect peace she fell asleep in Jesus, realizing the full fruition of that blessed hope in divine grace which had been her support for more than forty years. Her whole life was a perpetual testimony that the Spirit of Christ reigned in her heart. Sister Horton, (familiarily known as "Aunt Millie,") was a daughter of the late Barnabas and Jorusha Wheat Horton, born near Rockville, in the town of Wallkill, Orange Co., N. Y., March 16th, 1823. I have not the date of her marriage, but her husband, Mr. Chauncey Horton, has been dead about twenty years. Two sons and one daughter survive to mourn the loss of a devoted mother. There are now remaining of her father's family only two brothers, our esteemed brother Alfred M. Horton, of Middletown, and Mr. J. M. Horton, of New York. May they and the children, with all the mourning relatives, find the consolation which can be ministered only by the Spirit of truth, and be enabled to see that it is in love that God has taken their dear one from the sorrows of earth, to rest forever in the heaven of his own immediate presence, where sorrow and suffering can nevermore break her peace. And when our mortal life shall close, may each of us enjoy the same bright assurance so sweetly witnessed in the beaming light which shone in the face of our dear sister as the breath left her perishing body.

Funeral services were held at the residence of her son, on the night of Dec. 13th, and at the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Middletown, where her membership was, on the 14th, where the writer endeavored to present some considerations of comfort in connection with the subject recorded in 1 Thessalonians iv. 18.

WM. L. BEEBE.

WARWICK, N. Y., March 17, 1898.

Mrs. Catharine Rutherford departed this life Dec. 13th, 1897, at the house of her son, Andrew J. Rutherford, aged 85 years and 8 days. Her maiden name was Tomlinson. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church at Southampton, fifty-five years ago last August, by Elder James Bowen, who was then pastor, and continued a faithful member till her death. Her experience was very clear and deep, and her conversation upon spiritual things was valuable and comforting to those of like precious faith. During her last illness of five weeks, she suffered but little, but gradually wasted away. Her mind grew weak in regard to natural things, but seemed very much intent and clear on spiritual things. She spoke very humbly of herself, as so unworthy, but expressed confidence that the Lord had given her a good hope through grace, and talked sweetly of her past experience. She would repeat to herself hymns, and portions of Scripture. Once when very weak she repeated all of hymn No. 807, Beebe's Collection, beginning, "O land of rest, for thee I sigh." And again, "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah." She was very patient, and waited quietly for the change to come, and passed away quietly. She was the mother of twelve children, seven of whom survive her, six sons and one daughter. There are eighteen grandchildren. She will be much missed by all, but especially by her son Andrew, with whom she lived, and his wife, who is a member of our church.

The funeral was largely attended at the house, Dec. 16th, when I read the ninetyeth Psalm, and spoke from the last part, and also at the meeting-house, six miles from the house, where I again spoke of the way of salvation, and the hope of the righteous.

"Peace!—'tis the Lord Jehovah's hand
That blasts our joys in death,
Changes the visage once so dear,
And gathers back the breath."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 6, 1898.

ONE of our oldest members at Indiantown, James W. Bethards, departed this life Feb. 17th, 1898, at his home at Liberty town, Worcester Co., Md., aged 87 years, 7 months and 10 days. He was baptized Dec. 30th, 1839, by Elder Warner Staton. Brother Bethards was an industrious farmer; had been quite successful in life, a man of strong mind, and he lived a faithful member until death. He loved the theme of salvation by grace, and was not willing to make any compromise with error in any shape. He had been hard of hearing for several years, which kept him away from meeting a great deal, but he loved to talk about what he thought was truth. Nothing seemed to be more on his mind whenever I met him. His mind seemed to be clear as long as he lived. I think his disease was the giving away of all the

powers that was mortal. I was told that he worked a little every day, even the day that he died. He said he was going to die, and went in and laid down across the bed, and was dead before the family hardly knew it. Thus the tale is told, and the life is ended, of a faithful man. Brother Bethards leaves to mourn, his companion, being his second wife, three children, nine grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren, with the church where he had been a member so long. May God sanctify his death to the good of all, and to his own glory. We believe he now sleeps in that Jesus that seemed to be his theme and hope while in life.

T. M. POULSON.

MASSEY, Va.

DIED—At her home in Jerico, Mo., on Thursday evening about 5 o'clock, Mrs. Sarah Butler Crossen. She was born in Farmington, Me., on the 12th of April, 1829, and lived there until she was eight years old. With her parents she emigrated to Ohio in 1837, where she resided until 1854. She then removed to Knox Co., Ill., and in 1886 to Cedar Co., Mo. By a first marriage she has one son, who lives in North Dakota. Her marriage to brother George Crossen took place on the 6th of May, 1886. Her last illness began about six months ago, characterized by intense binding pain in the region of the right eye. Later it diffused itself through the body, attacking chiefly perhaps the muscus membranes, and the nervous system. She had forebodings from the beginning, but endured with heroism her extraordinary sufferings, rejoicing in the watchful and tender care of her husband. Her remains were conveyed to Warren Co., Ohio, where the joyous years of her youth were spent, and there buried beside those of her mother, in the Crossen Cemetery, named after the one who donated the ground. Mrs. Crossen's people were early New Englanders, who took prominent part in the Revolutionary war. She was a woman of unusual intelligence, interspersing her conversation with memories of the past, and favorite quotations. She was always interesting, as well as genial and kind. The noblest element of her nature found expression in the care of youth, who needed home influence. In her last illness she often expressed her trust in God, and requested to be remembered at a throne of sovereign mercy.

Funeral services were held at the house on Friday at 2 p. m., by Elder J. A. Lowe.

OUR dearly beloved brother, Solomon Ferguson, fell asleep in Christ, as we hope, on the twenty-first day of February, 1898. He was 81 years, 3 months and 8 days old. He joined the Leading Creek church by experience, in June, 1877, and was baptized by the writer the next day. Brother Ferguson was born and raised, and died in Randolph Co., W. Va. He married Miss Mary J. Triplett, from which union were born, I

think, seven sons and daughters. One son, two daughters, and his first wife, are all gone to their eternal home. After the death of his first wife, brother Ferguson married Mrs. Mary Coberly. Both his wives were members of Leading Creek church. The children were all with their father in his last hours, with one exception. I have been acquainted with brother Ferguson for upwards of forty years, and he was always counted honest, truthful and industrious, a kind husband and father, and a good neighbor and citizen. I desire to say that he has been among those who walked the most orderly among the brethren. He loved to hear the word preached, which is Christ and him crucified, the way, the truth and the life. Salvation by grace was his theme. He was kind to his brethren and sisters, and his friends. His dear wife and children will miss him and his sweet counsel. I do not think that any of the brethren and sisters will miss him more than I shall, save his dear wife, and son, brother Park Ferguson. When the brethren and sisters would carry me in and set me in the pulpit, here would come my dear brother Ferguson with a word of comfort. The dear wife and the children have my sympathy. May the Lord be a husband to our dear sister, and a Father to his children. May he bring the children to know and love the truth, if it be his will.

I was at his burial, and talked awhile to a large company of friends. Prayer was made, and hymn No. 1252, Beebe's Collection, was sung at the house of meeting, when the body was laid away in our graveyard.

Your brother,

JAMES MURPHY.

MONTROSE, W. Va., Feb. 14, 1898.

THE widow of our brother Ezra Mead died from a paralytic stroke, and was buried last Friday, leaving their only child, a lovely daughter of about twenty years, an orphan. Mrs. Mead was a member of the New School Baptists, yet always took an active part in helping the Old School Baptists ever since brother Mead's death.

ALSO,

ON Friday morning, March 4th, 1898, our much beloved brother, **Neah D. Vermilyea**, fell asleep in Jesus at his home near Halcottsville, Delaware Co., N. Y., in his 75th year. In this loss there is a treble sorrow to the family, the church and the community. It comes most directly on the family, and especially on the home in which our dear sister lies on her couch with double quinsy affliction, to sense her great loss of one of the best of husbands. Her only consolation being in her dear Redeemer, though she has two sons and their wives, and some grandchildren, surrounding her. Her condition prevented her from attending the obsequies of her dear husband, which was held at our

churchhouse, at Roxbury, Delaware Co., on Monday, March 7th, 1898, being attended by a large company of mourners. His mortal remains were laid by the side of a former wife and child, to await the descent of the Savior of sinners. Brother Vermilyea united with the Second Old School Baptist church of Roxbury, about forty-three years ago, and though not much of a talker, yet he was an efficient clerk, and deacon, holding the latter office at the time of his death. How we shall miss his always pleasant face; but our God knows best. May he give sustaining grace to all that feel this loss, our loss being eternal gain to him.

ALSO,

DEPARTED this life, March 14th, 1898, at her son's, in Staunford, Delaware Co., N. Y., **Mrs. Angeline**, wife of Nathan J. Travis, in the 73d year of her age. Sister Travis was stricken down by paralysis nearly four years ago, and has been helpless ever since, with the exception of her right hand, yet she had her mind. She was blessed with the comforts of life, and all that good children and husband could do to make it cheerful for her in her affliction. Her great consolation was in her hope and rest in her blessed Lord and Savior. She united with the Old School Baptist church over forty years ago, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of reigning and saving grace. A defect in her hearing, and many cares, often kept her from the company of the saints on earth. But her spirit is happy now, being free from that which was to return to the earth, from whence it was taken. Mortality is fully swallowed up of life, and immortality assured by the great seal of our God on the vessel of mercy, afore prepared to glory, this vessel being the redeemed sinner saved by grace, redeemed to God by the precious blood of Christ. Our dear sister left behind her our dear aged brother, one son and one daughter, with their families and other relatives, to mourn, and also the church, but our loss is gain to her.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

CHURCH NOTICES.

THE Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church, 152-154 West Thirty-sixth street, New York city, have meetings at the above address every Sunday at 10:30 a. m., and 3 p. m. A cordial welcome is assured all lovers of the truth.

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“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

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CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW.—REV. XXI.

NUMBER FIVE.

“AND he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.” The meaning of these spiritual measurements seems to have been but little, if any, opened to me. There appear unsearchable mysteries here, and yet there is a thrilling interest in the very forms of expression that keeps my mind upon it. One thing which is taught throughout the Scriptures is very noticeably shown in this measuring, and that is the perfect exactitude of all of God’s works. Nothing uncertain or contingent or unfinished about them. Everything pertaining to the church of God is shown by the apostles to be finished, and absolutely perfect. The true doctrine, and the true order, and the true ordinances of God, will bear the closest scrutiny; there will be no imper-

fection found in them. They will show forth God’s glory. Even in nature this difference between the works of men and the works of God is very noticeable. Place the finest cambric needle under a microscope, and it will appear as rough and dull as a marline spike. Place the sting of a wasp under the glass, and it will still appear perfectly smooth, and the point as sharp as to the naked eye. So a slight knowledge of heavenly wisdom will enable one to see abundant faults in the religious doctrines and works of men, while the greater the wisdom, and the more powerful and searching the vision with which the truth and works of God are examined, the more will their absolute perfections be brought to view.

The golden reed is probably the same that was given to John before, with which he was told “to measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.”—Rev. xi. 1. That reed was like unto a rod. A rod is the emblem of kingly power and majesty, such as Moses had, which represented the word and power of God. As the rod in Moses’ hand caused all of God’s words to be fulfilled, bringing dreadful signs upon Egypt, opening a path through the Red Sea, and bringing

water out of the rock, so God's word in the hearts of his people, given them by his Spirit, is the rod of his strength, which he sends to them out of Zion, and by which he opens the way before them to escape from all their enemies, and to walk in his commands; and the golden reed by which all his works are measured, and their greatness and perfection made to appear in the sight of his people, is like unto a rod. It is the riches and power of God's word felt in their heart, which brings the riches and perfection and glory of his finished work to their enraptured vision. The word of God is the golden reed by which the Angel, or Spirit of Christ, measures all spiritual things.

John in the Spirit is on a great and high mountain, and yet he is not looking down into some beautiful valley, nor abroad upon some wide, far extended and glorious landscape, but is looking upward, always upward. And when we are in the Spirit, and exalted in the grace and wisdom of God, and are thus enabled to look understandingly into the inspired Scriptures of truth, how entirely our minds are directed upward. As we are enabled to reach with some degree of understanding, and with humility and love, into the sacred mysteries of the gospel, we find ourselves looking intently upward, and O, how far, how infinitely far up into the unsearchable depths of heaven our sight seems to reach; and yet we see that there are infinite distances and depths beyond that we can never fathom. We can more easily think of attaining with our natural vision to the utmost limits of space in the natural heavens above us, than to think of the possibility of attaining with our feeble powers of thought to the unlimited "depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God." Those spiritual heavens are indeed beyond the utmost

reach of mortal vision. God "dwells in the high and holy place, and inhabits eternity;" and "how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways are past finding out." "The love of Christ passeth knowledge," the peace he gives "passeth all understanding." His grace has its origin in the ancients of eternity, with every spiritual blessing now experienced by his people; and the greatest as well as the least of his servants, acknowledges that he preaches "the unsearchable riches of Christ." So we can see nothing and know nothing of the boundless glories and infinite perfections of God, except as he reveals them to us, causing his sublime and unspeakable "works to appear unto his servants," "coming down from God out of heaven." He who dwells in the high and holy place, "dwells also with him who is humble and of a contrite spirit;" and he brings with him, as he graciously comes to them, all his divine and glorious attributes, "to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones," and to perfect praise out of the mouth of these babes.

The measurement of the city is immense when compared with the earth, but is very small when compared with the immeasurable extent of the heavens out of which it descends. Twelve thousand furlongs—fifteen hundred miles—in length, and breadth, and height. From no place on the earth, not even from the highest mountain, could such a city be seen by mortal vision, even with all possible aid that it can receive. From the center of that city, taking the dimensions to be literal, the sight must reach seven hundred and fifty miles in each direction, and fifteen hundred miles upward. If we take the height of that city literally, and divide it up into cities high enough to allow for the highest permanent struc-

tures that have ever been erected, we should have twelve thousand cities, each fifteen hundred miles square. It is not in a trifling spirit that I am calling attention in this manner to the wonderful extent of this city, but that we may very particularly consider how immensely great it is, and also that it may be forcibly impressed upon our minds that this city differs essentially from earthly cities, as the figure described in the first chapter, as one like unto the Son of man differs essentially from the appearance of any man that ever lived upon the earth. Thus we more clearly see that this is an emblematic vision. And this will more definitely appear as we attend to the special peculiarities; and particularly when we come to the consideration of the fact that great as the city is, there is but one street in all its unexampled vastness.

And now we must again stop a moment to consider that this city which the inspired servant of God is describing, is not a literal city at all—cannot be, for it is “the bride, the Lamb’s wife,” which is the church of the living God, which Jesus gave himself for, “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Eph. v. 25–33.) She is now shown to John, and to all who have eyes to see, as that “bride adorned for her husband,” in all her spotless glory, as “the perfection of beauty.” Being therefore the bride, the Lamb’s wife, we must of necessity discard the tradition that this city is the special and eternal abode of God, which we think of as heaven. It is his dwelling-place only as the church is his dwelling-place, where he dwells in his people, and walks in them. (2 Cor. vi.

16.) While a city so great could not be seen on the surface of the earth, even with the aid of a telescope, on account of the rotundity of the earth, it could all be seen, or the parts of it toward us, with its form and dimensions, if it were up in the sky at a proper distance, not directly above us, but away far enough so that the walls and height, as well as the breadth and length and foundations, should appear. From such a great and high mountain, how wonderful would such a city appear, hanging in space, or rather appearing in the midst of the glorious, unsearchable heavens, which are not dark, dead space, but glowing and pulsating with the life-giving power of God. As such a city should first break upon our astonished view in all its beauty and glory, far up and out in the living, throbbing depths above us, how would our eyes and our thoughts be turned from all other things, to dwell in wonder upon that strange and sublime vision. As it descended nearer to the beholder, though still ever far above, its wonderful form and vast proportions would first strike the attention, with the “wall great and high” surrounding it.

“The city lieth foursquare.” How exact its proportions! The tribes of the nation of Israel were twelve, and of these were sealed out of each tribe twelve thousand. (vii. 4.) All that concerned this nation of Israel as the chosen people of God, was typical of his redeemed people from among all the nations of the earth. These form “a company that no man can number;” but with God they are as exactly known and numbered, and the place of each and all assigned, as was the case with Israel after the flesh. So the twelve thousand sealed of each tribe represents not the exact numbers saved out of the nation of Israel, but the exactitude

of God's knowledge and arrangement of all his people who constitute the church of the living God, and who are chosen out of all the nations of the earth, and are called "the nations of the redeemed." When Moses blessed the children of Israel, for some reason the name of Simeon was omitted, but in the close of the peculiar blessing of Joseph, his two sons are mentioned in such a way as to show that "the ten thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh," while representing all of those whom Jesus shall bring to the ends of the earth to see his salvation, (Deut. xxxiii. 17; Isa. lii. 10,) they are also regarded as each a tribe of Israel, making twelve tribes without either Simeon or Joseph. In the enumeration of the tribes out of each of which twelve thousand were sealed, the tribe of Dan and of Ephraim are omitted; but as the tribe of Manasseh, one of Joseph's sons, is named, it is evident that when the tribe of Joseph is named, the tribe of Ephraim, his remaining son, is meant. So for some reason in one important enumeration of the tribes, Simeon is omitted, and in another Dan is omitted in order to give place to the tribes of the two sons of Joseph, and still preserve the number of twelve tribes. This gives the four equal sides to the city and the wall, with three gates on each side, affording ample provision for entrance for those who are brought from the west and gathered from the east; whom the north must give up, and whom the south cannot keep back; who are the sons of God brought from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth; whom he has created for his glory. (Isa. xliii. 5-7.) Thus there are twelve gates for the twelve tribes, a gate for each tribe, and the names of the twelve tribes written on the gates, so that neither more nor less than the election of grace shall ever enter there.

"And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel." The height of the wall would be slight compared with the height of the city, if we took the measurements as literal, or as bearing the relation to each other represented by the literal numbers used; for while the city is twelve thousand furlongs in height, the height of the wall is only one hundred and forty-four cubits, or something more than two hundred and fifty feet; and yet the wall is spoken of as "great and high," while the dimensions of the city are merely given without any comment. But it is said that this measure of the wall is "according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel." What the full significance of this may be I cannot tell, only that it removes it from natural computation, and shows it to be especially figurative. Also in chapter xxii. 8-13, we find this angel which shewed John these things, said of himself, "I am Alpha and Omega." This wall then is according to the measure of Christ. He is the salvation of his people, and it was declared in prophecy concerning this same Jerusalem, "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."—Zech. ii. 5. The wall then is Jesus, who is the defense, the salvation and the glory of his people; and as we grow in the knowledge of him, in our experience, and in the unfolding of the Scriptures to our view, we shall see more and more that Christ is our All; that aside from him there is no attraction, no delight, no source of joy, for a child of God. He has not built up beautiful and glorious things to gratify our minds, as earthly monarchs do, but has become himself unto his people all that these objects of beauty and glory and value rep-

resent to the natural man. Thus all manner of names of great importance and value among men, and upon the earth, are applied to Jesus, representing dear relationships, as Husband, Brother and the like; or implements of war and defense, as "the sword of their excellency," and the shield of their strength; or things for safety, as their tower; or for food, as bread and meat, or the vine and apple tree; or for firmness, as the Rock; or for offerings, as the Lamb; or for brightness and light, as a star, the sun; or for beauty, as the rose; or for preciousness, as the pearl. But the names that illustrate the preciousness and beauty and value and glory of Christ to his people, are more than can be named here. That this wall is Jesus as the salvation of his people, further appears in that the building of it was jasper, which is the same stone most precious to which the light of the city is compared; so that the whole of that wall of jasper, clear as crystal, is light in itself. Christ is our light and our salvation. Salvation is not something done by us, not brought about by our works or goodness, but it is Jesus. He through his finished work became our salvation before we knew him, or knew our need of salvation. When we needed salvation, and there was none for us, because we were already lost, then he appeared as our salvation and righteousness, and the law was silenced, having no charge against us, but on the contrary declaring us justified. As a wall great and high would secure the safety of those around whom it is built, so Jesus became our wall. Eternal safety is in him, and he is the firmness and light and beauty of the jasper stone to us; "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." When we are in trouble through transgression, through temptation, through affliction, through sin wound-

ing the conscience, we do not get comfort by getting that wall mended, or prevailing upon the Lord to heal some breach in it that we may think we have made, but through the appearing of Jesus again in his goodness, and faithfulness, and mercy, and everlasting love, as our salvation, no breach was ever made in that wall; the firmness of that jasper stone never fails, nor does its light diminish. In us healing is needed from day to day, for in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing, and every day we need the prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Then he lifts us up, opens our eyes again, and there is Jesus within us and about us. The wall unbroken is still there, and the foundations in all their beauty; and we find ourselves built up in him, as well as built upon him. And when he restores our souls, and makes us to feel again himself as our wall of salvation, our rejoicing is not merely because of a sense of safety from danger and destruction, but because we find in that dear Savior all that we need; because we find that the things of the world are not necessary to our joy and happiness; because in him is all our life, and light, and blessedness; all our sweet consolation and joy, as well as our eternal safety; so that "we are complete in him."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 12, 1898.

FULTON, Ky., Feb. 22, 1898.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read your comments on your dear father's editorial on "Absolute Predestination," in current volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I so fully indorse the views expressed by him, and you, that I feel a desire to write to you. I can remember forty years ago, the SIGNS was the only Old School Primitive Baptist

paper circulated in this part of the country, and its teachings on predestination were heartily enjoyed and believed by the Baptists here almost universally. Another feature of the teachings of the SIGNS was (and is) that the salvation of God's elect, God's children, was from first to last by grace. Baptists all agreed on this. The Arminians were continually making war on these points of doctrine. The instruments of warfare used by them were such sayings as these, "That makes God the author of sin;" "You destroy the responsibility of man;" "If this be so, then man 'Can't help it;" "If I believed this, I would give myself no concern about good works; I would take my fill of sin;" "You have to do what God predestinated you should do, then why be concerned one way or the other?" "If God has decreed all things, you are not to be blamed for any of your acts;" you "Can't help it;" "If you are to be saved entirely by grace, then go on and do all the wickedness you can, you will be saved any how." Now, ever since I can remember, I have heard such sayings as these thrown at the Primitive Baptists, by the self-righteous Arminian, but never did I hear any one who claimed to be a Primitive Baptist, use such sayings against the doctrine, until within the last few years. But now, papers claiming to represent Primitive, or Bible Baptist's views, are filled up with such expressions. Those that have departed from the original doctrine held by the Baptists, have become as vile in their sayings as our most avowed enemies. They use precisely the same words that have been used against us by our enemies. I am very sorry this is so. I do not believe, nor have any knowledge of any Baptist that does believe, that God, or the holy Spirit of God, prompts man to sin. I knew one

man, several years ago, that got drunk, and made a plea that it was predestinated that he should get drunk. My advice to the church was to inform him that it was predestinated that all such men as he should be excluded from the church, and the church did exclude him in short order.

I have for the last thirty years sensibly and sorrowfully felt that I am a sinner. I have been desiring, and striving, all this time to be a good man, to be free from the workings of sin in me, but have failed, only at moments when, as I trust, the Lord has sweetly drawn me out of self, by faith, into the righteousness of Christ. This however, does not last but a little while with me, until I am feeling that I am doing that I would not, and not doing that I would; so then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I have found "I can't help it;" not that God makes me sin by working in me to sin, no, but sin in me. I wish often, "I could help it." I would hate to boast of my ability to do good, and then not do it. It seems to me that such boasting smacks of impudence, and shows willfulness. If God's children have power to keep all of his commands, and the keeping of them depends upon them, and they do not do it, it shows to me, if it shows anything, that they wickedly and willfully commit sin. If they can, and do keep all of his commands, then perfection can be reached in the flesh, and we would have no need of grace after regeneration. If this be so, then the last thirty years of my life have been a delusion, for I have felt every day that I needed grace. Grace has been my only support. I have never been able to live by works. I trust that I have been, to some little degree, able to work by life, which is Christ that liveth in me. This makes me to hope that God has predestinated that I shall be con-

formed to the image of his Son. If this be so, then "We know that all things shall work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." This we could never know if some things are taking place which God never designed or purposed, for if he has been frustrated in one of his designs, he may be in all. But we are assured that, "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Hence he embraced in his divine purposes, each of our sins, and all of our sorrows. His divine wisdom knew what was for our good. He ordained it for our benefit. How could we appreciate grace were it not for the oppression of sin, that so distresses us? Not that sin is good, no, but God has ordained it, that we get the benefit of the contrast, his righteousness, and appreciate his grace. It is a thing very strange to me that any poor sinner, who has felt the exceeding sinfulness of his nature, can boast of the dependence for good being in himself. "If any of you be justified by the deeds of the law, ye are fallen from grace." As for me, I have spent my time as a beggar, begging for grace, not that I voluntarily begged, but it has been with me because I could not help begging, I am so poor. I am entirely destitute. "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." Then should we not be glad that our salvation here in time does not depend upon us?

I am very sorry to see this departure from the truth. Men that a few years ago seemed to believe, and ably (in the letter) promulgated truth, have now set themselves against it, and are spending their time in vilifying those who are contending for the faith once delivered to

the saints. They have formed a league with our former enemies, and are doing their utmost to annihilate us. I feel no disposition to return evil for evil, but my poor heart is full of pity and sorrow. I still hope that God will give them repentance to the acknowledging the truth.

Our God notified us beforehand that the time would come, when "some shall depart from the faith, (truth) giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," yet our poor heart is filled with grief when we see the fulfillment of this prediction. Many whom I once loved in the truth have turned from it, and are now denouncing it, and me for believing it. I think that many good brethren and sisters are following their pernicious ways, for such I feel a deep sympathy. As for me, my race is about run, and the nearer I approach the end, the more I rejoice in the thought of the absolute sovereignty of our God over all worlds, beings, and acts of beings. Could I be made to believe that one thing has acted contrary to God's expectation or design, I would be alarmed indeed, for my hope of heaven is upon the unchangeableness of his will. I believe also that he embraced in his will each crumb of "our daily bread" that we receive while we tabernacle here, which he, according to his divine power, gives us freely. It is the duty of God's children to serve him, and to this end he "worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This gives me comfort in my declining days; trusting that I have realized the "inworking" of God's Spirit, working in me both to will and to do.

When I commenced this letter I only thought to express my appreciation of your father's, and your editorials, as referred to above. What I have written I

now submit to you to do with as you may think best.

I am a poor sinner, in hope of eternal life.

R. H. BOAZ.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 17, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you the inclosed private letter from brother Milton Dance, that it may be published if you deem it proper to do so. Such good letters I feel ought not to be selfishly laid away in a pigeon-hole, and no more see the light of day. This one has encouraged me greatly.

Your brother in fraternal love,

B. F. COULTER.

GITTINGS, Md., Jan. 21, 1898.

MY BELOVED BROTHER COULTER:—Your letter received, and in answer will say your request to give my views on 1 Peter iv. 1, went through me like an electric shock, and the very first thought was, Brother Coulter wants to catch me in my hypocrisy, for he knows how ignorant I am of spiritual things; but soon another feeling came over me, of humility, and I felt so little in my own sight that I trembled with very weakness, both in body and mind, and felt that I could not write on any subject, much less this one, that which would be of any interest whatever to any one, even if I understood the subject. But in thinking the matter over (not the subject) I concluded I would write, and in doing so I feel that your understanding of the Scriptures is so far in advance of mine, that you will not accept anything but the truth, but call my attention to it. I may have views on a passage of Scripture, but cannot think them out as I view them, only as opened up while writing; and so at this time, I have no idea what I shall write, but what-

ever I do write must be rapidly, or stop entirely.

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” This, as well as in all other epistles of the apostles, I think, was written without chapters or verses, and it is necessary to understand what the writer means; to commence with him, and keep company along with him, and if we understand who he is writing to, we will soon be in harmony and understanding with the writer. This whole epistle is written to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. Yes, my dear brother, and to you and me, if we are of the “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” There is hope pictured out in almost every line of the foregoing chapters. The faith of God’s elect, which is given us in or with a knowledge of God’s love, is very precious in God’s sight, and he tries this faith, not that he may know how precious it is, but that we may feel the preciousness of it, and its power in keeping us in subjection; not to keep our faith in subjection, but to keep us. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift 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.” Not to do good work to receive faith, but to work out or manifest what God has wrought in us by this faith, which is the gift of God, and brings hope; and without faith it is impossible to please God. Therefore to understand what the apostle means here, we must have this precious faith. We also find sweet admonition along in this epistle, and when I say sweet admonition, I feel that they

are not admonitions to us if they are not sweet. When we feel the power of these admonitions, our fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, has no power over us. But to get to the text. "Forasmuch then." We find the preceding chapters setting forth the sufferings of Christ in the flesh, and that for the sins of his people, and his obedience, and contrasting our obedience in him, with our disobedience. The sufferings of Christ and his obedience, is fully set forth as an example for those for whom he suffered and died, to follow. Forasmuch then as he suffered for us in the flesh, or because when he was reviled he reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously, this is our example, and because Christ suffered the just for the unjust, and if we are persecuted, reviled and spit upon, we should arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, and not turn and threaten and strike back, with the same mind of these revilers, but arm yourselves, that is, manifest the faith and forbearance that God has endowed you with; let not your flesh return evil, but let the mind of Christ that is in you, manifest that meek and quiet spirit that he did, and thereby manifest that you have suffered in the flesh, and ceased from sin; that you should no longer live the rest of your time in, or subject to, the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. If Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, and bare our sins in his body on the tree, while we were dead in sins, having no knowledge of sin, but as sheep going astray, but are turned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, even Christ, of how great importance that we should arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, the strength of faith. The arms of a soldier are prepared for him, and he is directed to put them

on, and we are commanded to put on the whole armor of God, as we do the new man, or put off the old man. Therefore arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, when you are buffeted, take it patiently; when you are reviled, revile not again, but when you do well and are buffeted for it, and ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. Christ suffered for sin, that he might bring us to God, so when we suffer for sin, it brings us to God, and we sweetly kiss the rod. O how humble we are when we have the mind of Christ, that is, when the sufferings of Christ for our sins, are felt in our hearts and lives. We cannot live any longer in sin; it has become a stench in our nostrils. These are precious seasons, as we travel through this vale of tears, and when darkness that can be felt is upon us, and we cannot come forth, how much we crave one little ray of light, yet we are suffering in the flesh, and while thus suffering, we are getting nearer and nearer to God, and we rejoice in tribulation, for tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. While by the death and sufferings of Christ our sins are forever blotted out, the seed of sin remains in the flesh, and we are led astray by it; yet we are without sin unto condemnation, but are subject to the wiles of Satan, and are warned, but are admonished to arm ourselves with the mind of Christ; to put on Christ; follow him according to the example he has given us. There is much room here for careful examination of ourselves, or myself, and we do well to consider the penalty for disobedience, or departing from the example of our great Sufferer. I am at a loss to understand how any child of God, who has tasted of the goodness of God, can fall back on predestination for a shield, or an excuse for sins.

I am told there are such among us that claim that let them do what they may, it was predestinated they should do this sin, and must of necessity do that which God predestinated they should do. Now I greatly fear that such have not the fear of God before their eyes, and they want an excuse to follow the lust of the flesh, and deny the authority of the church to question their acts. When God made Adam of the dust of the ground, he was a creature of God; he had no power to act, or even to receive or ask for life, but God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul, or man; not set free to do as he pleased, but subject to the will of God who made him and gave him life, and he walked exactly in the way God had before determined he should, and Adam had no mind to do good or evil. But God made Satan in the form of a serpent, and a creature of God, to do his bidding, and the serpent fulfilled the very purpose which God before determined he should. If we deny this, we must acknowledge there was some other creative power somewhere, which was equal with God, not only in creative power, but in independent action. Both acted exactly as God before determined they should. Now in the face of all that which they done, was either excused in any sense whatever for their acts? The serpent was cursed for his act, and made to go on his belly all his life. Adam was cursed, with the ground of which he was made, and God declared that it should bring forth thorns and briers, and that has been the lot of man ever since. My dear brother, I never knew the nature of my lusts until I had eaten of the tree of life, nor knew the difference between truth and error, and the lusts of the flesh have ever since been as a moth eating into my very vitals, and

with this before me, how can I make any excuse for my sins which I inherited from my earthly father, Adam? But thanks be to God, he also determined there should be a Savior, who should save all his chosen people, and put away sin from them by his own sacrifice, even his darling Son. So then let us follow this great Savior and Redeemer; this precious One, who has set us an example, and given us such sweet admonitions, and given us the mind of Christ. Shall we follow the lusts of the flesh, and then blame God for it all? Where is the love of Christ in such a theory as this? This is not the mind of Christ, neither has such armed themselves with this mind, but have armed themselves with the mind of Satan, and have not ceased from sin. I understand this ceasing from sin, is the hatred to sin, and desire to be rid of it. This anxious desire to be rid of sin, and to be kept by the power of God, comes by faith, and enables us to put on the whole armor of God, and "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called."

I hope you will see by what I have written, the way my mind runs on this subject, although I have not written as full as I have felt the importance of the subject. I have written very hurriedly at night, after a hard day's work in the office, and I am sure you will correct me if I have missed the meaning of the text, or have misapplied it. I can go as far as any one in predestination, and yet I cannot claim that it is right to do that which I am commanded not to do, and charge it to predestination, for my conscience smites me, and I so often have to cry out, "O, wretched man that I am."

I am your weak brother, if I dare claim that relationship which I prize so dearly,

MILTON DANCE.

P. S.

FEBRUARY 2, 1898.

You will see by the date of this that it

is about two weeks old, and I hardly know whether to send it or not, but Jennie says send it. Maybe she knows better than I. My own writing never looks to me like others. I am sure what I have written is the truth, whether I have got the right view of the text, and I want you to find all the fault with it that it deserves, and correct me.

Lovingly yours,

M. D.

WEISER, Idaho, Jan. 9, 1898.

"WHEREFORE, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."—Rom. vii. 4.

All our Lord's teachings, parables, symbols and illustrations, were taken from things with which his disciples were daily familiar. Lessons of the deepest spiritual significance were drawn from the mountains, the rivers, the forest, the wheat, the corn, the stones, the mustard seed, the vineyard, the winepress, the pearl, the sun, moon and stars, and even the reptiles of the earth. So that we can truly say, that never man spake as this man spake. So, in this case, the relation which his people sustained to the law, and it to them, Jesus inspired his apostle to illustrate by a figure familiar both to them and to us; the marriage relation between man and woman. As nothing but the death of the husband would dissolve this relation, or legalize marriage with any other man, a marriage to take place before the death of the husband would incur the sin of adultery. If the relation be dissolved by death, the law which bound them would lose its force, and would allow, and even justify marriage to another man. So in like manner, he

says, speaking to his brethren, "We have become dead to the law by the body of Christ." He means that the body of Christ has really slain our first husband, in order that we should be united to him in indissoluble wedlock, over which death itself has no power, for our second husband has gotten the complete victory over death, and will live forever. This marriage, unlike the other, is indissoluble. The reign or dominion of our first husband was so stern and rigorous, that although a husband, when we have assurance that he is really dead, and that we are freed from his dominion, if we weep at all, it is for joy, especially when we realize that in the desolation of our widowhood we were espoused to our second husband, and that henceforth we must lean upon his all-sufficient arm, and upon his pledge and promise oft repeated, that he will never leave nor forsake us. Our second, and greatly beloved husband, in order to show us the extent of his love toward us, and that this blessed union with himself is the result of his own sacrificial work on our behalf, and the incompetency of the blood of beasts on priestly altars slain, and that this relation to our first husband was dissolved by his own body or person, has imprinted indelibly, this precious truth in our hearts, that sacrifices, and offerings, and burnt-offerings, he would not have. But he says, A body hast thou prepared me, for in such as these thou hast had no pleasure. Then he says, 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. Yes, he has taken away the handwriting of ordinances which was contrary to us, nailing it to his cross, having spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them, and triumphing over them in it. All this is

done that he may establish the second, indissoluble union with himself; a heart-felt union, in which his blessed covenant is written in the heart, and imprinted in the mind, so that he shall be to them a God, and they to him a people. We would naturally inquire, What are the fruits of this marriage, or union? All this has been done for us that we might bring forth fruit to God. To show that such a marriage union really exists between this bride and heavenly Bridegroom, he has instituted the beautiful symbol, or ordinance of baptism, in which this blood-bought, and heavenly bride, takes the name of the Bridegroom, and manifestly acknowledges him to be her husband and head, and that all former allegiance is everlastingly dissolved, and that henceforth she can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." In thus acknowledging him we have participated in the highest privilege ever conferred upon the children of men. We have been raised from the dunghill, and have been permitted to sit among princes. Such as have felt him precious will realize in taking his yoke, that it is easy, and his burden light, and rest will be found to the soul.

The further fruits of this union will appear in the godly lives of his people; in encouraging and approving all that he approves, and in condemning what he forbids, both in themselves and others. Their desire above all else will be, and should be, like Mary, to sit at his feet and hear his words. They do bring forth fruit in old age. For he said, "Even to old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you, I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you." Their fruit appears conspicuously in bitterly denouncing themselves. There appears so much in us that is repulsive

to the stainless character of our Beloved, that we loathe and abhor ourselves, and repent in sackcloth and ashes, saying in substance like Isaiah, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." To show us our dependence, and to strengthen within us the spirit of prayer, to bring us to the throne of grace, he hides his face from us, he answers us not a word, as was the case with the Syro Phoenecian woman, but like her, our desire is thus intensified, and we fall at his feet, saying, "Lord help us," and right at the time most needed, help comes. Having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day. If our eyes could always be fixed upon our Beloved, we could joyfully walk over the deep waters of affliction, and billows of temptation, but when we see not our Beloved, and view the turbulent water, in our weakness we begin to sink, and cry, Lord save, I perish. Then we find his left hand is under our head, and his right hand doth embrace us, that the eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms, that we are dandled upon the knees of his mercy, and kept as the apple of his eye, and surrounded with the impenetrable walls of salvation. O blessed hope, and precious promise! Thus will the fruits of this divine wedlock be seen, and God will be glorified, till we are called to cross the river of death, and then he will prove a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. He will make all our bed in our sickness, and show us that the death of his saints is precious in his sight. Thus these precious fruits will be seen even in the embrace of death, and on the other side of the river of death, these heavenly fruits will bloom in the paradise of God. Then will be brought to pass the saying, "O

death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I remain your brother in a precious hope,

J. C. TURNIDGE.

COOPERSVILLE, Miss., Jan. 9, 1898.

B. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been asked several times to write some of my travels from nature to grace, and while reading the SIGNS I have decided to try to comply, the Lord being my helper. Sometimes I think that I know nothing about a change, although I have a little hope which I would not exchange for the world. I remember well the day when I hope the Lord, for Christ's sake, forgave my sins. Several years ago while I was in the world, as I deem it now, I was with the Missionary order, and thought I was as good as anybody. When I was overtaken and arrested by the holy law of God, I thought I was going to die, and all my friends thought so, too. I thought that hell was my portion. I tried to pray, and the more I prayed the worse I got, as it seemed to me. The ministers would tell me to accept Christ on the terms of the gospel, and exercise faith. But they might as well have told me to take wings and fly to heaven, for I had no faith to exercise. It seemed to me that I was plunged in a gulf of dark despair, without one cheering beam of hope or spark of glimmering light. While in this condition, I went to bed one night, and dreamed that I was in a field picking cotton, and the field was white. While looking over the field, I saw a man coming in a hack, and on each side in front, was a lamp burning. It frightened me, and I ran and got out of the way, and while

trying to get out of the way, I came to a large city, and was standing and looking over it, and there came a man to me, and asked me what I was doing there? I told him my troubles. He told me to change my clothing and I would not be troubled any more. I told him that I had no clothing to change. He told me to follow him, and he would give me the clothing. I followed him to an upper room, and he gave me a suit of clothes, and told me to go and do what was right, and I would be troubled no more. I awoke and felt troubled over it. I felt that I was going to die, and I had got by this time in such a condition that some thought I was losing my mind. One day I was thinking over my lost and ruined condition, and it seemed to me that I had been asleep, and had all at once awakened, and everything seemed changed. I asked of those around, what was the matter? They told me that they did not see anything. But thanks be to God, I could see and feel that something had taken place. All nature seemed to be praising God. The birds sang sweeter than I ever heard them before. The trees seemed to be clapping their hands for joy, and I felt so happy. My burden was gone, and I felt that I would never have any more trouble, but in a few days doubts and fears began to arise. I would try to get my consent to go to the church, but it seemed to me that I was too unworthy to offer myself, as sinful as I felt myself to be. I battled along for several years in this way, until at last my duty became so heavy that I decided to leave my case with the brethren. I was received, after narrating a part of what I have here written, and was baptized by Elder J. S. Joiner. Since then I have been trying to serve that God who has all power in heaven and earth, and who

rules, and superrules all things. Once I was trusting in what I could do; I have now learned by experience that salvation is by grace. All our works are as filthy rags in the sight of God. For we read in the Scripture, "By grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." I do pray that at all times I may be found walking in the way that my blessed Savior commands me. O, if we could let our minds run to Calvary, where our blessed Savior was nailed to the tree, between the heavens and earth, for his bride, the redeemed of the Lord, how would we rejoice and serve him. If we, who are Primitive Baptists, are what we profess to be, and I do believe that we are the people whom our Savior redeemed upon Calvary, what manner of persons ought we to be. We hear him say, "It is finished." The work he came to do is completed, and none of his children will ever be lost, for he has redeemed them with an everlasting salvation. And God is able to keep them from all harm.

Brother Beebe, do as you think best with this, and all will be right with me.

Your brother,

S. W. SHEARER.

PINSON FORK, Kentucky, Jan. 29, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I send you a letter from sister Lydia Williams, of Red Bush, Kentucky, which she wrote last November, but did not send until a few day since. I am anxious to see it in the SIGNS. It has been a great comfort to me, and I am sure will be to the brethren and sisters generally, who may read it. I do not feel like withholding such a soul-cheering letter from the household of faith, who, like sister Williams, are often in a desert land, hun-

gering and thirsting, and their souls fainting within them.

Yours in hope,

W. J. MAY.

RED BUSH, Kentucky, Nov., 1897.

ELDER W. J. MAY—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—My heart is full of praise this morning, and I am so continually writing you in my mind, that I now attempt to write with pen, not because I can be of any comfort to you, but because my heart is full of praise to my Maker. It is a glorious morning; the fresh breezes fan the fields of corn, the trees, and the flowers, so that they seem to be bowing in praise to their Maker; and well may they praise him, for he is a great God, and a great King, above all gods. Praise God for his wonderful works to the children of men. I have for some time past been in a desert land, but bless the Lord, I hungered while there, and am now filled to overflowing. I cannot keep from praising God this morning, though not with my lips. My heart exclaims, "Glory to God in the highest." The last Saturday and Sunday was our regular meeting time at Enterprise. On Friday before, I was preparing for supper, and all at once I seemed to be wrapt in darkness; I was in so much trouble; it was almost as much as before I claimed a hope. I went to the meeting Saturday, but did not want to go. I enjoyed the meeting notwithstanding, tolerably well, and rather desired to go on Sunday, and I am so glad that I went, for it seemed that we had a pentecostal shower. The Lord found me in a desert land, and it was sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, to be filled, after hungering so long. I know that I am not worthy of one little crumb, but the Lord did bless me. Yet I cannot offer one word of

praise that it seems could be acceptable. My heart is full, but how can I praise him? One sister said yesterday, that she had wicked children, and she longed to see sinners coming home (meaning the unregenerate, for we are all sinners.) I was sorry for her, but blessed assurance, I know that the unregenerate are in the hands of an all-wise God, and with his loving-kindness he will draw them into the fold, when it shall please him. I should have been glad could I have spoken one word that would honor or glorify God.

I wrote the foregoing some days ago, and if I could get writing off my mind, I would not send it to you, but I cannot dismiss it from my mind, and now it is with a feeling of unworthiness and timidity, that I send it. Just now, I feel so cast down and forsaken, that it hardly seems possible that I, an unworthy worm, can have a good hope in Christ. I often fear that I have not, for,

Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought,
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

Unworthily yours,

LYDIA WILLIAMS.

[SUCH experiences as the above remind us of the varied exercises of mind described by the sweet singer of Israel. As in this one letter, so we find very often in the same psalm, a travel of mind described, which reaches from the depths of darkness up to the heights of joy and peace. Sometimes a psalm which begins with a song of gladness, closes with lamentation. Whether it be joy or sorrow, all is alike precious to the believer, for it all describes his own travel, and in it all he finds fellowship with the word of inspiration, and thus he is strengthened, even out of the weakness of the psalmist. And thus is fulfilled the word, as poor, yet making many rich.—ED.]

KIOWA, Kansas, Jan. 29, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I seat myself for the purpose of saying how well I am pleased with the SIGNS. It speaks my sentiments on nearly everything. In fact it is the cheapest and best Old School Baptist paper of which I have any knowledge. All of its correspondents are sound in the faith, and the editorials are good, edifying and instructive. Yours in the number for January 15th, is good. There is one verse which I regard differently from the way in which you have explained it. That is the twelfth verse. It reads as follows, "That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ." My understanding is so dull that I cannot see the matter in any other way than that the God of heaven is he that first trusted in Christ. From the way that the text reads, and also the verse preceding, it is clear to my mind that Paul meant that God first trusted in Christ. The preceding verse reads, "In whom ye also have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And then the words, "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." You seem to think that it means the early saints first trusted in Christ, and you say on page 57, first column, and twentieth line from the top, it was that those who had first trusted in him, should be to the praise of the glory of his grace, and that those also who afterwards had heard the word, should also be to the praise of the same grace, having also come to trust in him. Now, brother Chick, would it cast any reflection upon the character or attributes of God, to say that he was the first one that trusted in Christ? Did he not trust the salvation of his people in

the hands of Christ, when he gave them to him? I do not think it would. In the eleventh verse, Paul was speaking of our being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will. It seems to me that the work and will of God is under consideration in this verse, and then in this twelfth verse it seems to me that he continues right on, declaring God's work. Now, if he meant that the early saints were the first to trust in Christ, it ought to read thus, That we should be to the praise of *their* glory, who first trusted in Christ. But we are not to be to the praise of *their* glory, but to the praise of *his* glory, who first trusted in Christ. And so it seems to my weak mind, that God first trusted in Christ. Hear what Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 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." Did not the Father in this sense trust Christ before any other one? While I believe that God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are one, I believe that the church belongs as much to the Father as to the Son, notwithstanding the Father gave them to the Son. I think this is the plan which the Father devised from all eternity to save his fallen people, who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, from their sins. He trusted their salvation to his Son Jesus Christ. Then in verse thirteen he says, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believe, ye were sealed with that Holy

Spirit of promise." I think that the pronoun, *ye*, means all the church of Christ, from the first to the last. Abel certainly heard the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, or he would not have offered blood as a sacrifice. Cain never trusted in Christ, or he would not have offered the works of his own hands, for a sacrifice. After Abel was taught of the Lord, he trusted in Christ, even as God the Father was the first to trust in him, that we should be to the praise of his glory.

Now, I have not written this for controversy, but merely to give my humble views on the subject. I am a poor old ignorant sinner, and if I know my own heart, I do not want anything but the truth as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ. I am getting old, and I want to know the truth before I die. I am here, out in the west, where I hear no gospel preaching, only as I get it through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I get so hungry before each number comes, that I can hardly wait for it. Dear brother, may the Lord spare you long to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and may the SIGNS OF THE TIMES continue to come laden with the rich clusters of gospel truth, as it has done heretofore. I want to get out and see one or two, who I think might subscribe for it. One of them is about eighteen miles from here. I hope that he will subscribe for it. There are so many, like myself, destitute of the pure gospel, and every number comes laden with a feast of fat things to the hungry soul. The nearest church is eighty-two miles from me, and my way of conveyance is very poor. The brethren who have churches near them, and sound preaching, do not know how to appreciate these blessings, like one who has had the same blessings in days gone by, and now are

away in a strange land. Pray for me, that I may be reconciled to God's will concerning me. Do with this as you think best, and all will be right with me.

Your lone brother in hope of a home in heaven,

J. M. DULEY.

[It is our desire at all times that our brethren shall feel as free to express any dissent from our view of a text, as they would to express assent. We should feel that the Spirit of Christ dwelt in us in a very limited degree, if we thought any the less of a brother for differing from any view that we have presented. We still think brother Duley is mistaken in his view, but very many good and able brethren have understood the text as he does. We think the grammatical construction of the sentence compels us to refer the relative pronoun "who" to the pronoun "we," at the beginning of the verse, rather than to the pronoun "his." The sentence transposed would then read, That we, who first trusted in Christ, should be to the praise of his glory. The word translated here "trusted," rather signifies, "hoped," and thus, to us seems to belong to those who were saved in him, rather than to that God who gave us to him. But no point of doctrine is here involved, yet it is important, it is true, to rightly understand the meaning of the Scriptures, and therefore it is good to study them, and confer together concerning their meaning. Indeed, it is an evidence of real interest, if when brethren get together anywhere, they ask each other to speak their thoughts concerning portions of the word. How much better this is than to spend the time in general conversation, which to say the least, has no profit in it. We feel grateful to our brother for his kindly words in behalf of the SIGNS. It does, we believe, maintain

its old position, adopted from the beginning. If others differ from the general views advocated in the SIGNS, it is they, and not the SIGNS, who have departed from the old ways.—ED.]

NEWCASTLE, Ky., Dec., 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I inclose a letter from our dear aged sister Beard, of Barren Co., Ky. To me it was comforting and encouraging. How often I get to the place where I can find no evidence that I am a called servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, or of any benefit to the church, and were it not for an occasional ray of sunshine, in seasons such as referred to by our dear sister, poor creature that I am, I should utterly yield to despair. The meeting referred to was to me one of the most precious ones of my life. I had felt an impression of mind for some time to visit that country, but it was with many doubts and misgivings that I wrote them of my contemplated visit. I was much surprised at the hasty reply, and the mention that they had felt for some time, that I would visit them. The time was arranged, and I started on my way with many and serious questionings, for truly the way seemed desert. I was met by our dear old brother Buckles, feeling as I stepped off from the train barren and desolate, and wishing that I had stayed at home. But O, when the Lord appears in his glory, how soon the past, present or future disappears. The angel of the Lord's presence shone around us, and it was a time of rejoicing. Our meeting had begun, and it was but one meeting during my entire stay, as we went from house to house, in prayer and in breaking of bread. Truly it was one of the days of the Son of man. Our dear old sister, whose letter I send, had wandered long upon the mountains,

and the cold, barren, desolate wastes, and had found no place of rest till she found it in the Master's kingdom, when she and two others came to the little church, tremblingly, and desired a home with the children of God, giving the sweet and precious evidence of that gracious work within. I felt to say, surely this is a goodly land, a garden of spices; yea, all the chief spices were made to flow out as the gentle zephyrs wafted the fragrance and rich perfume across the barren waste. Sister Beard has written I am sure out of a good and honest heart, having nothing in view but the glory of God, and the Master's cause, which to her is clear. This church being isolated, had not held a meeting for over three years. But the Lord works, and none can hinder, notwithstanding the oft repeated prophecy made that the cause is dying out. May the Lord give us faith to believe on the real Jesus. I submit the above, and so much of sister Beard's letter as relates to the welfare of our beloved Zion, to your better judgment.

With best wishes to you, brethren editors, and to all the household of faith, I am unworthily yours in Christ,

P. W. SAWIN.

GOODNIGHT, Ky., Dec. 20, 1897.

DEAR ELDER SAWIN:—After a long delay I seat myself to pen you a few lines, trusting that they may find your family in health, hope and happiness. I was over at Mr. Nichols' last month, and had the pleasure of reading your good letter to him. I also read the letter of Elder May to you, and one from Elder Durand. They filled our hearts with a longing desire to see and be with you all. I brought all of them home with me. My children also read them, and enjoyed their contents as well as myself. Yours

also to Elder May, published in the SIGNS, was a feast, and a great comfort to me. I had been groping in darkness for many long weeks, with scarcely one ray of light. When I read of the sorrows, trials and conflicts of the children of God, and more especially of his undershepherds, I feel that such a poor, vile worm of the dust as I feel myself to be, should not entirely despair of the loving mercy of God. Sometimes I am permitted to rejoice in the promises of God to the poor and needy, but these times do not last long, when I am again filled with gloomy forebodings, and often fear that I am a stranger to grace, and that I have deceived the people of God, and have no right to be identified with them. One comfort has never left me, and that is the sincere love that I have for them. Sometimes this is all the hope that I have left me. O, how thankful I desire to be for this, and for every other blessing bestowed upon poor, vile, sinful me. One among my greatest blessings, as I hope, was your visit to us last May. I look upon that visit as being from the Lord. I told my children before you came, that I could hardly realize that a dear minister of God was coming. I could not feel that thrill of joy that I desired until you came. Those sweet songs of Zion that you sang in the afternoon, I shall never forget. The music and sweetness of them has never left me. They were so appropriate to my feelings that I could not restrain my tears, neither did I desire to do so. Then you questioned me in such a sincere manner, that I could but answer your conversation. After telling the little that I had to tell, I asked you, as I had once been deceived, if you did not think I might possibly be again? You said that you did not. O, what a comfort your answer was to my poor soul! I was led

to think if you, who were a servant of the most high God, could be so positive that it was truly the grace of God, by which I had been exercised, I could no longer doubt and fear but what I had felt that change which brings one from nature to grace, and that in God's own way. While groping in darkness for so many years, how often had I thought,

Why should I longer lie?
Surely the mercy I had sought
Was not for such as I.

My doubts and fears all left me for the time being, and for many weeks afterward. I was enabled as you know, by the Lord, as I hope, to go forward the next day, and tell the church a part of what I had told you and Mr. Nichols the evening before, and was received. Also, as you know, my dear daughter and my husband's niece, after relating the Lord's dealings with them, both like myself dating their hope back many years, were received.

"Why was I made to hear his voice,
And enter while there's room?
While thousands left to their own choice,
Would rather starve than come."

Nothing but the love of God moved you to come to us. Had you never visited us, or some other dear servant of God, we would, as I believe, have all remained outside of the visible church of God during, perhaps, our whole life. I shall ever feel thankful to God, as I hope, for putting it into your heart to visit us. Each time you came as did Peter of old, and the other apostles, preaching unto us the unsearchable riches of Christ, which was joyfully received, and which became food and drink to our thirsty souls. Liberty was given you to open up the Scriptures, and to us was given the hearing ear to hear the joyful sound, the glorious gospel of the Son of God proclaimed in all its rich fullness, and joyfully received. Our

hearts were made to rejoice in God our Savior, and we felt to thank and praise his holy name for remembering us in our lonely condition. Some of us had not heard a gospel sermon since Elder Durand visited us several years ago. The SIGNS OF THE TIMES contains the most of our preaching. It cannot supply the place of a dear, loving pastor. As we are only a little band, with no minister near us, of the one faith, the one Lord, and the one baptism, we have to pass many lonely months, owing to want of means for expenses of travel, and remunerating the time also, of those who might come to us; for our ministers and their families have to live, as well as others. We are looking forward to the days of spring, for we hope that by that time we will be enabled to pay our expenses here again. I look upon this as a Bible injunction for all the followers of Christ to obey, as the dear Lord blesses them with means to do so, and I sincerely hope that our ministers may never be neglected.

Dear Elder Sawin, pardon the many errors which this contains. Accept of my best wishes, for your temporal and spiritual happiness. Remember us all, when you can approach a mercy-seat.

Yours, &c.,

LAURA M. BEARD.

MATTVILLE, Ohio, Feb. 22, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I have often been impressed to write for your paper, but feeling my weakness I have laid the matter aside until now. If you deem what I write to be proper for publication, correct all mistakes, if not proper, cast it into the waste basket. In the beginning of what I have to say, I must speak of the goodness of God, which has followed me all the days of my life. When eighteen years of age I united with

the Methodist church. Instead of being there admonished to follow the footsteps of Christ, I was told that the laws of man, or the discipline of the church, was satisfactory. I was sprinkled, or baptized, as they called it. I also took upon myself the vows of their Holy Catholic Church, not the Roman Catholic, as they informed me. For about seven years I bore the galling yoke of bondage in Babylon; men binding burdens upon us, grievous to be borne. None can know these trials but those who are led captive. O, the anguish of my heart, and the earnest groaning after God, to be led in his way, and to do his bidding. Once when I had been seeking spiritual food, upon my return from meeting I asked a dear friend who was a member, what she thought of such sermons, for hungry and thirsty souls? She answered that they had to preach all kinds of sermons to please the people. I thought that surely this was wrong. We are taught that those ministers who will please men, cannot please God. My parents moved into another County, and our home was near an Old School Baptist church. Although they were evil spoken of, I laid aside all prejudice, and said that I would go, and if they said anything that agreed with the Bible, I would believe it, and if not, it would be nothing to me. O, how I feasted with them secretly! A dog may eat the crumbs that fall from the Master's table. I asked the Lord that if this was the way that I long had sought as his way, to make it manifest to me. A new light seemed to light up the dark places. I wept and prayed much. Often I was nigh unto despair. At other times I rested in what I hoped I had received. At one time when I thought that my time on earth was near an end, these words came to me so plain, as though some one

had spoken them, "Mary, the Master has come, and calleth for you." I thought I was dying, but behold I lived, but for what purpose God knows best. I told my husband my strange experiences, and pondered them over in my mind many days. Since then I have had much comfort from them. By faith I saw myself humble enough to sit at Jesus' feet, and bathe his feet with tears. Naturally, or in the flesh, I was like Martha, careful and troubled about many things. But how lovingly he addressed her, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and troubled about many things, but Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." I was given to see Christ as my sin-bearer, and I realized myself as one coming up out of the wilderness, leaning on the arm of my Beloved. O, how precious was the thought, to believe myself a member of the bride, the church, which he purchased with his own blood. I sought the M. E. pastor, to ask that my name might be erased from their church book, since I had been brought to see my home and kindred elsewhere. He treated me very kindly, and told me that he was sorry to do so, but if I thought it my duty, all right. One lady said that I had forsaken Christ. I simply replied, that I thought it better to obey God rather than man. I do not think that I had many doubts about the Baptists receiving me, for God had marked out my way so plainly, I could see his hand in it all. I offered myself to the church, and was received and baptized. Since my stay among them I have had seasons of joy, and seasons of sorrow. I think sometimes that the church would be better off without me, as I am the youngest and the weakest of the flock, having to depend upon the milk of the word, while the rest are older, and more

established, and have need of meat. I sometimes think that the sermons are especially for me. But since he has brought me to his banqueting-house, where his banner over me is love, may I bow my head, and ever say, "Thy will be done." Robert Peters is our moderator, and he has endeared himself among us by his well ordered life, and godly conversation. He is ever willing to correct and watch over us for good, as a wise undershepherd should be. O, that I may be a humble christian wife, and mother, is my desire.

From an unworthy one,

MRS. FRANCIS FULLER.

SOUTH LOWELL, N. C., Jan., 1898.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—This cold wintery day, as I sit shut in from the outside world, with my two poor helpless children, my mind is impressed to write to the editors, writers and readers of our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, once more. God in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has spared me to see the passing away of another year, with its trials and deliverances, and the coming in of a new year, whose joys and sorrows can only be known as time unfolds them. But whatever of trial or affliction it may bring for the child of God, he has the blessed assurance that Jesus will be with him, his troubles to bless, and to sanctify to him, his deepest distress. O what a blessed assurance that in all our trials his everlasting arms are underneath us to bear us up. Dear brethren and sisters, I feel to be the least in my Father's house, but I do love to ascribe all power and glory to God. I joy in believing that he overrules all things for our good, and to his glory. This faith encourages me to go on and meet each trial as it comes. It strengthens me to know that I must stand still, and know that he is

God. My dear brethren, I commenced writing for the purpose of expressing my gratitude to the editors and contributors of our paper, for their continued kindness in sending me the paper. For many years it has come to me, regularly without money and without price, and has proven to be a spring in the desert, and manna in the wilderness. By reason of age and great family afflictions, I am deprived of the privilege of meeting with the saints at the house of worship. And O, how often, when bowed down with cares, my heart is made light, and tears of joy to fill my eyes while reading the communications of the dear saints. I love to be enabled to rejoice with those who are upon the mountains, viewing the promised land, but my heart goes out with an inexpressible nearness and tenderness, to those who are in the valley of humiliation, who feel as brother Keene says, to be the hindmost ones, those whose limping feet are so lacerated by the thorns in their rugged road, that they are ready to faint by the way; their harps are often hung upon the willows, for they cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. My dear companions in tribulation, be patient. He who is at the helm, makes no mistakes. There is a godly purpose in all our afflictions. He sends not one trial more than is for our good. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Your unworthy writer often feels so careworn and weary, so tempted by foes within, and foes without, there is no peace here. With the poet I can say,

"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!"

Again, when I look back over my unprofitable life, of more than three score and ten years, and see how little I have

lived to the honor and glory of my God, and how often I have done what I ought not to have done, and left undone what I ought to have done, I feel that surely a merciful God reigns, and that his goodness has followed me all the days of my life. I feel, my dear readers, that this may be my last writing, and how glad I would be, to say one word to encourage the halting ones who are outside the fold, longing and waiting for the stone of their unworthiness to be rolled away, that they may come in. Dear little ones, all the fitness he requireth is to feel your need of him. Then tarry not. He says, "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 of heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.

Brethren, forgive the imperfections of this scribble. I feel to send you new year's greeting of love and fellowship, and to all the Old Baptists everywhere. I desire your prayers, that I may be faithful and patient to the end.

Your unworthy sister,

SARAH GARRARD.

HARLEM, Mo., Jan. 28, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—MY DEAR BROTHER, AS I HOPE, IN THE LORD:—In the first place, I want to say to you, that I have but very little worldly knowledge. I never was at school in my life. What little I know I got here and there as best I could. I do not think I can say this morning that I have a good hope through grace; that I have been taught in the school of Christ. If I have been taught of him I have been taught the right lesson. I believe he has taught me that I am saved by grace. I believe that when a man is dead, he has no power, will nor mind, to think, nor do anything at all.

If this is the condition man is in, what must be done for him, and who must do it? I hear one of old say, "Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." I think that David had been taught by Christ, that without him he could do nothing. My dear brethren, have you ever come to that stand-still place? Now what can we do? We can do nothing. Christ must come and do all for us. I do not believe the dead can come nor go anywhere. But when God gives a man sight to view his lost condition he finds that he already is alive. A child never cries until it is born.

I will be seventy years old next March. I can look back sixty years, and I am constrained to praise the Lord for all his goodness to me. It is hard to tell who anybody is in these days. Fifty years ago, when I heard a man say he was a Baptist, I knew who he was, but now the mere name does not tell who men are. We have this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. My mind this morning goes back thirty-eight years. We then had a little church in Clay County, where we could meet in peace and love, and part in peace and love; but those happy days are gone, I fear, never to return. As far as I know, I am the only one left in Clay County, and I think that I can say, it is by the grace of God that I am here. There is one dear old brother in Blue Springs, Missouri, from whom I sometimes hear, and I just say to him to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

I dislike but one thing in the change of the form in the SIGNS, they do not come often enough.

As ever your brother,

RICHARD WALLER.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1898.

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

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.
B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

BRIEF REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:
—I wish you to give your views through the SIGNS upon John iii. 5. What I want in particular is your view upon the birth spoken of. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit." Is all this one birth, or is it two? The Campbellites say that it means one birth, and that this is accomplished by water baptism. What is the water birth? Please answer at your earliest convenience.

Yours in love,

WILLIAM WITT.

KIRK, Va., Feb. 28, 1898.

While we do not hesitate to present such views as we have, in response to our brother's request, we would say in the first place, that we cannot expect to convince all of their correctness, seeing that brethren of equal ability and understanding of the Scriptures, have differed very widely concerning this very subject. We purpose making but a brief reply. We have never seen any reason to believe that the Savior had the slightest reference to what we call water baptism. Water baptism is not the door into the kingdom of our Lord. In fact if one is not already a member of that kingdom by a new and spiritual birth, he has no right to baptism

at all. The visible church is not the kingdom of God. One may be a member of the visible church, without being an inhabitant of the kingdom of God at all; and one may be a member of that kingdom, and never become a member of the visible church at all. Now the Lord said that the birth of water and the Spirit was needful in order that one should enter, not into the church, but into the kingdom of God. We ought never to lose sight of the difference between the visible church organization, and the true spiritual kingdom, which is within men, and which is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and which is not in word, but in power. Now the Savior did not say, that a man must be born of water and the Spirit, to enter the visible church, but in order to enter the kingdom of God. The Master was not touching upon outward forms at all, but upon heartfelt work, and true spiritual realities in the soul. He had said that a man must be born again, or from above, to see the kingdom. That is, as we understand, to know anything about it. One may see a kingdom, and not enter it. But for the believer there is both a seeing and an entering in. To see is much: it is an evidence of spiritual life in the soul, but to possess, or to enter, is more. If one is born of God, born of the Spirit, he can see what he never saw before. But there is to be a real, true, spiritual entering into this kingdom, and this can be brought about only by an experience in the soul. As the experience of the people of God goes on, there is an entrance more and more abundantly ministered unto them. There is a growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus the Lord. There is a coming to know more and more of his power and grace in daily salvation. This is wrought in the soul by the application of the word. This is the

washing of water by the word. This is what the psalmist had in view when he said, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." As the Spirit has quickening power, so has the water cleansing power. The water is an emblem of cleansing. The Spirit applies the word to the soul. And as this work goes on, entrance into the kingdom, into its joys and delights, into its ordinances and worship, and into an understanding of its spiritual character, is ministered. We then understand the words referred to mean in substance, except a man be quickened into divine life by the Spirit, and then be instructed in the word, and thereby cleansed from every false way and doctrine, by the application of the word of truth to him, he cannot enter into the kingdom.

WE would like to have your views upon 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. Who are the all men, and also kings, and all that are in authority?

A FRIEND.

BENTLEY, Ill., Dec., 1897.

There can be no question as to the reason why the apostle has given this admonition. It is that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives. Negatively the apostle does not exhort his brethren to pray that all men, or all kings, with all others who are in authority, may be savingly brought to know the Lord. He does not exhort believers to pray for what is commonly called the conversion of all men, or of all kings. As he was led in his admonitions to the churches by the Spirit of truth, he could not call upon any of them to pray for the salvation of all men; and therefore he did not tell his son in the faith, Timothy, to enjoin any such thing upon the churches. He could not have done so for two reasons, viz: he believed the

doctrine of election, and knew that all men were not chosen to life and salvation, and therefore to pray for the salvation of all men, would be to pray for what God had not designed, or in other words, to set himself against the will of God, in his teaching. Also he knew that the blessed Master himself did not pray for all men. He said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me," and "for them also which shall believe on me through their word." But Paul did teach that we should pray for the good of Zion, in all things. Therefore we should pray for our rulers, that wisdom might be given them to rule wisely, and to enact just laws, which should conserve the best interests of all the people. Also, we should give thanks for the temporal mercies which God has bestowed upon all men, and pray for them, that they may be good citizens, living at peace with each other, for so should the people of God be at liberty to lead quiet and peaceable lives, and as they should live such lives among their fellow men, they would commend the doctrine which they believed as not hurtful to men, but on the other hand beneficial. We have no doubt that Paul means earthly rulers, and all the children of men, by the words to which our brother has called attention.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I write you a few lines for information. We wish to know whether it is the rule for Primitive Baptist ministers to officiate in political affairs. I cannot for my part feel that it is right for them to engage in canvassing for office, or act as a policeman in a city. Will you please give your views upon it? I will close by saying, write soon.

Your brother in Christ,

A. BAILEY.

ARGENTINE, Kansas, 1897.

We would not be understood in replying

to these questions of our brother, as desiring to lay down a rule for others to follow. There are many things which must be left to the conscience of each one, and in which no other one has any right to dictate. We can give our judgment, and it is but our judgment, though as Paul once said, in giving his judgment, so we feel that we have, in what we desire to say, the mind of the Lord. There are some things which must be decided between each believer and his God. Speaking as a rule, we believe that those who are called of God to preach the word, should devote themselves to that work. But Paul labored with his own hands to provide himself with the necessities of life; and he was laboring in his calling in the ministry as much when he was engaged in tent making, as when he stood up before the people, and declaring to them all the words of this life. If circumstances are so ordained of God, the true servant of the Lord will still labor with his hands, for his temporal support. Still as we have said, we believe that the true business of such an one is to devote himself to the ministry of the word. As far as is possible, the called minister should disentangle himself from the affairs of this life. No set rule can be given beforehand in any case. He who has a heart engaged in the work, will desire to watch the indications of Providence, and the leadings of his own mind. It is sure that the Lord will open paths for usefulness to his servants. The spirit which actuates us is the chief thing. In these things it seems to us each one must judge for himself. These things are not to be decided by any other man. The church must and will recognize the gift of the ministry where it exists, and has a right to call upon him who possesses such a gift, for the service which he owes to

her for Christ's sake. But even the church cannot say to one who is called of God, You must labor here or there, or you must do this, or not do that. If a man who is called of God to the ministry, forsakes his high and holy calling for the gain of this world, he shall suffer the due reward; he shall reap corruption by reason of his sowing to the flesh. These things seem to us clear. Now who shall decide as to what business is right, or what business is wrong for a servant of God to engage in, so that it is an honest business, honestly conducted? It seems to us that each one ought to, and must decide for himself, in the fear of the Lord. What would be right for one under certain circumstances, would be wrong for another under different circumstances. Others may think that the decision is a wrong one, but still they can only express their judgment, and have no right at all to seek to bind their brother by their judgment. If a brother has made a wrong or a fleshly decision, he will soon know it, and will suffer the rod for it. But he must be left in the hands of God. This does not of course apply to cases where such a servant of God does that which violates the revealed law of God. He does not violate any revealed law of our God in engaging in some worldly employment or business, but he would violate such law should he act dishonestly in that business. The church would be bound to act in the latter case, but have no right to even censure him in the former case. At furthest they ought only to advise and counsel. Still further, should the circumstances of the case require that one called to the ministry should enter into some employment or business to obtain an honest living for himself or family, and if the woe to those who are called to this work be upon him,

he will seek such employment as will leave him at most liberty to preach the word, and such as will be least liable to bring reproach upon the work of the ministry. This we are sure will be his desire. Still he will find it often the case that he is shut up to employment which he might not desire. Our feeling has always been that we should not feel at liberty to engage in politics in any form; yet we have known as good and conscientious men as ever lived, to see their way clear to accept office at the hands of the people; and we have known some such who retained the respect of all men in doing so. We have known some who continued to labor in word and doctrine all the time they were in office. We felt sorry that they were induced to accept the office, for we felt that it would be a cross to them, and bring a snare to them, but yet we had the same confidence in them, and love and fellowship for them, that we had before, or that we had for others in the ministry. We have ever felt that this was a matter which they had to decide for themselves, and which no other one could decide for them. We suppose that there are greater temptations in holding office, than in farming, or merchandizing, but still we do not doubt that a servant of God may do the one thing without blame, as well as the other. We know of no law of God which would forbid any man from seeking to serve his constituents in any capacity that is honorable and honest. We should think that almost any man would find the position of policeman in a city very unpleasant, but still we do not know of any law that would forbid a servant of God from making a living in that way. A man can be honest and honorable, and a christian, in his deportment, in any position, and this is the chief thing. We know that it may

be said that politics are so corrupt, and so many who are engaged in politics are dishonest, and therefore it is not becoming for a christian to engage in this calling. But is it not also true that many farmers and merchants are dishonest? And yet no one would think this a bar to a minister engaging in these things. Keeping in mind what we have said, we do not think that it is wrong when circumstances require that a minister should labor for his support, for him to accept office, or employment under the government, any more than to engage in any other business. One is as honorable as the other. But yet such an one ought to remember that to labor in word and doctrine should be the one thing uppermost in his mind.

O.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REMARKS ON ISAIAH L. 10, 11; LI. 1, 2.

WE have been called on to publish our views on the portions of Scripture referred to above, and in obedience to the desire of our friends we cheerfully present such views as we have upon the subject. It has been thought by some that the prophet in this text contrasts the child of God with the unregenerated idolater, but a careful investigation of the subject will, we think, convince the candid inquirer after truth that the whole subject is addressed to the real Israelites, who represent the real children of God. The subjects addressed were those who among the people of Israel, "Fear the Lord and obey the voice of his servant," especially such of them as "walk in darkness, and have no light." We do not understand by this description of the subjects of the address, that the servants of

God, who fear him and obey the voice of his servant, never enjoyed the light of divine revelation, the light of life, or the light of the divine presence experimentally, but those simply, who for the time being are walking in darkness, from whom, for the trial of their faith, the Lord withholds the sensible radiance of his gracious presence. This is not infrequently the case with the people of God, as we may justly infer from the often repeated lamentations of the saints of both the new and old dispensations. This very prophet, Isaiah, was led to cry out, "Verily thou art a God that hideth thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior," and David said, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." The disciples' eyes were holden sometimes, even when Jesus was personally with them, even in the flesh, that they should not for a time know him. There probably is not a saint on earth who would not utterly despair, if compelled to believe that God's children are never left in a state of darkness, wherein they walk having no light. Those who profess to be always in the light, to have no dark seasons, no fiery trials or distressing doubts, are regarded justly as strangers in Israel. But the text contemplates those who walk in darkness, because they fear the Lord. Notwithstanding their darkness, they still walk, and that in obedience to the voice of his servant. To such only as walk in darkness, and have no light, is the blessed privilege given, to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God. The servant, or servants of the Lord, whose voice was to be obeyed by the God-fearing Israelites, were those holy men, by whom God spake to the fathers. They all spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Hence the communications of

God by them demanded obedience, and that, too, whether they were in the light, or in a state of darkness. But, "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." And his Son has appeared in the flesh, and taken on him the form of a servant. In his transfiguration, a voice came out of the cloud saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." He was spoken of by the prophet as God's servant who should deal prudently, who should be exalted and extolled, and be very high. He came down from heaven, to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work. The apostles of the Lamb were also servants of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and divinely commissioned to set in order authoritatively, all things pertaining to the doctrine, order and ordinances of the christian church. Under the gospel dispensation therefore, those who obey the voice of his servant, are those who obey our Lord Jesus Christ as their King and supreme Commander, and by his authority, his apostles, as those whom he has seated on thrones of judgment in his kingdom.

We may fairly infer that our darkness does not release us who fear the Lord, from our obligation to obey the commandments of Christ, whether they be enjoined by him personally, or through his inspired apostles; in either case they are the voice of his servant, in the prophetic sense of our text.

Now then, Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? What shall be done in such a case, and under such circumstances? True, it is a trying state to be

in, and to have to walk in the dark is certainly to walk by faith, and not by sight. The faith which is of the operation of God, always leads its subjects to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God, for it destroys all confidence in the flesh. When all is total darkness around us, we cannot walk by sight, for we have none, we must therefore either stand still, or walk with a reliance on our guide. Christians who walk in darkness, can trust in nothing short of the name of the Lord, nor is there anything that can stay or support them, but their God. Why are they directed to trust in the name of the Lord? Because the saints have an interest in the name of the Lord, as the son has an interest in the name of his father, or as the wife has in the name of her husband. The legitimate son has a legal right to bear the name of his father, as an indemnity against want. The wife who has no other reliance or means of subsistence, feels perfectly composed, while her husband's name is good at the bank, for all that she needs, for any sum that she may ask. By marriage union, she has a right in that name to the extent of all that is necessary for her support and comfort. Thus our beloved Lord has instructed his bride, that whatsoever she shall ask of the Father, in his name, he will do it. If she is in the dark, and needs light, or wisdom, she will call upon the Father of lights, in the name of her Husband, who is her Lord, and he will give liberally and not upbraid her.

The admonition in the next verse of our text, is to the same character, and shows the consequence of disregarding the instruction given her to trust only in the name of the Lord, by trying to supply her lack of light and comfort by her own inventions. It has been said in relation to natural things, that "Necessity is the

mother of invention," and what has been more common with the saints when cold and comfortless, when dark and disconsolate, than the suggestion from the flesh that they must do something to improve their condition? When we are in total darkness, the question is, Can we not kindle a fire that will afford some light? And when cold, Can we not make a fire that will afford us comfort and warmth? Under these circumstances and impressions, the dear children of the living God have often been tempted by the devil, and inclined by their own ungodly natures to forget that they have renounced all confidence in the flesh, and trust alone in the name of their Lord, and stay alone upon their God. The flattering tempter tells them they are not machines, they must be up and doing, they must use means, they must gather sticks, although it be the antitypical Sabbath, and they must kindle fires, and compass themselves about with sparks, and warm in the heat of their fire, and walk in the light of the fire which they have kindled. Alas! how often have the children been thus beguiled. Get up a protracted meeting, call in some skillful manager who can get up a revival, collect some combustible matter, make a blaze, and then raise the shout, "Aha! I am warm, I have seen the fire!" But is this trusting in the name of the Lord? Or is this staying upon our God? Is it not a lamentable evidence of distrust in God, when we resort to the inventions of human reason, for religious prosperity or comfort? This shall they have of the Lord's hand, they shall lie down in sorrow, for the Lord will chastise them for their follies. He will not consign them to the perdition of the ungodly, but he will cause them to lie down in sorrow, for their departure from the pathway of righteousness. But who ever heard of an

unregenerated sinner being sorry for having kindled religious fires? They glory in it. From pulpit and from press their vain gloryings are proclaimed abroad. We are ridiculed by those, as anti-efforts, inert do-nothings, &c., who will not worship their net, and burn incense to their drag.

As an encouragement to the faith of God's dear children who walk in darkness and have no light, still to trust in the name of the Lord, instead of looking to themselves or to their own works or inventions for light or comfort, they are in this connection called to hearken to the Lord, and look to the rock whence they are hewn, and the pit whence they are digged, to look unto Abraham their father, and unto Sarah that bare them. Abraham walked in total darkness, so far as human wisdom or light is concerned, for he went out not knowing whither he went. In regard to God's covenant with him, and his seed in him, he had simply to trust in God. Nature could afford no light or comfort in regard to what God had promised. Abram was stricken with years, and his body as good as dead, before the promised seed was born, yet he staggered not at the promise, for he believed God, and trusted in the name of the Lord. And when he was called to take his only son, even Isaac, and offer him upon an altar, he had to walk in darkness, without any light of nature to aid his vision. Yet he knew that God was able to raise up Isaac even from the ashes of the altar, and he trusted in his God. Look also unto Sarah, whose incredulity, laughed at the promise of a son, unless it could be brought to pass by the use of means, on the account of which she ultimately laid down in sorrow. But God was faithful to his promise, and at the appointed time the promised seed was

born, according to the word of the Lord. "I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him," saith the Lord. Look then to this example of God's power and faithfulness, and be not faithless, but believing. Not only was Abraham alone when God called him, but God alone blessed and increased him. No aid was required to assist him in the performance of the work, no contributions to replenish his treasury, no bond maids for instruments, nor human contrivances to facilitate the end. God was alone in calling, blessing and increasing Abraham. Look at him as a solitary unit called alone. Look at him as a multitude whose number excels the stars in the firmament, or the sands on the sea shore, and say, What hath God wrought? Then shall ye be prepared to rely upon his power and faithfulness to fulfill his word that he has spoken, and the oath that he hath sworn, that he will comfort Zion in all her waste places; that he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord, without any human aid or instrumentality whatever.

Our subject affords instruction and admonition, comfort and encouragement, to all the saints who hearken unto the Lord. The Lord God and the Lamb are the light of the holy Jerusalem, there shall therefore be no need of candles or artificial lights. He is a wall of fire round about his people, and a glory in their midst; therefore they are not to kindle fires of their own for light or comfort. However dark may be their way, it is their privilege to cast their care on him, and trust in his name as a strong tower, in which all his family in heaven and in earth are named. They that trust in him shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed; but they that seek to wizzards that peep and mutter, shall regret their folly; for

he will visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes; nevertheless his loving kindness he will not utterly take away from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Once has he sworn by his holiness that he will not lie unto David.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 1, 1855.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, Feb. 16th, 1898, Mr. Edwin S. Dowe and Miss Idella McCallister, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

By the same, at his residence in Delmar, Del., March 16th, 1898, Mr. Henry D. Roe, of Philadelphia, Pa., and Miss Anna W. Evans, of Camden, Kent Co., Del.

By the same, March 23d, 1898, Mr. John W. Culver, and Miss Jennie Hearn, both of near Delmar, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At his late residence, Northwood, Ontario, Canada, March 9th, 1898, our beloved father, **James Campbell**, who was born of Old School Baptist parents, near Utica, N. Y., July 16th, 1820. With his parents he removed in 1838, to the farm where he died. March 7th, 1843, he married Mary Kerr. Her mother, who was a member of the Old School Baptist church fifty-seven years, spent her declining years with them. Of ten children seven survive him, also twenty-five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. Two of his children died young, and one, Mrs. Elizabeth Reed, passed, as we fondly hope, to a better and brighter world, April 18th, 1897. His wife survives him. They were both in early life baptized by the late Elder Thomas McColl, who took a great interest in their welfare, and often made special appointments at their house. As an old resident he was highly respected in the community where his life was passed. He was prosperous in business, and given to hospitality. For more than forty years he was a subscriber for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He was prostrated with "la grippe" more than a year ago, from which he never recovered, gradually growing weaker until the end came, old age being the chief cause of death. About fifty-seven years ago, as he was nearing the old log meeting-house in Dunwich, about forty miles from his home, his burdened soul was set at liberty by the application of the words, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires."—Isa. liv. 11. His experience was deep and searching. He often said, "Like an ancient mariner, I have been delivered in many a storm, but I

cannot rely on past deliverances when a fresh storm arises." The burden of the church was his burden. During his last sickness he often said, "I never knew a time so dark that I could not say,

'My soul doth wish Mount Zion well,
Whate'er becomes of me.'

For days he complained of darkness of soul, and would often say, "I cannot have been deceived, but I want the light of his countenance. I want one more token before I go." At last he was comforted with the exhortation, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."—Hebrews x. 35. After that he was kept in peace. Among his latest audible words were, "Pray! I could soar!" He passed away so gently that his wife and family watching by his bed, could scarcely tell when the spirit fled.

He was interred in the burial ground near the Regular Baptist meeting-house at Northwood, where funeral services were conducted by their minister, who spoke comfortingly from Isaiah liv. 11; Hebrews x. 35. His daughter,

SARAH McDONALD.

DUART, Ontario, March 16, 1898.

Deacon Thomas Peterson departed this life at 6 o'clock p. m. the first day of March, 1898, at the age of 76 years and nearly five months. He was born and spent the early part of his life in Alabama, where he was married, in Coosa County, to Louisa C. Mahan, who yet survives him, and is near his age; to whom were born nine children, all now living in Dallas Co., Ark., and members of Chappel Hill Primitive Baptist church, except one, our dear oldest sister, who died in Texas, rejoicing in hope, twenty odd years ago. The second son, Elder Thomas Peterson, has been pastor of this church since his ordination in 1874. He began preaching in his nineteenth year, now is in his forty-seventh year. The descendants of our beloved father and mother, including grand and great-grandchildren, are near a hundred. Our father moved to this, Dallas Co., Ark., in 1849; received a hope and was baptized into Chappel Hill church, in November, 1851, by Elder Thomas Britton. He was chosen clerk at the next meeting, and served his church faithfully, and much of the time the South Arkansas Association, in that capacity till 1878, when at his request the church released him, and put it upon his oldest son. Father was chosen deacon in 1877. His judgment and counsel were often sought in both temporal and spiritual matters, and he ever first questioned, What is right? and said, that do. We feel that the life of our dear father was a labor of love. He ever labored with his hands, that he might have to give to those in need. All bear him record, as far as known, which is extensive, that he ever remembered the poor; working very hard, yet keeping nothing over of what the Lord

was pleased to bless him with, but as a faithful steward was blessed with the precious gift of liberality. We feel that we have great reason to rejoice on his behalf, for we feel assured that he hath ceased from his labors, and his works do follow him. While we realize that his place can no more be filled with us, we believe that the Lord doeth all things well. May we not all say, What a glorious and precious Lord have we! "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." We, as a family, and we think we can safely say, for our little church, who feel the bereavement with us, dear brethren, pray for us.

A. M. PETERSON.

MEETINGS.

THERE will be a May meeting held with Frying Pan church, in Fairfax Co., Va., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in May, ending Sunday. Train leaving Washington city, Sixth St. depot, Thursday 4:30 p. m., and train leaving Friday 9 a. m., will be met at Herndon. We hope to see our brethren and friends, especially our ministering brethren.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66.

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NO. 9.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW.—REV. XXI.

NUMBER SIX.

“AND the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.”

Passing by the first of these sentences for the present, we will consider what is meant by the precious stones which form the twelve foundations of the wall, and with which they were garnished. This wall, with its twelve gates and twelve foundations, appears to me so wonderful and mysterious that I feel a special sense of insufficiency for the consideration of it, and of inability to express even the partial and feeble view which I have of its spiritual significance.

“Thou shalt call thy walls salvation,” the Lord said to “The city of the Lord, the Zion of the holy One of Israel.”—Isa. lx. 18. This wall, as it was shown to John in the Spirit, appears to have been more essentially and intimately a part of the city than a literal wall can be, as the salvation which a literal wall is designed

for is more important to the city than the wall itself. In other places in the Scriptures it is the city that is said to have a foundation, or foundations, but here it is the wall that has them. This is very suitable when we consider that Salvation is the subject of all gospel teaching, experience and work, and that it is of that, as the wall of the church of God, that we seek for the foundations. It is needful for our establishment and comfort that we have some view of those foundations.

While salvation is as a wall around the whole company of the redeemed, it is intimately close to every individual member of that innumerable company. Salvation is the desire and hope and song of each inhabitant of Zion. It is the one theme of the Scriptures of truth. Salvation was the dear Savior's theme and work while he lived on earth; in his death he finished it; in his resurrection he brought it forth before all nations, and appointed it for walls and bulwarks to his people.—Isa. xxvi. 1. Concerning that wall, Salvation, the apostles rule in judgment over the twelve tribes of Israel, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, appearing as angels at the gates, and, by their names of apostolic authority, in each of the foundations.

If we should behold a city with our natural eyes literally descending out of heaven, the foundations would be among the first things brought to our view for particular attention. But in the case of such a natural view the foundations would not be established, but would be falling, instead of coming down, seeking a solid place upon the earth to rest upon. But this city is not falling, nor do the foundations lack a firm and abiding resting place, although it is seen coming down. The foundation of any great natural building must rest upon a solid base of rock, or material as substantial, which generally takes them down out of our sight. But these foundations are above the beholder, and in open view. What then is their character, and what are they fixed upon?

Such questions cause us to consider that the city thus revealed is not of an earthly character, nor do the foundations of its wall rest upon an earthly base. Also we remember that it is not to mortal eyes that the revelation is made, nor by the natural understanding that its meaning is known. He to whom these heavenly things of the church, the Lamb's wife, are thus emblematically shown, is especially prepared to see and know them by the angel, who is "the Alpha and the Omega," Jesus the Son of God, who carries him away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain. Being in the Spirit he does not look upon the surface of things revealed, but sees all parts alike easily, the far side and the parts within, as well as the outside and that nearest us. As it is said concerning the Son of God, so it is true concerning his works, the understanding by which we know them must be given by himself: and as it is declared that if we know him that is true we are in him that is true, (1 John v. 20), so

also it is true of his works; if we know them it is because we are in them and they are in us. If the works of Jesus have not been wrought in us we cannot know them. Not with our mortal eyes, looking abroad over the natural earth, and away into the infinite expanse and depths of the heavens, do we behold the wonderful works of God, such as were revealed to John. But with these natural eyes closed, and the eyes of our spiritual understanding enlightened and turned within, "we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." We see in the mysterious depths and heights of our own souls the glorious workmanship of God. We learn there "what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints;" a greater, richer and more glorious inheritance than any imagined city, even of pure gold, with walls of jasper, could possibly be. There, within us, we see and know "what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places."—Eph. i. 18-20. It is there, within the soul, in the experience of "the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, that we see and know the manifold wisdom of God." We can know nothing of the holy perfections and glorious works of God except as they are revealed to us in our own experience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation."—Isaiah xxviii.

16. According to the grace of God given unto Paul, and to those who were God's laborers together with him, they as wise masterbuilders laid foundations ministerially, as inspired apostles, for others to build upon. But they solemnly admonished all the saints to take heed how they built thereupon. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 9-11. If even an apostle should present any foundation but Christ, or any earthly element as joined with the true foundation, any merit, power or works of men, then we must not build on that. Nor upon the true foundation must we build anything but that which God has wrought for us and in us, which is emblematically represented by gold, and silver, and precious stones; for all else will be burned up by that fire of God's truth which "shall try every man's work of what root it is."

The apostles judged, set in order and established in the church, the doctrine and commandments and ordinances of Christ, and thus we see the twelve apostolic foundations, and nothing but Christ in any of them. He was foreordained for his people before the foundation of the world, and therefore as a foundation he reaches into the depths of eternity, and all the eternal purposes of God, with all grace and spiritual blessings, are in him. When he was tried as a foundation stone he went to the lowest hell, pressed and borne down by the sins of his people, and when he arose justice and judgment had been satisfied, and became the habitation of his throne; and they constitute such an element of strength in this foundation Rock, that the gates of hell cannot prevail against the church which he has built upon it.

The everlasting covenant of grace and peace, ordered in all things and sure, is

the strength and stability of these foundations; and thus as they appear in the spiritual heavens, coming down from God, with God's sovereign and eternal purpose of love and mercy as their base, they appear in colors of wondrous and ineffable beauty. Of old the Lord made a blessed promise to Noah, and those with him who had been saved by the water that destroyed the world, and had come forth out of the ark, and were standing upon Ararat, which means, holy ground, and he set his bow in the cloud as a token of that covenant. The beauty of that sweet promise to those poor souls, alone in a new world, after such a fearful experience, may well be represented by the unspeakable beauty of the rainbow.

To the church of God, brought forth out of desolation and sorrow, as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, the dear Lord says, "Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name." So this is the bride, the Lamb's wife, the same holy Jerusalem which John saw. Then the heavenly Husband makes to his wife an "exceeding great and precious promise," which was fulfilled in the gospel day, as John beheld. "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. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth; so have I 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." Now those to whom this precious promise is made are standing upon holy ground, when this promise is spoken to them;

but they see themselves so poor and vile and unworthy that they are slow to believe that such good things can be for them. So they are further described by the very conditions which cause them to doubt, and the promises and tokens are repeated to them in such sweet terms of assurance that their fears are finally removed. "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. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee."—Isaiah liv. 5-14.

There is nothing in nature more surpassingly beautiful than the rainbow, appearing against the dark cloud after the storm has passed by. To the poor afflicted soul, "tossed with tempest and not comforted," what can be more sweet and lovely than the appearance of the Lord's covenant of peace, quieting the tempest of trouble in the soul, and showing how all our afflictions have worked for our good, bringing forth to our view God's purpose of love and mercy concerning us. David says of this everlasting covenant, "This is all my salvation, and all my desire." So it is with all of the Lord's people. Whatever the apostles have taught are the things that belong to Jesus, who is the one Foundation, and who is "given for a covenant of the people." The beauty of that covenant appears in all the doctrine and order and ordinances, in all the exhortations and rebukes, in all the prophesyings and teachings of the apos-

ties. When these things appear as coming to us, as our own, then does their beauty appear. Thus the Lord lays the stones of Zion with fair colors. How beautiful now appears this doctrine which was hateful before, since we see it as the foundation of all our hope and comfort. That which was unlovely before is now most precious and delightful. Jesus, who before had no form nor comeliness that we should desire him, is now in our view "the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely." His doctrine drops like the rain, and as the Sun of Righteousness shines upon those falling drops of rain, the colors of the rainbow appear, and the beauty of the Lord our God is upon us.

The foundations of Zion are laid with sapphires. That is the color of the sky. When Moses and the elders of Israel saw the God of Israel, "there was under his feet, as it were, the paved work of a sapphire stone, and the body of heaven in his clearness." Heavenly things, and not earthly things, are our foundations. All the borders are pleasant shores: all the varied paths of experience in this blessed truth are continual revelations of new and marvelous beauty.

It has been said that the twelve precious stones which formed the twelve foundations of the wall show the colors of the rainbow in their order. It is difficult to decide positively as to all of the stones named there, for many of the names are so different in modern times; but so far as I can judge, I believe the order of the colors is the same in the foundations and in the bow, and that the beauty of the covenant of grace and peace, as it appears to the subjects of it, is thus set forth, as they see coming down from God out of heaven that Zion "which is the perfection of beauty."

"And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was one pearl."

The gate is the opening in the wall through which entrance is made into the city. In general, and especially here, it is not the structure which closes the passage way, but the passage way itself. If this idea is not the one we have previously entertained concerning these gates, a little careful thinking will soon confirm it to our minds as the correct view. A gate may be closed by the bringing of such a structure, prepared for the purpose, and hung upon hinges, against the opening, thus stopping it, and preventing any ingress or egress through the gate; it may also be closed by putting up boards, or anything that will prevent passage through it. In either case the gate is shut; that is, the passage way is shut. There are places where the word gate in the Scripture means the structure which closes the entrance, but in most places the opening or way is meant. The distinction is easily seen.

In this place the pearl signifies value and preciousness, and therefore beauty. In these gates the interest and value attach to the way of entrance, and not to that by which the entrance may be barred. These gates are never shut, as we find stated both in Isa. lx. 11, and in this chapter; therefore the structure prepared for shutting them, if there be such, must be hanging back against the wall, in a manner out of sight, and not of sufficient interest to attract especial notice, no matter how valuable and rare the material of which it may be composed. Those who come to these gates are not in a condition of mind to be gazing about, seeking objects of beauty upon which to feast their eyes and gratify their minds, nor would they have time or inclination to stop for that kind of entertainment.

Their hearts are filled to overflowing with wonder, joy and praise, that they have found an open gate before them through this wall into the heavenly Jerusalem. They had been wandering in a solitary way, and found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty their souls fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he heard them and delivered them out of their distresses. "He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." They found no way in themselves, but when they were sinking in despair Jesus appeared to them as the way, and through him they entered into gospel rest and peace, and became "Fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Jesus was to them indeed, the "Pearl of great price." To their sorrowing, fainting souls he said, "I am the way;" and there, in that sweet and holy way, as they came "Into his house in the multitude of his mercies," they felt the infinite value, and preciousness, and whiteness, and purity, of that wonderful Pearl. With heavenly rapture they gaze, not upon the gate structure prepared to bar the way, however beautiful it may be, but upon the way itself; and as they see it open before them their souls rejoice with "Joy unspeakable and full of glory."

All the gold and precious stones in the world could but faintly represent the value and preciousness of this glorious gate, this open door, this "new and living way," that leads into the heavenly Jerusalem, to the poor soul who has found it. To them that believe Jesus is indeed precious. At whichever of the twelve gates this abundant entrance is ministered unto them; whatever portion of the apostles' teaching is blessed to them, to show them that they have right to the

privileges and blessings of the church; it is still Jesus, the one Pearl of great price, who is set before them as the way. The value of such a pearl literally would be inestimable. The riches of Christ, proclaimed among the Gentiles by the apostles, are unsearchable. Those who have that Pearl of great price most gladly give up all they possess in exchange for it; "Count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Thou shall call thy gates Praise."—Isa. lx. 18. Praise fills the heart, and is perfected out of the mouths of the children of God as they enter into these gates. The gates represent the strength of a city. There the councils of wisdom are held, and there the armies appear. When the high praises of God are in the mouth of the saints, and the two-edged sword of the Spirit is in their hand, then are they strong in the Lord indeed. Then fears depart, and they are joyful in glory, and sing aloud upon their beds of gospel rest. Then they realize the victory over all their foes through Jesus Christ, and execute upon them the judgments written." "This honor have all the saints. Praise ye the Lord."—Psalm cxlix.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 1, 1898.

"CHOSEN US IN HIM."

I HAVE seasons of musing, at times only a few moments in duration, when wrapped up in contemplations of God, and his ways unsearchable, such sacred sweetness is my portion, that language can never tell it. I see myself a tiny speck, my God so great, so infinite! Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders; almighty, eternal unchangeable, his understanding infinite. Then his judgments and mercy, his justice and grace, and his love in

Christ Jesus our Lord, are fields of meditation so vast, so high, so glorious, exceeding all my thoughts, that I lose myself in adoring wonder, and worship at his footstool. Holy and reverend is his name, and he is to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. So in such moments how sacred is every revelation the Lord has made of himself! How desirable is that posture, to sit as a little child at the feet of our God, to receive the words of his mouth! Those who are born of the Spirit learn, and in due time will confess that the Holy Spirit is the only guide into the truth. The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. I have often trembled lest I should have wrong thoughts of God—lest I should be taken captive by divers and strange doctrines. The very thought that I should be moved away from the simplicity of Christ, and teach what is not the doctrine of God, has so pained me that I have cried, "O Lord, have mercy upon me." Why do we experience such trouble of soul? It is because God is dear to our hearts, and we want no thought or doctrine to intrude that would dishonor his great and gracious name. The doctrine of election and predestination is embraced in the deep things of God, and though ever so much misunderstood and hated by men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, and though among the churches there arise vain janglings over the doctrine, and though some dear children of God are much tossed about by such contentions, nevertheless the doctrine of election and predestination testified of in the Scriptures, is very precious and comforting in the heart of those to whom it is revealed by the Spirit of truth. God's glory therein is wondrously made known, and as from time to time the Holy Spirit gives us glimpses of God's

glory and grace therein, our admiration of the God of electing love will not a whit diminish. O no! but our God and the revelation of his truth will be more and more precious. In our contemplations upon the deep things of God, it is well for us to ever remember that "His understanding is infinite."—Psalm cxlvii. 5. He made the world to be inhabited; he formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. But before the worlds were framed by the word of God, all creation from the loftiest aspect of it, to its tiniest atom, with all that should transpire therein, whether it were earthquakes or floods, the revolutions among the nations of the earth, or the falling of a sparrow to the ground, or the thoughts in the hearts of mankind, all was present in the counsel of his own will. For God is revealed unto us, "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." Our God therefore whose understanding is infinite, is revealed as speaking of things that are not as though they be. David speaks of God, saying, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16. God speaks to Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." Before the foundation of the world, God speaks of his creatures, the offspring of Adam. He

beholds them as his creatures, and in his infinite wisdom, and for his own glory, he makes choice of a number of his creatures, so considered a people unto himself, "the election of grace," "his own elect." He beholds the election, and the rest fallen in sin; he appoints to salvation his elect, and the non-elect to wrath. (1 Thess. v. 9.) "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory 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?"—Romans ix. 22-24. The lot, the portion, the eternal destiny of all mankind, was determined in the everlasting counsel of Jehovah's will. The sovereign acts of God in election, as recorded in the Scriptures, do not all set forth the same event. There are various manifestations of election that it is instructive for us to observe, and not to confound the distinctions. Thus of the apostle Paul, who was one of the chosen in Christ Jesus, God declares, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel." The people of God are "chosen in Christ," and again they are spoken of as "chosen in the furnace of affliction." (Isaiah xlviii. 10.) The one revelation of God's election has relation to them in regard to eternity, and the other has reference to the estate of his chosen during the time of their sojourn in the world. Keeping these scriptural distinctions in view, of which the foregoing are examples, let us pursue our contemplation of this subject. In the minds of some there is only a partial, imperfect understanding of this glorious doctrine, the election of grace. Though

I write this, I do not claim to have that full and infallible understanding, therefore if any child of God discovers anything in what I may pen upon the subject that is not according to the teaching of the word of God, utterly refuse it, and have mercy upon me, and shew me from the Scriptures wherein I err. The highest view wherein the crowning glories of God's election are revealed, (and wherein there is a lack and confusion of understanding, even among those who profess to believe the doctrine,) is recorded in Eph. i. 3, 4, "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." Some who very sweetly and comfortingly dwell upon the theme that God hath from the beginning chosen his people to salvation, (2 Thess. ii. 13,) have not as yet entered into the depths of grace and glory revealed in the doctrine that God the Father hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world. Jehovah's eternal election of his people was not apart from, but in Christ Jesus. It is upon what is embraced in this aspect of the election of grace, that I desire particularly to dwell. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom the Father hath chosen us, is the Son of God—the Word, who in the beginning was with God, and is God. He is equal and one with the Father. (Phil. ii. 6.) He is a man also, the seed of Abraham according to the flesh. Christ is Emmanuel, God with us. (Matt. i. 23.) The man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts. (Zech. xiii. 7.) In arriving at the peculiar signification of being "chosen in him," we are led to seek how, and in what relationship, are we chosen

in Christ, and yet new fields of delightful meditation will open to our view in considering what is the purpose and end of God in the election of grace in Christ Jesus. The church is Christ's body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. (Eph. i. 23.) "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body."—Eph. v. 23. In Christ as the Head and Husband, the church was chosen. All other relationships (revealed in the Scriptures) subsisting between Christ and the church, are related to and proceed from this highest revelation of the oneness of Christ and his people. "We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." The election of grace are the members of Christ's body, which is his fullness, and he is the chosen Head of the election of grace. Those rulers that derided the Son of God knew not what they said when they exclaimed, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God."—Luke xxiii. 35. The Lord speaks of Christ, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth."—Isa. xlii. 1. The Lord hath chosen Zion. (Psalm cxxxiii. 13.) He hath chosen Jerusalem. (Zech. iii. 2.) This represents the church, the election of grace. Christ is the foundation, chosen of God and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter ii. 4, 5.)

"Would you the church of God survey—
Its beauty, strength and harmony?
Then Christ Emmanuel see!
Where all perfections in him meet,
There is the church of God complete;
The sum of all is he.

Christ is the precious corner-stone
Which all his church is built upon,
Nor can it ever fall.
The prophets and apostles, too,
Other foundation never knew,
Than Jesus, Lord of all."

From the whole connection of the doctrine recorded in Ephesians i., it is most preciously evident that as members in the head, the church was chosen in our Lord Jesus Christ

“ Ere angels fell, or time had birth,
Or God to being spake the earth;
In Christ, the Head, the saints were chose,
One glorious body to compose.”

Christ is the Father's elect, in whom his soul delighteth. “When he appointed the foundations of the earth; then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.”—Prov. viii. 29–31. The highest and greatest grace ever bestowed upon the creature, was the election of the man Jesus, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, in the womb of his mother, the Virgin Mary, unto union with the Word. For the Son of God verily took upon him the seed of Abraham. This is bestowing the highest dignity upon the creature man, and is the most exalted view of the election of grace. Our Lord Jesus Christ in all things hath the pre-eminence. He is the Word made flesh, and thus considered is the Head of the body, the church. “Mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.” Abraham was the father of the children of Israel, and is an eminent illustration of the election of grace; and in his election we can trace a type of the election of Christ as Head of the church, and the election of the church in him. “God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.”—Gen. xvii. 4; Romans iv. 17, 18. God chose Abram personally, and in his election he was constituted the head of his seed, the whole nation of Israel. “Thou art the Lord

the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham.”—Neh. ix. 7. I called him alone and blessed him, “Because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt.” Again, the Word says, “Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,] to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.”—Deut. x. 15. Muse upon the meaning of that word “only,” which God assigns as the sole cause of the election of his people. “Thou Israel art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend.”—Isaiah xli. 8. To Abraham, and to his seed in him, pertained the promises and the covenant. The Lord said unto Abram, “All the land that thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.” (See also Gen. xvii. 1–8.) Thus in Abraham his seed was blessed, and chosen unto the possession of the land of Canaan, while as yet there was none of them. All this was secured unto the tribes of the Lord in Abraham as the head, and this without regard to their going down into Egypt, their servitude, afflictions, evil treatment and idolatry therein. This could not disannul the immutable covenant of their God, which was secured in their election in Abraham unto the promised inheritance. “For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee, and so after he had patiently endured he ob-

tained the promise."—Heb. vi. 13. The going down of Israel into Egypt, their cruel bondage, the duration of their sufferings, their deliverance and coming forth in the time appointed, was all ordained of God for the declaration of his own glory, and it was all the predestinated pathway to the fulfillment of his promises and covenant. (Acts vii. 5, 7, 17, 36.) All was embraced in the eternal purpose of God as the channel through which his love and mercy, and the exceeding riches of his grace unto Israel, should be displayed.

Having considered the election of the head of the church, let us further consider the election of the members of the body in Christ Jesus. "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, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Mankind were created in Adam before he fell by transgression, and they were in him when he sinned. While he remained unfallen they were in him as creatures simply considered, and when Adam sinned they were sinners in him. Levi is said to have paid tithes in Abraham unto Melchisedec, for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him. (Hebrews vii. 9, 10.) When God made choice of his people, was it upon the view of them as creatures, or as sinners, that they were chosen? In the order of the revelation of the doctrine of eternal election, it was upon the view of mankind as yet unfallen that God's decree of election and non-election passed upon all the human race. Then relatively being viewed as

having sinned, the elect in Christ were chosen to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ to salvation, and "the rest," were appointed to wrath. Before proceeding any further suffer a digression, an explanation. God ere time began in one infinite, eternal thought, embraced all creation, and all that should transpire therein until the end of time. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Therefore, though in the revelation of the doctrine of God's decrees of eternal election, there seems to be a succession of acts, we need not entertain the thought as though there were any interval or time between the distinct manifestations in which God has been pleased to make known the doctrine. Thus in the election of Christ as the Head, it has the aspect to us that he was first chosen, then his members chosen and given to him ("Thine they were, thou gavest them me,") and thus one with him as the body and fullness of Christ, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, chosen in him unto eternal glory. Having in remembrance Jehovah's infinite understanding, and the eternity of his purpose in Christ Jesus, I do not contemplate the election of Christ as the Head to be prior to the election of the members of his body, which is his fullness, the fullness of him that filleth all in all; but that the distinct manifestation (in which it hath pleased the Holy Ghost to reveal the doctrine in the inspired Scriptures) are all one eternal purpose and act of God. You will bear this explanation in mind, dear brethren, while reading what I may yet write concerning the election of grace. We have seen that in the election of Abraham, the covenant head of Israel, God blessed his seed, and gave them possession of Canaan while they were yet in the loins of their father.

That it was not with respect to their bondage in Egypt (which was typical of the lost and fallen condition of his people) that they were chosen, and blessed, and had given them the promised land; but it was "that the Lord thy God may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Consider yet another illustration of election. "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."—Mal. i. 2, 3. "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. What shall we say then? Is their unrighteousness with God? God forbid."—Romans ix. 10–14. The children, twin brothers, conceived by the same act of generation, yet unborn, considered simply as creatures. God in the counsel of his will chose Jacob, and left Esau. This was purely an election of grace; for in God's election it was not that God beheld them as having done works either good or evil. The election is the election of grace, and grace is not to be restricted to favor shewn to sinful creatures, for the highest, the most transcendent grace is shewn in the Word taking unto union with himself the seed of Abraham, that first-born son (conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb) of the Virgin Mary. 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. God's election of his people was not upon the view of works, either good or evil. It was not upon the view of works done while mankind were yet in innocency, neither was it upon the view of works done by mankind as sinners; but here it is absolute grace—the unconditional election of grace. Esau and Jacob are presented as an illustration of God's election, as in their case they were viewed simply as creatures. So God in his act of election considered all the seed of Adam as neither having done any good or evil; he beheld them as his creatures. A more ample view of this is presented in contemplating the purpose and end of God in the election of his people in Christ Jesus. To what end were they chosen in him? First and highest. His own glory and praise, his own delight was the purpose and end of their election in his dear Son. "I have created him for my glory, I have formed: yea, I have made him."—Isaiah xliii. 7. My chosen have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. "Israel my glory." (Isaiah xli. 13.) "Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them." "I was daily his delight."—Prov. viii. 30. "Hephzibah." (Isa. lxii. 4.) Then related to this as the highest, the purpose and end was to take the creature man unto union with himself, unto immutable holiness, unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, unto eternal life and glory. Also the elect being viewed as having sinned, their election was unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ to salvation; that is to those blessings that have relation to the estate of the elect while sojourners and pilgrims on the earth. As to what concerns us, the ut-

most end of God in election was to exalt his chosen creatures to an higher glory than was attainable in the creation of man; that is, that they should be "one with Incarnate Deity." This is the height of our exaltation and glory to which we are secured and predestinated according as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. I have already dwelt upon the transcendent glory and grace of the personal union of the man Jesus with the Son of God. In this he hath the pre-eminence above his fellows, and stands distinct in infinite exaltation. Though the union of Christ in God transcends our union to God (for no other creature save that "holy thing" that was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary, hath such union with the Godhead,) yet that union is the pattern of the union of the election of grace to our Lord Jesus Christ; the Word made flesh. "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 23. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. iii. 3. "The Head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the Head of Christ is God."—1 Cor. xi. 3. This is the order of the revelation. Will my language convey to you my meaning if I say that Jesus is in immediate union with God, and that the elect are mediately in union with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ? The God-man, the Word made flesh, is the medium of our union with God. Thus so often in the Scriptures we find the words by, in and through Christ Jesus. It is in this union with Christ that we have communion with God. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known

that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." In all this he speaks of the elect. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."—John xvii. 6-10. As the union of the person of the Son of God with the seed of Abraham is indissolvable, so the union of Christ and the church cannot be dissolved. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

"Since Christ is my Head, this with joy I remember,
His body to which with affection I glow,
Although I'm the most insignificant member,
Can't be full without me, ah never, O no!"

(Continued next number.)

ALLENTOWN, Pa., Feb. 21, 1898.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I feel like writing you a few lines to-day, and hope that you will pardon the liberty. I was greatly impressed with the dreams of that dear brother published in the last number of the SIGNS. I liked very much what you said in reply to his request, and believed every word of it. Although I have never been a believer in dreams, I can but think they were sent to our friend in order to comfort his troubled heart. There have been three dreams in my life which greatly impressed me. I can appreciate his feelings perhaps better than those who have not been blessed in that way. The third one of the number was published in

the SIGNS a few months previous. This was the one which enlightened me upon the subject of faith, about which I was troubled, not knowing whether I possessed it or not. I had become so bewildered about the matter, having read a great deal about saving faith, and the many other kinds of faith, that I was greatly confused about it. I then received the dream which was published, which greatly encouraged me to think that I really did possess it.

The first dream of all was the beginning of my conviction of sin. The second dream showed me my evil companions. The first dream was as follows. I dreamed that a man had died, who was a stranger to me, and was buried in the Presbyterian graveyard, at Flemington, N. J., where I then resided. I thought after he had been dead a few months, his friends decided to have him removed to the new cemetery, which had been recently opened. It seemed that a great many people, and I among the rest, went to the yard to see the body taken up. After this was done, his friends wished to see him, and concluded to open the coffin. It seemed to me such an awful thing to do, and I begged them not to do it. They paid no attention to me however, and removed the lid of the coffin. Everybody went up and looked at the corpse but myself, and I thought that nothing could tempt me to look. Presently I found that I was the only living being in the graveyard, for all had departed. But the open coffin was still there, from which I tried to keep away. But I was drawn to the coffin by something that I could not resist, and made to look in. I saw a man whose face was not an awful sight, such as I had feared to see, who looked as if he was asleep. I wondered where his soul was, whether in heaven or in hell. As I

gazed at him he opened his eyes. I asked him where he was, and he answered, "In hell." He talked to me about hell, but I cannot relate what he said. I think that dream was the beginning of any real conviction of sin that I ever had. But still I went on in sinning the same as ever, living a butterfly life, and rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue.

In a short time I had the second dream, which was as follows. I thought that I had started to go on a journey. Everything in nature seemed radiant. The birds were singing, and the sky was blue, and the flowers were fragrant and lovely, and grew all along the path in which I was walking. The path was white as sand, and not very narrow, and I could see it miles ahead of me. It seemed to be a goodly land. I was singing as I walked along, and gathering flowers, which grew along the path. Then I saw some flowers a little distance from the path, which I thought more beautiful still. So I stepped out of the path to pluck them, and kept wandering away from the path in pursuit of other flowers. Then when I hastened to retrace my steps, I found that I had lost the path. I wandered around searching for it, but could not find it. Then all at once I found myself in a dreadful place, with a lowering sky, and not a sign of vegetation to be seen. The best comparison that I can give is that of miry clay, in which I began to sink. With every step which I took I went deeper into this clay, until I was in above my waist. Then I began to call for help with all my might, although there was not a living soul in sight, so far as I could see. As I continued to call I saw a man running toward me, who when he reached me took hold of my hands and pulled me out of this soft clay. He asked me what I was doing

in that clay? I told him where I had started to go, and how I came to be there. He said there were a great many people in that place, and that he was stationed there to rescue them when he heard their call, but that he did not always hear them. Then he said that he would start me on the right road again. The way that I had to go then was to walk on a narrow plank, which was placed over a dangerous place, where I would have been dashed to pieces had I stepped off. "O," I said, "I cannot walk on that narrow way, for it is almost dark, and I cannot see where to step." He said, "It is your only hope." I started in great fear; but there seemed to be a presence unseen with me, guiding my steps. It was growing darker all the time, but my feet were placed upon that plank all the way. I cannot tell how long I was walking that narrow way, but finally it led me to a church, which was brightly illuminated, and which looked lovely to my eyes. If I remember correctly, I heard singing. I longed to get inside, but thought that I could not, for there were a great many people outside, and all around the door, who were not able to get inside. I thought, They are all ahead of me, and if they cannot get in how can I? I walked on, and the people seemed to fall away, and to make room for me to pass through them. I reached the door. I entered in and sat down close by the door. Then the presence which had been with me became visible, and his countenance was sweet and lovely. He said to me, "Beware of evil companions." These words were spoken to me three times, and were the last thing in my dream.

This second dream revealed to me my evil companions. I was always of a very lively disposition, in fact it might be

called levity. These companions of mine were all of them church members. I thought strange of their worldly levity. They indulged in cards and dancing, the same as I did. These indulgences on their part made me somewhat skeptical with regard to religion. I concluded that I was as good as they were, for they seemed to do just as bad as I did. The only difference that I could see, was that I made no profession, and was not a hypocrite at all events. I kept right on going with my gay society friends after I had the first dream, until the second one came to me. That dream left such an impression on my mind, that I stopped right off from my trifling ways of living. I made up my mind to lead a different life. I left off sinning, so far as I knew, and joined the M. E. Church. I led an exemplary life outwardly, and was praised by the ministers and members. You see that I was putting a salve on my conscience, by trying to live a religious life. But this salve did not ease my conscience altogether. I knew that I had not been born again, but thought that I would be, if I lived obediently and did good works. I was called rather eccentric in my views, with regard to some of the church work, and the manner of raising funds to support the church work. I am sure that at that time I did not know what the gospel was. I became very angry at my dear grandmother one Sunday when she went to church with me, because she told the folks when we reached home that she heard no gospel, but only a few stories which brought tears to some eyes. I thought that the preaching was splendid, and was not backward in saying so. But grandmother still insisted that it was not the gospel, and I now know that it was not. I lived in this way for a number of years, always

doubting and always hoping that God in his own good time would give me the assurance that I was his child. If I have ever passed from death unto life, I do not know the time. I came across the SIGNS less than two years ago, and found such comfort in them that I subscribed for them. I can hardly wait from time to time for them to come. I believe and love the doctrine, and know that if I am saved it is by grace alone. O, Elder Chick, I cannot make you understand how I have always sinned. My original sin I cannot help, but my willful sinning torments me so. I cannot begin to tell you how sorry I am that I sinned so grievously against a holy and merciful God. He was following me with those dreams at the very time that I was rolling sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue. I feel humbled when I think of his tender mercies, and of how he saved my life a number of times when I was in great danger.

I will send this to you to do with as seems good to you. If they are from God, I ought not to withhold them from his children. I have not narrated these dreams to many, for they are sacred to me; but others may think that they are vain imaginings. I have retained them in my memory for fifteen years, and they are as vivid to me now as they were then.

From your unworthy sister,

MARY E. FISHER.

[BY what various ways does the Lord lead his chosen to himself; and what a separation does he bring to pass between his believing people, and the vain world. Carnal amusements are contrary to the spirit and teaching of the Bible. We are sure that when the heart is filled with the love of God, there will be no place for such vain and carnal things as worldly amusements. Many thousands are made

to doubt the reality of religion, because of the frivolous lives of many who profess it. The world will enjoy the world. But as long as any one enjoys such vain pleasures, they are not prepared to become members of the church of Christ. In a striking manner the Lord brought this dear friend to see the folly of these things, and gave her a heart to love the better things. Her experience is an experience of grace, the grace of God in salvation. She should go home to her friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for her. We hope that she may do so ere long. She will find a home, and loving kindred, and the answer of a good conscience, which is the best of all.—ED.]

PEACE VALLEY, Mo., Jan. 13, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Through the goodness of the all-wise God we, a few names of us, are spared to the present time, and it is impressed upon my mind to-day to write a little through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to my dear brethren whom I love, though many of them I have never seen, but hope to meet beyond the grave, where all the glorified family will be at rest, and shall see the Savior, and be like him. But, my dear brethren, do I love the Lord or no? Do I believe in his name or no? Have I been born again or no? As I examine myself I find that I am so prone to sin I fear that I am not born again. I would cite the dear readers of the SIGNS to Romans viii. 13-15, "But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." In

the life here spoken of, we find no sin. For the apostle testifies that, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Now I understand the word dead to mean just what it says in both places. That is in being dead in sin, and being dead to sin. Now I take the ground that the sinner while dead in sin is destitute of power to restore himself into the favor of God by his own works, and come to hear, and know, and understand. So I would refer the reader to John iii., where he will find who it is that can hear, and know, and understand. Now, my dear brethren, lest I should weary your patience, I must close my letter, by asking you to do as you think best with it. I ask the prayers of all the dear children of God, that he will enable me to comfort his dear children with the truths of the gospel. May God forgive and save, is my prayer for us all.

WILLIAM H. BARTON.

FALKVILLE, Ala., Jan. 28, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—While I do not feel that it is right for me to trespass upon your valuable time, I cannot refrain from thanking you for continuing to send us the dear SIGNS. We are nearly all strangers in the flesh, but I trust that we are heirs of the heavenly kingdom. All the preaching that we have we get from the SIGNS. I call it the best of preaching, for they contain nothing but the truth. I have not heard any preaching for a number of years. I am low down in health, and feel that I am near the end of my journey. I sometimes wish for the time to hasten on, when I can lay my armor by and dwell with Christ at home. I feel cold and lifeless at times, and find myself murmuring, yet with all these feelings I sometimes have an assurance that I know

that my Redeemer liveth, and rejoice, and feel strong in him. Then, I think that I never will feel so cold again. The dear Lord has been so good to me. I feel that his protecting care has been over me, and underneath have been his everlasting arms, to bear me up, or I should have fallen many times.

Dear brethren, we have hoped to be able to send you subscribers every year, but have failed. I would be so glad if some of our brethren would come to this place and preach. With much love to all the readers of the SIGNS, I will close. Excuse my mistakes, for I am weak in body and mind. May the Lord bless you all.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

MARIA N. BOYLE.

EAST PITTSBURGH, Me., Jan. 13, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—As the time has arrived for me to renew my subscription for the SIGNS, I thought I would write a few lines for its pages, if you should see fit to publish them. I do not know where to begin. I have taken the paper, off and on, since 1869; besides when I was a girl at home, my elder brother, John F. Little, took it, and I would sometimes read articles that seemed good to me, but thought that I must not think that it was of any importance, as I had always heard this doctrine slanderously spoken of. That was before I was brought to a knowledge of the truth. How glad I am that the dear Lord in his mercy has established me in the truth. It seems strange to me that some Old School Baptists have no relish for that soul-cheering doctrine, the predestination of all things. Why, it just buoys me up as I travel on my way in this world of sorrow and trial. I love the truth as it is in Jesus, our Lord. I think I can say honestly, that I love the Zion of our God,

that I prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy, that I wish Mt. Zion well, whate'er becomes of me. I love the assemblages of the saints. I do so enjoy the associations. Why should any one think that harm could come out of such joyful meetings? We are so glad to see each other's faces, and grasp each other's hands. The most of the time is taken up in talking about what the Lord has done for us, and how he saves his people from their sins, and what a help he has ever been in times of trouble. Why, it does me good to look around and see the hungry children eating and drinking, while the dear servants of God hand out the bread of life, and the water that comes from that river whose streams make glad the city of our God. Some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent at associations. The Whitefield church, where my membership is, has but few members, but they are strong in the Lord. We try to get together once a month in conference, and during the warm weather Elder Beal comes to us nearly every month, and the past two years, Elder Keene has come in October, right away after our association, and has stayed a few days with us, and we have enjoyed it much. I will not trespass longer on your time and patience. I have not written what I have been thinking of writing. I ought to have known better than to have tried to write, but dear brother Beebe, be faithful. If it is not fit for publication, burn it. Those who are gifted in writing do not know how to appreciate it.

From your sister,

ANGIE MOODY.

[We greatly appreciated this letter, for its defense of associations. The experiences such as our sister's, at these meetings, are all the defense that they need. We know of hundreds who are like sister

Moody, of spiritual mind, who feel the same way with regard to them. At least, it is sure that God has blessed them to many of his children. We have seen ourselves great good grow out of them, in building up and encouraging the churches. We want to add that we have been intimately associated with the brethren in Maine all our life, and we do not know of any who are, and have been, more steadfast in the faith, than they, or who are more strict and orderly in their walk. They are living witnesses that belief in the unlimited predestination of God, does not lead to a careless life. Though we have lived long away from them, our heart is yet with them in the bonds of the gospel.—ED.]

HARTLAND, Wash., Nov., 1897.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have a letter received from a dear old sister who is inconveniently situated with regard to church privileges, and feels that her pilgrimage is almost over, and she has written me that if I thought it worthy I might send it to the SIGNS for publication. I do not feel myself qualified to be a judge, so I will send it, leaving it to your judgment. I can sympathize with the dear old sister. I have known her for years. She has had many trials in her life, yet she has ever been faithful, and ever trusting in the true and living God for her salvation. She is now nearing her eightieth year, and I think it will be a comfort to some of her brethren and sisters who have known her so long, to see this letter in print.

Now, dear brethren, wishing you success in the noble work that God has given you to do, I remain unworthily your sister in Christ,

MRS. A. J. PITMAN.

FOUCHET, Wash., Nov., 1897.

VERY DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER

PITMAN:—Once more while in this tabernacle of clay I venture to write to you. Alas! alas! how cold, how benighted is my poor mind. When writing to the saints of the most high God, it should be with the Spirit, and with the understanding also, and to the edification of the loved ones. But I am constrained to say, O, my leanness, my leanness! "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be an excellent oil that shall not break my head." One said, "For yet my prayer shall be to thee in these calamities." "Thou passest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways." O, the excellency of the words of the psalmist. Though my brethren and sisters smite me, it shall be a kindness, and neither shall my prayers cease for them. May the Most High hear my supplication. The Savior said, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." From this I am convinced that he will give us grace according to our day. Thus we are encouraged to pray, and faint not. Once have I fainted when I should have been encouraged to pray. Many times of late years hath death taken hold upon my soul, and I have been shut up in the darkest prison, without one ray of light. Yet I know that my Redeemer liveth. The Lord has said, "When thy father and thy mother forsake thee, then the Lord will take thee up." The prayer of the psalmist was, "Teach me thy way, O Lord, lead me in a plain path." How many supplications did the psalmist utter. Again he said, "My moisture is turned into the drought of summer." This is near the state of mind that I have at this time. Not a tear will spring up for my reviving.

Tears are evidence of emotion. We read of many of the ancient saints who found occasion to weep. But the psalmist said that his moisture was turned into the drought of summer. It seems that he must have been sunken below the tide of weeping. Yet can we say, as David did, Thou art my hiding-place, thou shalt preserve me from trouble. It is certain that the Lord of heaven and earth knoweth just how to lead his chosen ones. He can lead them through dry places, as well as through the oases. He will not leave one of his little ones, neither in the wilderness, nor in the desert, to perish. No, my tempest-tossed brother and sister, his watchful eye is caring for all his people, though in righteousness he judges them severely.

May the God of all grace guide, guard and uphold you in your declining years, is the prayer of one of the least,
MRS. SARAH A. CUMMINS.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

PLEASE BE SURE

IN sending remittances for renewals of subscriptions to give us the same name in which the paper is already coming. If the party is married, and the paper is coming in the wife's name, and we receive remittance to renew the subscription, and the husband's name is given, we have no means of knowing that it is meant for the subscription in the wife's name; consequently the husband's name is entered on our list, and the paper sent to both parties. Or if the paper is coming in the husband's name, and the renewal is sent in the wife's name, the same thing is likely to occur. It is a good plan to inclose in the letter one of the little pink slips containing the name, taken either from the margin of the paper, or from the wrapper in which the paper comes.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1898.

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F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EXHORTATION.

THIS is a New Testament word. So far as we have read, it never occurs in the Old Testament Scriptures. The word is never spoken of as emanating from Deity. It expresses always the word of man to man. But it is used to present things which belong to our obligations to God, and to one another. It occurs more than thirty times in the New Testament. Paul uses it more than all the rest of the writers of the New Testament put together. In every instance, but twice, it is from the Greek word *Parakleo*, which signifies literally and primarily, to call near. From this primary meaning other shades of meaning are derived, so that it signifies exhortation, incitement, persuasion, hortatory instruction, entreaty, importunity, earnest supplication, solace, consolation, joy, gladness, rejoicing, and cheering and supporting influence. But all these shades of meaning lead back to the first or primary meaning, which is "to call upon, or to call near."

It is not a command, and therefore it cannot be applied to that which God says to men. He commands, but he does not exhort. The blessed Savior in all his teaching is never said to have exhorted the people or his disciples. But the

apostles and evangelists are often said to have exhorted the churches, and their brethren. The word is confined to the Acts, and to the epistles, excepting once (in Luke iii. 18), where John the Baptist is said to have used exhortation. It is then, the word of man addressed to his fellow man. The apostles are said to have exhorted their brethren to all christian duty of every kind, and at all times. We believe that we have scriptural warrant for saying, that it is one of the most important parts of the ministry of the word. It is said that he that exhorteth, let him wait on exhortation. (Rom. xii. 8.) Paul said, that he thought it necessary to exhort the brethren. (1 Cor. ix. 5.) Paul bade Timothy, exhort as well as teach. (1 Tim. vi. 2.) Titus was bidden to exhort, three times, in the short epistle to him. In Hebrews iii. 13, the brethren generally were bidden to exhort one another. So that it is apparent that it is an important thing, which cannot be neglected, without disobedience to God, and great loss and harm to the church.

It would seem also that all things which pertain to the obligations of believers, to live as becometh the gospel of Christ, are the proper subjects of exhortation. Paul exhorted those who were with him on board the ship, to be of good cheer in the hour of their danger. (Acts xxvii. 20.) The brethren were exhorted to continue in the faith. (Acts xiv. 22.) Barnabas exhorted the brethren at Antioch that with purpose of heart they should cleave to the Lord. (Acts xi. 23.) But without consuming space in references, we will say that the subjects of exhortation included making up collections for the poor, that the brethren should walk and abound more and more in that which they had been taught by the apostles was pleasing to God, that they should warn the unruly;

that disciples should with quietness work and eat their own bread; that prayers, giving of thanks, and supplications, should be made for all men; that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives; that servants should count their masters as worthy of honor; that gainsayers should be exhorted; that young men should be exhorted to be sober; that believers should earnestly contend for the faith, and all other things which pertain to a godly life among the people of God.

The subjects of exhortation, are the children of God, who have come to know and love him, whenever the subject of exhortation is any spiritual thing, or anything that relates to the service of God. It is true Paul exhorted those on board the ship with him, but this was not to any spiritual service, but only that they should not fear the result of the storm which lay upon them, nor the danger in which the ship was placed, since the assurance had been given him that they all should escape. In Titus i. 9, where it might be said the children of God were not meant, "the gainsayers" are really those of doubting and questioning mind among the brethren themselves. For they are not only to be exhorted but convinced, as the apostle also says. Men dead in sin, are never in the Scriptures exhorted to believe, or to do any spiritual thing. Exhortation implies an understanding of the thing spoken of, and a heart to love and receive the exhortation. It implies that the one addressed has come to know the Lord, and that he or she is capable of receiving the word which is spoken to them. This is not true of the unregenerated among mankind. It is never of any use to exhort a man to that of which he has no knowledge, and for which he can have no love. Exhortation, to be of any use, must strike an answering

chord in the heart of the one addressed. Paul expresses it all, when he says that he thought it meet to stir up the PURE minds of the brethren. It is a bringing to remembrance again, that which we have once loved and followed, when we have, through the stress of temptation, and the cares of the world, and the weakness of our own natures, forsaken the right way. An exhortation to love and serve God, could have no meaning to him who is ignorant of God. Exhortation, to have any force, must appeal to things which we know and feel. It must lay hold upon something which is already within us. Therefore all appeals to natural men to love and serve God, must ever fall upon ears which cannot hear, and hearts which cannot understand. Men are dead in trespasses and sins. It is in vain to exhort the dead. The voice of man can never reach their ear nor heart. Only he whose voice can pierce the regions of death, can do this great work of making the dead hear and live. But the living are the proper subjects of brotherly exhortation. Who among the children of God does not remember how his heart has been stirred by exhortation to that which he has believed and loved, when he has been feeling dull and lukewarm, and as though there was no life in him? In this application of the exhortation to us we come to see how it can have the meaning of solace, or consolation, or joy, or gladness. Because, when we find the heart thus responds to the word that reminds and incites us to our obligations, we can but take hope and courage to believe that the word of God dwells in us, though we feel that it is not richly, but very meagerly and weakly. Thus, exhortation comes with power to comfort, as well as to stir up our minds to that which is commanded of God.

What are the motives to be appealed to in exhortation? Motives are appealed to in the teachings of the apostles. But they are such motives as address themselves to the spiritual mind. They are never low, or earthly, or selfish. They take hold of that in the believer which is Christlike. They stir up his love and faith and hope. They are not of a nature to exalt, but rather to humble him who feels these things. He who has been stirred up by any word of exhortation in his own mind, will never feel that he is therefore to be judged as being better than he who has not been so stirred up. He will know that the word of exhortation has come to him as a blessed gift from God, and that it is something to be thankful for, rather than to be proud of. He will feel to say, Why have I been favored with the ear to hear, and the heart to feel something of the power of the word? He will regard exhortation as one of the gifts of God to him, who is all unworthy of such a favor. He will remember the many times when he has heard or read the same exhortation from the word of God, or from the lips of him who preaches the word, and has been totally unmoved by it, and he will feel that it would have been just so now had not the dear Lord opened his heart, and sent the word therein with power, and fastened it there, as a nail in a sure place. He will feel as though he must continually call upon the Lord to make the word efficacious in his case, for if he does not, it will pass him by, as it has done before, and he will receive no benefit.

It is sure that exhortation does not imply self-dependence at all. That form of exaltation which does imply this, is not scriptural exhortation. Anything that for a moment causes us to forget the source of all good, cannot be right, nor to the good of those who are actuated by it.

If we may speak for ourself in this matter, we have ever felt when the word of exhortation has come to us with power, and we have thereby been stirred up, to go on in the path of our duty, that we have received a great mercy from God, and that all our praise for going on in that path, must be rendered to him. It is most sure, as we have said before, that all exhortation must pre-suppose grace, in the heart. It is sure also that the word would do us no good, did not the Lord open our hearts, as he did the heart of Lydia, to receive the word. For the exhortation and for a heart to receive it, and for the benefit of it, then, we must praise the Lord. O! may God keep us from any feeling of self praise, for any love, or fear, or faith, or confidence, or any other spiritual gift, which we may possess, and for any obedience which we may render outwardly to his commands. May we never feel, for a moment, that we are any better than that brother who may be far astray. May we feel sure, all the time, that wherein we differ, we must praise the Lord for it. Who hath made thee to differ, comes often to our heart, when we hear of some brother who has grievously sinned. The most awful fear that we have ever known, has arisen out of a sense of our own weakness, and of our depravity of heart, and the thought that we cannot keep ourselves, and the thought that we may also fall. Sometimes this fear has been fearful. We cannot for one moment feel that we can in the least degree boast over the brother who has gone farthest astray. The constant keeping of the Lord of grace must be our sole dependence. For this reason we are glad of that preaching that tells us our faults, that stirs up our minds to that which is commanded of the Lord. It seems to us that the teaching of the

Scriptures concerning this matter is, that those things which the believer has come to love, and to hope in; those things which the Lord has done for him, and which he has promised to do for him, the glory of the Savior, whom we have come to love, and the good of the Zion of God here on earth, are the real and proper motives of exhortation to obedience on the part of believers. Since the Lord has done such great things for us, let us serve him. Since he has shed his love abroad in our hearts, and has bought us with a price, and we are not our own, let us glorify him in our body, and our spirit, which are his. These things are all spoken of in the word. These things are our goodly heritage, and in them let us live. Exhortation is one of the God appointed ways in which these things are to be impressed upon us, and in which our God works in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure.

It has come to our ears, though we are slow to believe it, that there are some of the brethren, in some sections of the country, who deny that there is any such thing as exhortation recognized in the Scriptures. It is said, they claim that if the unlimited predestination of God be true, then there is no room for exhortation, and charge all who do exhort the brethren to the service of the Lord, with Arminianism. We have never met any such brother, though we have dwelt all our life among those who believed in unlimited predestination. If we had met any one who sought to shelter himself from his guilt under this plea, it would not cause us to doubt the truth of predestination, but it would cause us to very much doubt the christianity of that brother. Predestination does not destroy exhortation, nor the guilt of the sinner. In the ninth of Romans, Paul would meet

all such assertions with the stern query, "Who art thou that repliest against God?" Men who denied predestination, urged that it destroyed man's accountability, and asked, Who hath resisted his will, and why doth he yet find fault? Paul said that this was replying against God. If any who believe in this doctrine, say that it does relieve them from responsibility, then they are more guilty than were those to whom Paul replied in this ninth chapter of Romans. They who do not believe in it, may come to the conclusion that they do, that it relieves one of guilt, because he has done the thing which God had predestinated, but it seems sure, that if a man has the grace of God in his heart, and by grace has been brought to believe in, and love the doctrine, he will have such a principle of holiness in him, that he will not seek to shelter himself, or find an excuse for his guilt in it. We should feel like asking those brethren who have been alarmed lest a belief in unlimited predestination should lead to such results as these, Would it be the case with you, if you did believe this doctrine, that you would make an excuse of it for your sins? Men do make a belief in salvation by grace, to be a reason why they would continue in sin, because they are to be saved anyhow, as they say. But we have always contended that this only proved they still loved their sins. So we should think if we heard one say, If I believed in unlimited predestination, I would not feel guilty, and no one ought to condemn me, that he had not yet been washed from his sins, and that he yet loved sin.

Thus we do feel the obligation resting upon us, in all our ministry, to exhort as well as to proclaim salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, finished and secure. It seems to us unquestionable that if indeed we have been redeemed, we shall

desire to so walk as he who redeemed us walked. We shall, therefore, welcome all that helps us to remember our obligations to him. It is sure also, that he that sows to the flesh, of the flesh shall reap corruption. The harvest will be what is sown. We would keep in mind these things, and we feel well assured that we should put the brethren in mind of these things. Fully one-half of all the writings of the great apostle to the Gentiles, is occupied with admonition, and exhortation, and warnings, and reproofs. We should certainly conclude that one was in a bad state of feeling who did not want to hear these things enforced. We should think that minister neglectful of his duty as a minister of the word, if he did not reprove, and rebuke, and exhort, as the apostle has directed. We hope it is not true that any who bear the name of Old School Baptists in the land, deny their accountability to God for all their sins. It is sure that we must all appear, as believers, before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive the things done in the body. He who has never thus appeared, has not known the Lord at all, or else he is without sin. The last is never true in this life. We can but believe that those who have been thus accused, have been misunderstood, as all who have believed in grace, and in predestination, have always been misunderstood, by all who deny those principles of doctrine. So long as we have any remembrance of our own daily experience, we shall know that our God has held us accountable for our sins, by many corrections, and chastisements. We shall also believe in the predestination of God, so long as the Scriptures so declare of him. But the one truth does not destroy the other. Each is of God, and will withstand the attacks of all who may oppose.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE WILL OF GOD.

WHEN duly impressed with a sense of the superlative perfections of Jehovah, the enlightened christian contemplates the principle on which God governs and controls all things, with inexpressible delight; and in the inspired language of the psalmist will say, "The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice." The grandest theme that moved the prophetic pen, was that in which the absolute government of God is declared unto Zion. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." If he were only trying to reign, and unable to overcome the impediments thrown in his way by men and devils, the anxiety of his people would be very great. But the good tidings of good, the publication of peace, the proclamation of salvation, by heaven inspired, is based upon the assurance that the God of Zion reigns. He rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth. Sparrows are guided and protected by the orders from his throne, and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered, so that not one of them can by any casualty fall to the ground without his decree. The natural heavens declare his glory, the marshalled hosts are governed by his law. The sun, moon and stars obey the sovereign orders of their God. The earth and seas also obey him, and the islands shall wait for his law. The winds and storms are his messengers. He rideth upon the wings thereof, and makes the clouds his chariots. The troubled ocean is calm when he rebukes the tempest, and the monsters of the deep are swift to obey his mandates. Angels, men, and even devils, are encircled

by his power; they can neither think nor act in any sphere beyond that which he has appointed them.

In the administration of the divine government, as exemplified in creation, providence and grace, many things are inscrutable to us, for we can only know and comprehend his government so far as he is pleased to enlighten us. The faith which he has given us is brought into active operation, affording us that confidence in God, that we can cheerfully trust in him, where we cannot trace him. When he plants his footsteps in the sea, and when his ways are past finding out, we know that all things do work together for good to them that love him, who are the called according to his purpose. When darkness veils the sky, when thick darkness of the sky is his pavilion, when he keepeth back the face of his throne, and spreads his cloud upon it, even then we learn to "Be still and know that he is God." And the more dark and inscrutable his government is to us, the more clearly is our faith and confidence in him demonstrated. If the sun and the land were always in sight, the mariner would have no use for his compass. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit, in the saints, which God has ordained shall be subjected to fiery trials; but it has power to shine the brightest when most opposed. Nothing would be allowed to come in conflict with it, if it were not necessary for our good, and God's declarative glory.

But the principle or standard of the divine government, is what we designed to notice more particularly in this article. Seeing that all things are governed by the power and providence of our God, how consoling it is to know that Zion's God is perfectly competent to administer the government over all his works; for, "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Now if we have confidence in

his will, if we are reconciled to it, and in the language of the dear Redeemer can say, Not my will, but thy will be done; or in the language of the prayer, Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven, then we shall rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. If his government were administered according to any other than God's will, we might fear the result. If he consulted our wills and inclinations, alas, how fickle and trifling are we! Or should the government of earth be left to the popular vote of the race of mankind, how uncertain would be the result. But all is made to depend on his own will, and hence the final result of all things is secure. The supreme will of Jehovah is the standard of all the actions and government of God. He has no other law by which to do his pleasure in the armies of heaven, or among the inhabitants of the earth; and we rejoice that it is so, for his will is perfect, pure, infallible, immutable and holy. No other rule of government therefore could be so honoring to God, or safe for us, as that by which all the orders of his throne are administered. In his will all the eternal attributes of the Godhead are embraced. His wisdom, truth, justice, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence and eternity, affords us indemnity that nothing will be administered that can possibly conflict with the eternal perfections of the Deity. Who then would wish to shorten the sceptre of his power, or pluck one gem from his crown? Could we act rationally or consistently in asking or desiring him to change his administrations, however dark or inscrutable they may seem to us, or to adopt as a rule of his government the will of any or all of his creatures? Or who that knoweth the Lord, can desire to limit his control over the events or destiny of all beings and all worlds? Nay, we can but rejoice that he

is King of kings, and Lord of lords. We rejoice not only that the saints are governed by his law, but also that wicked men and devils are under his control; were it otherwise all would be confusion. Their limits are fixed, their bounds are irrevocably set; hereunto they shall come, but no farther. The hearts of kings and proud monarchs of the earth he turneth as the rivers of water are turned. Truly 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 their cords away from us." But, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." The monarch of Babylon may attempt to ascend above the clouds, to set his throne above the stars, and to be like the Most High, but he shall be brought down to hell, to the borders of the pit. Pharaoh may determine to detain the Lord's chosen tribes in Egypt, or to pursue and bring them back after God has broken their yoke, but God will display all his wonders on Pharaoh and his host, and Israel shall sing the song of deliverance in full sight of their vanquished enemies. All this results from the administration of the divine government according to the will of God. Can any saint be found to say, This is more power or government than what properly belongs to God? Will any say that his power should be restricted to good men, and their good actions, and that he has no right to control evil men, and evil actions of men, according to the counsel of his own will? We hope not. But it is sometimes objected, that if God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and nothing after the counsel of his creatures' will, and if his will is eternally the same, from everlasting to everlasting, so that he has "Declared the end from the

beginning," and said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," then we are only machines, bound fast in the decrees of fate, and only like clay in the hands of the potter. If this be true, they say, we are not accountable beings, and "Why doth he yet find fault? Who hath resisted his will?" "Nay, who art thou O man that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" The apostle did not shrink from a defense of the sovereignty of God because men would surly say, "Why doth he yet find fault?" &c., but rebukes the fault-finder with merited severity. The inferences and conclusions of men in regard to the nature and tendency of this doctrine are not reliable. Man is by no means released from his accountability, nor is he propelled like a machine in his action; he acts voluntarily in his course of wickedness, without any fear of God before his eyes, and is therefore guilty in the eyes of the law and justice for his wickedness, and he is held accountable for his conduct, and will be punished for his sins, according to the testimony of the Scriptures. Many have failed to perceive how God can govern the world, and control all events, without influencing men to sin, or being the author of sin. By the terms "author of sin," we suppose they mean the fountain or source of sin. If this be their meaning, nothing can be more remote from the truth. For God is perfectly holy in his nature, and in all his administrations. Men are never influenced to do wickedly by any impulse directly from him. Their fallen natures incline them to do wickedly, and so far as God will permit them to have their

own way, they will drink in iniquity as the ox drinketh water. This we know to be the case by our own experience, as well as by the testimony of the Scriptures. Hence God's perfect knowledge, and even his design in all they do, does not change either their inclination to sin, or their accountability for sinning. Joseph's brethren acted voluntarily in meditating his murder, and in selling him to the Ishmaelites to be carried down to Egypt; and they were held accountable for their wickedness, as much so as though God had had no purpose in the matter; yet the event shows, and the word of God declares, that God had a purpose in it all; and we conclude that God had as much purpose in Joseph's going into Egypt, as though his brethren had had no agency in the matter. How these things can be, may be a mystery to men, but all is plain with God.

The Jews and Romans were guilty in putting Christ to death, although they could only do what God's hand and purpose had before determined should be done. It was not a divine influence that filled them with malice and hatred to Christ, nor was it by any gracious impulse of the Spirit of God, they crucified the Lord of glory. The spirit of their carnal minds, and the influence of Satan, urged them on in the bloody work, and they were without excuse. And as it was in the case of Joseph, and in the crucifixion of Christ, so we believe it is in regard to all the wicked acts of men.

A brother has used the figure of the good tree and the evil tree, which were created with all their subsequent developments in them, and under the unavoidable necessity of bringing forth the fruit which was according to their nature. This is unquestionably true in regard to trees, but trees have no volition; they are pass-

ive, and to them attaches neither blame nor approval. Men are accountable beings, and act voluntarily in sinning, and are subjects of condemnation and wrath. The figure of trees is applied to men, we admit, but not in reference to their original creation. Christ says, "First make the tree good, and his fruit shall be good," &c. But his application of the figure contemplates man as a fallen sinner, already condemned; he is like a corrupt tree; in his present state he can bring forth corrupt fruit, but he cannot bring forth good fruit. But God is able to purge the tree, and make it bring forth good fruit. All men are by nature, that is, in their fallen nature, evil trees, and polluted fountains, so that until God makes good the tree, and cleanses the fountain, no pure or holy productions can be developed.

We would not indulge in any vain speculations in regard to God, or in the contemplation of his perfections; the subject is too sacred to be approached but with the most profound reverence, but we do rejoice in believing that the God of Zion presides in power and majesty over all the works of his hands, and accomplishes his own purpose, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; causing the wrath of man to praise him, and restraining the remainder of their wrath. And we do rejoice to know that the will of God is the invariable rule of all his work of creation, providence and grace. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." We entertain no fear of his exceeding his eternal right in executing the counsel of his will; and so far as he instructs us that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, we shall be led in Spirit to cry out, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty,

with thy glory and thy majesty; and in majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.”

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., October 15, 1855.

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CHURCH CENTENNIAL.

SALT RIVER Church, Anderson Co., Ky., celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of its organization Feb. 3d, 1898. The church was organized Feb. 3d, 1798, with seven members from other churches, and called Elder John Penny as their pastor. He served the church regularly until 1833, when he died. Elder J. H. Walker, then a licentiate, was ordained and called to the pastorate. He served until his death, which occurred in 1862, when Elder J. F. Johnson was called. He also served until his death, in 1881, when the present pastor, Elder S. Hawkius, was called. Thus it will be seen that during the one hundred years the church has had but four pastors, and has never dismissed one who had been called as pastor; death only removing them from their service. Besides being blessed with the service of its pastors, the church has, with the fewest exceptions, dwelt in peace and unity during the entire period of its existence as a church. While other churches were being rent asunder by the divisions among the Baptists in 1832, and in 1833, Salt River Church remained unshaken, except the dismissal of a few members who were dissatisfied, and sided with the Missionary theory. They were few, however, and besides this there has never been any division in the church on any point of doctrine held by the Primitive Baptists.

Elder T. C. Herndon preached the centennial sermon, from 2 Cor. iii. 5, "Our sufficiency is of God." The day was clear and bright, and very cold, the thermometer registering near zero all day, yet there was a good congregation present, who listened to the able sermon, which was suited to the occasion celebrated. The church begins the second century with fair prospects before her; yet we would not put our confidence in visible things, for "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." With a membership of twenty-four, and in peace, and well established in the faith of God's elect, she looks forward to the future, rejoicing in the merits of her Redeemer. May this be the abiding hope of all her members in their trials and afflictions in this world of sorrow and temptation, and their theme of eternal praise when they have been called hence. And may our merciful Father raise up others to take their place in this visible kingdom among men, that she may be preserved as a visible church, walking in the order of the gospel, and proclaiming its glorious truths for ages to come, is the prayer of one who rejoices in the greatness of God.

C. W. BOND.

Brother Beebe, the above is sent at the request of Salt River Church for publication, if it shall meet with your approval.

Your brother in hope,
J. J. WATERFILL, Church Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder E. Rittenhouse, Feb. 9th, 1898, at the residence of the bride's parents, in Cecil Co., Md., Mr. Tullard Buckworth, to Miss Annie Redgrave, both of Cecil Co.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, at the house of the bride's grandfather, Mr. Elias Hogeland, Southampton, Pa., Dec. 8th, 1896, Mr. Willis Demott, of Clinton, N. J., and Miss Mary Hogeland, of Southampton.

By the same, March 7th, 1898, at his residence, Southampton, Pa., Mr. Aaron Pearson, of Breadyville, Pa., and Miss Anna Willoughby, of Philadelphia, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

SISTER *Ann Mahurin* died at her home near Bogue, Graham Co., Kansas, July 24th, 1897, at the age of 76 years and 8 days. She leaves nine children—five girls and four boys, to mourn her death. Her disease was inflammation of the bowels. She was sick but a few days, but was ready when her Savior called.

M. O. RITER.

ON Friday night, at 10 o'clock, March 18th, 1898, near Crab Orchard, Lincoln Co., Ky., Elder A. C. Newland departed this life, at his own home. Brother Newland was 77 years old, and had been preaching for more than forty years the unsearchable riches of Christ. A large company gathered at his house on Sunday, the 20th, and at 2 o'clock the writer tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing ones, from 1 Cor. xv. 57, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." After which he was peacefully laid away in the home graveyard, to await the sound of the last trump. Another father in Israel has fallen. May the Lord raise up another to take his place.

E. B. BARTLETT.

MANSE, Kentucky.

SISTER *Frances Anderson*, daughter of the late Elder William Galaway, was born September 25th, 1825, in Troup Co., Ga., and was married to Mr. M. E. Anderson, Feb. 8th, 1846, and died at their home in Coffee Co., Ala., of organic disease of the heart, on Feb. 3d, at 2 o'clock. On the 6th I attempted to speak to the comfort of the bereaved family, and attentive congregation, from the words, "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13. After which we laid her body to rest in the silent tomb, to await the resurrection morn. Sister Anderson was baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist church of Union Springs, Pike Co., Ala., in

1859, and remained a consistent member until her death, never giving any trouble. She was a noble, kind and benevolent christian, a kind and loving wife, a generous and indulgent mother and neighbor, bearing and forbearing under all circumstances. Indeed, a great and good mother has fallen asleep in Israel. She leaves behind her six children and an aged husband, to mourn their loss. Three of her children are members of the same church that she was, and three passed away before her, nine in all.

J. P. BRADLEY.

INO, Ala., March 4, 1898.

Mrs. *Sarah Ann Speirs*, wife of Elder Robert Speirs, died March 9th, 1898, of cancer in the head; after five long, dreary months of suffering that no pen nor tongue can tell. Sister Thurston was born Dec. 7th, 1825, in Franklin Co., Ind., united with the Bethlehem church of Primitive Baptists, in the same County, in January, 1843; married Robert Speirs Nov. 23d, 1848; moved her membership by letter to the Harmony church, Grant Co., Ind., in 1862, where her husband united in baptism, and was licensed to speak in public. In 1874 they moved to Keokuk Co., Iowa, and united by letter with the Cedar Creek church, Wappello Co., Iowa, where he was ordained, in June, 1874. She remained a mother in Israel until the day of her death, aged 72 years, 3 months and 2 days. She fell asleep in Jesus as a full sheaf, ripe and ready for the Master's use. The cold, lifeless clay, was laid to rest in the Highland Cemetery, to awake at the sound of the last trump.

At the funeral Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio, spoke in prayer, and a very comforting discourse was delivered from Psalm xxxix. 7, by Elder Isaac Sawin, of Moulten, Iowa. Elders Reeves and Byram were also present. Unto this union were born six children, two boys and four girls. Two girls preceded their mother to the Spirit world. The four living children all visited her during her sickness, although six hundred miles intervened. Also three brothers from Indiana, and one sister from Ohio.

ROBERT SPEIRS.

Mrs. *Katharine Crossfield* was buried at her home near Leathers Store, Anderson Co., Ky., March 18th. After many years of manifested christian love and fellowship, sister Crossfield was, as we firmly believe, called home to those mansions prepared for us, eternal in the heavens. She was born in Mercer County, Jan. 10th, 1815, and died March 16th, 1898. Eight children and a large number of grandchildren are left to remember her christian example. She asked for a home with the Primitive Baptists at Little Flock, Anderson Co., Ky., the fourth Saturday in September, 1834. Her husband, Morgan Crossfield, whom she married in 1842, united with the church at Goshen, Anderson Co., Ky., in June, 1866, and in August of same year

sister Crossfield put in her letter at the same place, where they lived respected by the friends and brethren until their call came. If we all could live such a consistent christian life as sister Crossfield, whom I knew and loved as one of the mothers in Israel, there would be no trouble in the churches, and no reproach on the cause of our Master. Though afflicted in many ways, and compelled to go on crutches, she ever met us with a smile, and seemed to bend every effort to make things pleasant for those around her. Whenever she could she visited her sister churches, and her earnest, attentive face was a comfort and help to those trying to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. May the Lord enable us all to so adorn the profession by an orderly walk, that those following in the footsteps of the flock may see the monuments of his mercy, and say with comfort in the depths of their hearts, that God still reigneth in the hearts of his people.

Your brother, I trust, in Christ,
 DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.
 LAWRENCEBURG, Ky., April, 1898.

“BEHOLD, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”—1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—Please publish a notice of the departure out of this world of our sister, **Rebecca Hartman**, in the 71st year of her age. Our departed sister was a daughter of the late John and Eve Hartman, of Phoenix, Baltimore Co., Md., both of them having passed away some years ago. The deceased was a member of the little church at Warren, Baltimore Co., Md., and was baptized by the writer, many years ago. She lived a consistent member until death. For a number of years past she has been hindered from getting to meeting on account of poor health. Her trouble seemed to be of the nature of asthma, shortness of breath, and oppression many long nights, unable to lie in her bed; but she was remarkably patient in all her afflictions; strong in the faith; giving glory to God. I could say much in regard to the wonderful change wrought in her by the grace of God, by which sinners are saved, having a knowledge of her case personally, but I fear it would require too much space; suffice it to say, that from one of the most decided opposers of the doctrine of salvation by grace, she became as decided in favor of it, and stood firm in belief of the truth unto the end, and passed quietly away when the time came, sitting in her chair, the family being aroused were not aware of the change.

The funeral was attended on Tuesday, April 5th, 1898, and after some remarks by the writer, she was gathered unto her people. Some of her brothers and

sisters were absent, being too far away to be present on the occasion. They were all much devoted to this departed sister, and the parting with her was a hard trial. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon them all.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

Mrs. **Minnesota Peek Holly** was born in Shelby Co., Indiana, Feb. 4th, 1856. She was the youngest daughter of Robert B. and Pernelia Peek, who were members of Conns Creek Old School Predestinarian Baptist church for fifty years or more. The subject of this notice stayed with her parents until death claimed them both. She was married to Charles H. Holly, March 1st, 1893, and removed with him to Jay Co., Ind., in the latter part of 1897. She became an invalid with consumption, and for several months was a patient and cheerful sufferer, until the angel of death claimed her, Jan. 30th, 1898. During the summer of 1896, I had the pleasure of meeting our departed sister at brother Newton Peters' house, where we were holding meetings at different times. I soon found her an earnest listener, and when opportunity afforded I had the pleasure of hearing her relate her bright evidence of a hope through grace. She, I found was taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, our family paper, and loved to read the things therein taught; and I found she was generally on hand at our meetings, and seemed to take great interest in mating and talking with the brethren, and gave me to understand she loved to hear the doctrine of the predestination of all things preached; giving evidence that she was trusting sweetly in an eternal Sovereign. We always felt gratified to meet our sister, because of the quiet, meek, humble manner she always manifested in our presence, giving evidence of the possession of the Spirit of God, which renders gentleness, meekness, and an abundance of love and interest in mingling among the people of God. We felt that she was resigned, and that she counted our people as her people, and our God her God, and that her chief joy was to be with the brethren. Her husband, while not understanding our doctrine, yet, because of the interest his wife took in attending our meetings, informed us that he wished us to inform them when we were to have meetings, in order that he might always bring her there, because she so much enjoyed it. Though she had not united with the church, yet we felt she was as much a child of God, and had received the knowledge of the truth as richly as any we knew of.

At the request of her bereaved husband, who is very deeply affected in having to part with her, I send this notice to you for publication.

B. F. HUTCHINSON.

ALMA, Ohio.

REQUESTS FOR VIEWS.

WILL some brother write in the SIGNS upon the words found in Malachi iv. 3., and oblige me? I have heard the views of Arminians upon these words.
Your brother,

ZECHARIAH WARD.

BEAR WILLOW, Va., Feb., 1898.

WILL some brother give his views through the SIGNS upon Isaiah v. 4, and also upon John ix. 31, and oblige?

J. H. BLACKBURN.

CHATHAM, Ontario.

[VIEWS are also wanted upon the first verse of the fifty-third Psalm, by sister Lucinda Riley, of Chatton, Ill., and by Luke Mason, of Citronville, Ala., upon Luke xix. 10. He wishes all the Scripture which relates to this subject. And by sister Rosa A. Coleman, of Swofford, Wash., upon the subject of Judas. Some of these are requests addressed to the editors, but we do not feel to have any special light upon them, and so we would be glad if some one else could feel like responding.—Ed.]

APPOINTMENTS.

THE Lord willing, I will be with the brethren in Kentucky as follows: Georgetown, Tuesday night, May 3d; Elk Lick, Wednesday, 4th; Little Flock, as brethren may arrange, Thursday afternoon and Friday, 5th and 6th; Mays Lick, Saturday and Sunday, 7th and 8th; Mt. Carmel, Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday, as brethren may arrange, 10th and 11th; Mt. Sterling, Wednesday night and Thursday.

SILAS H. DURAND.

PERSONAL.

If this should meet the eye of my brother, living in Saline Co., Ill., or in some adjoining County, and he would write to me, I should be much obliged.

A. B. LESTER.

MASON CITY, Iowa.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Harford Church, beginning on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1898, (18th, 19th and 20th).

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., on May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1898.

Those coming on Tuesday afternoon by Pennsylvania Railroad, will go to B. F. Coulter's, 1910 N. Twenty-

second St., (or to places where they are acquainted.) Those coming by Reading Railroad will get off at Columbia Ave. Station, and go to Mrs. Margaret Craven's, 1735 N. Seventh St. All who come on Wednesday morning will walk from Broad St. Station and the Reading Terminal to the place of meeting, southeast corner Broad and Cherry Sts., between Arch and Race Sts., (Odd Fellows' Temple, entrance on Broad St.) All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

B. F. COULTER, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1898, and continuing three days.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the New Vernon Church, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1898, and continue three days.

MEETINGS.

THE Mill Creek church, of Burlington, Hamilton Co., Ohio, will hold a two days meeting on the third Saturday and following Sunday, May 21st and 22d, 1898, beginning at 10 a. m. each day. A cordial invitation is extended to those desiring to meet with us.

WM. SATER, Clerk.

THERE will be a May meeting held with Frying Pan church, in Fairfax Co., Va., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in May, ending Sunday. Train leaving Washington city, Sixth St. depot, Thursday 4:30 p. m., and train leaving Friday 9 a. m., will be met at Herndon. We hope to see our brethren and friends, especially our ministering brethren.

E. V. WHITE.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1898.

NO. 10.

CORRESPONDENCE.

“CHOSEN US IN HIM.”

(Concluded from page 268.)

BEFORE the world began God who cannot lie promised to the elect eternal life. (Titus i. 2.) “This is the record that God hath given 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. “Our life is hid with Christ in God.” It is being “chosen in him” that we are bound in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. How blessedly Christ speaks of the elect in John xvii. 1-3, “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”—Acts xiii. 48. In God’s act of election their names were written in the book of life. They shall never perish. Eternal life was the end to which

God the Father chose us in Christ. As our Lord Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh, in his eternal Godhead he is by “nature” the Son of God. (Gal. iv. 8.) He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. (Phil. ii. 6.) The purpose of God in our election in him was to the adoption of children. Christ the Son of God being in the election the Head and Husband of the church, is the foundation of the relation of the adoption of children. The wife of the Son is the child of the Father. “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.” “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”—Romans viii. 29. It surpasses all our thought, that our Creator should in the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ, bring us into such relationship. “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth

us not because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." And then if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. As God hath appointed his Son heir of all things, (Heb. i. 2,) and as God hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, thus it is that in union with Christ in our eternal election, we are heirs of all things also. "All things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

"In Christ, from everlasting loved,
The saints were chosen and approved;
Formed for himself, with him joint heirs,
All things in heaven and earth are theirs."

Our relationship to Christ in our election in him, is our title to the predestined glory, for it is in Christ that we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. (Eph. i. 11.) Jesus, the Head of the church, prays to the Father, "O Father, glorify thou me, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Again he speaks, this time of the elect whom the Father hath given him, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou has sent me, and hast loved them as thou has loved me. Father, I will that they also whom

thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Christ, the Head of the election of grace, entered into his glory. (Luke xxiv. 26.) He was received up into glory, (1 Tim. iii. 16,) and all his members shall be glorified together with him. Eternal glory is the destiny of the people of God, and to this glory they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. The blessings in Christ Jesus, eternal life and glory, adoption and union to the Incarnate Deity, promised, given, predestinated, secured in Christ before the fall, according as God hath chosen us in him, were never lost unto the elect when they sinned in Adam.

"Chosen of old, of old approved,
In Christ the eternal Son beloved,
Adopted, too, and children made,
Ere sin its baneful poison spread."

The above mentioned inheritance of the elect, the ultimate end of their election in Christ, was not possessed by them in their creation in Adam, therefore when they sinned in Adam they did not forfeit their inheritance; the above mentioned blessings were not lost, and therefore were not restored by Christ. They are distinct from those benefits which come upon the consideration of us as sinners. They do not depend upon the elect having first sinned. If then without respect to man being considered as a sinner, the elect of mankind in indissoluble union to Christ Jesus as their Head and Husband were chosen and predestinated to eternal glory, why were the elect suffered to fall into sin?

"When man was created what wisdom we see,
The whole he possessed was the image of thee;
But O, in his fall we are led to espy,
'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high.

When Adam to eat of the fruit was inclined,
It answered the end which Jehovah designed;

No purpose of wisdom was altered thereby,
 'Twas all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

God, prior to their having sinned, beheld all his creatures, all the seed of Adam, by his own sovereign act, after the counsel of his own will, elected his people unto himself, he left "the rest." The elect and the rest fell and sinned in the transgression of Adam. Was this a disaster? Let us not entertain such a thought, for that would reflect upon the wisdom and power of the Creator. The angels which sinned, which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. (Jude 6; 2 Peter ii. 4.) The elect angels (1 Tim. v. 21,) God hath kept from sinning against him; they are repeatedly designated the "holy angels." (Matt. xxv. 31; Rev. xiv. 10.) "Bless the Lord, ye his angels that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word."—Psalm ciii. 20. Their eternal happiness around the throne of God, to which God hath chosen them, had no relation to sin, for they are holy, and have never sinned. Could not God have kept the creature man ever hearkening to the voice of his word? Could not he, the Lord God Omnipotent, who reigneth, have so kept and sustained the elect of his creatures, and the non-elect also of his creatures, that they had never transgressed his commandments? Then however inscrutable to us it may be that sin has existence at all, let us believe that our God, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity, has his own wise and righteous purposes to fulfill in the existence of sin in Satan, (he sinneth from the beginning, 1 John ii. 8,) in the existence of sin in the angels that sinned, and in the entrance of sin into the world. "By one man sin en-

tered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." God, in Abraham, gave the land of Canaan to his seed. This was the promised inheritance of his chosen nation. It was to be theirs in actual possession at the predestinated time. (Gen. xv. 13-16; Acts vii. 6-17. Might they not have remained in the land as strangers until the appointed time? No; because God had purposed it otherwise, as the Scriptures tell us in Genesis xv., "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed [not Abram, for in the type he was the head. It was the members of Christ's body that sinned, not Christ. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.] Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." How much was to be fulfilled before the chosen seed attained unto the possession of their predestinated inheritance! "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Sometimes brethren in presenting Adam as a type of Christ, have dwelt upon the love that he had for Eve his wife. She was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. How could he be severed from her? And because of his love for her, he partook of the fruit that she gave unto him, and did eat with her. But was this act of Adam's

commendable? Is it to be held up for our admiration, and thus glorified before our eyes? O, let us not think upon the subject in such a light. May we remember that all the types presented in the Scriptures come short of perfectly presenting Christ and the church. In the epistle to the Hebrews, we read that under the law the Lord gave to Israel "patterns of things in the heavens," "figures of the true "shadows of good things to come." The tabernacle was a figure for the time then present. But Christ is come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. So Adam in eating the forbidden fruit with Eve, is not to be viewed as the "very image" of Christ. Let us not overlook the exceeding sinfulness of Adam's sin, and the supposed motives that we imagine to have actuated him in his act, should not be entertained in our thoughts for a moment as lessening or glossing over the enormity of his guilt in sinning against his Creator. Christ the Lamb of God was verily foreordained before the foundation, (1 Peter i. 20,) so I believe the entrance by one man of sin into the world, was no less certain. It was as certainly embraced in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, as the crucifixion of the dear Savior. (Acts ii. 23; iv. 28.) Before our foreparents fell by transgression in Eden, "God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply;" but in the wisdom and purpose of God it was not until after they had sinned that Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain, and she again bare his brother Abel. The first a vessel of wrath, the other a vessel of mercy. Romans ix. 21-23, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump

to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? 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: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." How is it that Cain is a vessel of wrath, and Abel a vessel of mercy? Were they not both alike sinners, of the same lump of clay? "In process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."—Gen. iv. 3-5. "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."—Heb. xi. 4. Cain slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Abel is a sinner; by faith (that not of himself, it is the gift of God, Eph. ii. 8,) he offers unto God a more excellent sacrifice; his works are righteous; they are the works of faith, and by faith he obtains witness that he is righteous before his God. God has respect unto him. O Abel, surely thou art a vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory! What maketh thee to differ from thy brother Cain? Why hath God respect unto thee, and not unto Cain? How hast thou faith, and good works, and mercy, and righteousness through the sacrifice of the Lamb? To what shall all this be traced? "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Romans xi. 7. All through the Scrip-

tures, in the dealings of God with mankind, this is to be traced. "The Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel," and the especial difference was the blood of the passover Lamb. "The election hath obtained it." This is written upon all the forgiveness of sins, the mercy, the sanctification of the Spirit, justification in the sight of God, and all the fruit of the Spirit. "The election hath obtained it: the election of grace." As it concerned the election of grace in Christ Jesus, the sin of Adam was the outlet wherein God designed to present the glory and grace of election in every view, in the strongest light, and more illustriously to bring the many sons unto glory. That the love and tender mercy, the justice and power, faithfulness and immutability, yea, all the attributes of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, should be displayed in their infinite glory. "That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Christ in his prayer to the Father says, "That they may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me; * * * thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Christ the Head or the church was in the bosom of the Father from eternity. When the elect, the members of Christ, sinned, did the Father pluck them from his bosom? Did the Son of God put away his bride? Did our Lord Jesus Christ dismember himself? Ah, never, O no! For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. Deep, yes, as in a bottomless abyss, their sins had plunged them, and had the head of the election of grace been man only, then their salvation had

been impossible. (Matt. xix. 26; Psalm xlix. 7.) But O, the glory of electing love! Our Head is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. He will not cast away his people whom he foreknew. He will not disown, and turn adrift his wife. But in the riches of his mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved her, he will go to the ends of the earth after her, (Isaiah xli. 9,) and our heavenly Lover's cry will be, Return, my darling, my only one, I am married unto thee. He will go into the depths of the sea after her, and though all the waves of affliction go over him, he will bring her up from thence. (Psalm lxxviii. 22.) He goes forth saying, "I will ransom thee from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." He will descend to the lowest hell after her, (Psalm lxxxvi. 13,) and deliver his darling from the power of the dog. She shall ascend with him to glory, where before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy, he will present her to himself a glorious church, holy and without blemish, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

The elect sinned in Adam. The Lord was not nonplussed. He did not have to rearrange his purposes. The falling into sin of all the human race in Adam, "Answered the end that Jehovah designed." The election and predestination of the elect unto salvation, to obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, their calling, their sanctification of the Spirit, belief of the truth, and justification freely by grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, their resurrection from the dead, in their bodies changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, spiritual, in-

corruptible, immortal, fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Head of the church, we shall be like him. All was in the eternal purpose of God; the means, the decreed pathway to the ultimate end, for which he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

I have already intimated that the highest relationship of the church to Christ is that he is the Head and Husband, and all others are relative relationships. Meditate upon the relationship of Savior and the saved. "Israel shall be saved in the Lord." "I will save them by the Lord their God."—Hosea i. 7. How are we in the Lord, and Jehovah our God and Savior? It is "In Christ in God," by eternal election in Christ, and Christ is in God. "Thou Father art in me, and I in thee." Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh, and in his divine and human natures he is "man to suffer, God to save." And what is the Son of God unto the election of grace? He is the Head. "Christ is the Head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body."—Eph. v. 23. Here we have a revelation of two distinct relationships: the Head, the Savior, and the relationship of Savior is relative to the relationship of Christ being the Head. So also with all the manifold relationships declared in the gospel, that subsist between Christ and the church. They stand not apart, they are not separate from, but are attributable to that first, that most exalted and dearest relationship, Christ the Husband, and therefore the Head of the church. "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church; and he is the Savior of the body." May we ever be found in our doctrine, "holding the head." (Col. ii. 19.) Christ is the Head of all principality and power, angels and authorities and powers being made sub-

ject unto him. The Father of glory hath put all things under his feet; he hath given him to be Head over all things to the church. (Col. ii. 10; 1 Peter iii. 22; Eph. i. 22.) If he our Head be taken away, all is in confusion and everlasting ruins. But he cannot be severed from us. O Zion!

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones;
In all thy distresses thy head feels the pain,
Yet all are most needful, not one is in vain."

"The foot can't be crushed below,
And the head be unconscious above."

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." The Scripture says, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." But here the language is of deeper signification, as, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth," (Amos iii. 2,) as though all other families were strangers, with whom he had no intimacy. "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." "I never knew you."—Matt. vii. 23. This reaches back to eternity, and "whom he did foreknow," is from eternity. It is that knowledge and intimacy arising from near relationship. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2. Again, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 13. In both these Scriptures the elect are declared to be chosen unto salvation, and to all that is requisite to the knowledge of salvation. Does it stop short here?

Is salvation the ultimate end of their election? No, "To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."—1 Peter i. 4. And in 2 Thess. ii. 14, "To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." John xvii. 22-24, Paul says, "I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "Afore prepared unto glory, bringing many sons unto glory." Eternal glory is the ultimate, eternal destiny of the chosen in Christ Jesus. Salvation, to which God hath chosen his people, is not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.) This brings to view that very blessed subject, the everlasting covenant. As Isaac was Abraham's heir, so the saints are the children of promise, the heirs of the covenant, (Gal. iv. 22-31,) and in the covenant "heirs of salvation."—Heb. i. 14. Heirship brings to view relationship, and in what relationship are we heirs of salvation? Here it is: "The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body." The sweet psalmist of Israel said, "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."

"'Twas made with Jesus for his bride,
Before the sinner fell;

"'Twas signed, and sealed, and ratified,
In all things ordered well."

I cannot enlarge upon the blessed subject of the covenant, as my present intention is the presentation of the subject of

election. We will therefore continue our contemplation of election in relation to the elect as sinners. Our dear Savior says, "I am the good Shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine. * * * My Father gave them me. (Thine they were, thou gavest them me.)"—John xvii. 6.) Was it as a flock of lost sheep that the Father presented them to his dear Son, saying, Go seek and find and save them, and they shall be thine? It is a mistake to think upon the subject in this light. The chosen flock were Christ's own; he was their owner before they were lost in sin. Israel was loved and chosen of God; they were his people, his flock when they were in the loins of Abraham, when they were in the loins of Isaac, when they were in the loins of Jacob. How many was Jacob before he went down and suffered such bondage in Egypt? Three score and ten souls. (Deut. x. 22.) Was not Jacob his flock, his chosen, before going down into Egypt? Yes, indeed. Read the precious record in Psalm cv. 6-25. And when they came into Egypt, God did not disannul the covenant. He remembered his covenant, and their coming up out of Egypt as the purchased flock, (Exodus xv. 16,) and their possession of the promised land, was all of electing love. "Because thou hadst a favor unto them."—Psalm xlv. 3. Because he would "perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."—Deut. ix. 5. The flock was seventy before they went into Egyptian bondage, and were then the portion, the inheritance of Jehovah their Shepherd. "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee; when the Most High divided to the earth their inheritance; [Acts xvii. 26,] when he

separated the sons of Adam, [Gen. xi. 8,] he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." God gave the earth to the seventy nations. That is their portion, but the seventy souls of Jacob are the Lord's. "For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."—Deut. xxxii. 9. And the Lord is the portion of his people. The sheep were Christ's own, as the gift of the Father unto him before they went astray. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." "My people hath been lost sheep. * * * Israel is a scattered sheep. * * * But their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of Hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon."—Jer. 1. The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. Eternal justice required at the hand of the Shepherd satisfaction for the trespasses of the flock. Was Jesus an hireling, whose own the sheep were not? Was it a covenant that he should have them as his own, in his own fold, when he redeemed them? No; this is not the order. Let me repeat again, Christ stood in the relationship of Shepherd to his people before thy sinned. "What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was

lost."—Luke xv. 4-5. "My sheep." Mine before it was lost, mine when it was lost, (I had not lost it. I would not suffer the loss of it, it was precious to me. I went after it until I found it.) Mine when I found it, mine when carrying it home on my shoulders, mine now that it is home with me. Rejoice with me.

The good Shepherd would not disown, he refused not to redeem his sheep. The time set for the Shepherd to answer for the transgressions of the flock arrived. Did he then shrink back? Did he hesitate, so that he was a little behind the appointed "hour?" Glory to God! No! Never! O thy love my Savior! "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none. (John xviii. 4-9.) "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn my hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. He lay down his life for the sheep, and as the God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, so all the flock redeemed by the blood of the covenant shall be brought again from the dead. "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. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believe on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

In many other aspects the Scriptures present to us the salvation of the church by Christ, who is the Head and the Savior of the body. One in particular, is very largely dwelt upon in the epistle to the Hebrews. That the Son of God, whom the Father 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. That he as the High Priest and sacrifice, Redeemer and intercessor is our brother. He speaks of his people as "my brethren."

But I will not now lengthen out this long communication. Ponder over the first three chapters of this epistle wherein this relationship of our Savior is so gloriously revealed. I might present much more upon the subject of election, such as the evidences that we are the elect of God (1 Thess. i. 4), and the resurrection of the elect unto glory.

Could our eyes have seen the tabernacle in the wilderness, in our contemplation upon its structure, we should have seen that the middle bar overlaid with gold reached from end to end of the tabernacle. (Exod. xxvi. 28.) What is this golden bar that is the center, and reaches from end to end of election in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world? This is its name, "Only the Lord had a delight in thee to love thee."

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

1429 JACKSON ST., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Feb., 1897.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel somewhat out of place to address you in this way, for I feel unworthy to be classed among you. I have often wished that I could be able to write. But I know that in and of myself I cannot even pen down a few thoughts upon the theme of salvation, though they be ever so poor and worthless. I have spent hours and hours thinking upon the third chapter of Daniel. It seemed that more and more had been revealed to me, which caused me to wonder if any one else had such thoughts concerning it as had filled my mind. So finally I asked brother S. T. Cubbage if he had, and that if he ever felt so disposed, to pen them down for me? He has done so, and finding them a great comfort to me, I have thought that they would be to others also. I now send them for your disposal.

Yours in hope,

ANNA BEAUCHAMP.

1922 N. 31st. St., PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 29, 1896.

MISS ANNA BEAUCHAMP—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—Your request for my views upon the casting of the three Hebrew children into the fiery furnace, has by no means passed from my mind, as I have had them penciled out for a long time, and this afternoon I will try to get the letter in shape to send to you. The Bible tells us that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, &c.; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. We believe that it all has its place in the experience of the people of God, as the Lord, by his Spirit deals with them. So in looking over the history of Israel and Judah, under the various kings, we see that as a

whole, there is an important lesson in it, as well as in many individual passages and occurrences. This history is so familiar to those who have been led out of darkness into light, in its application to our experience, that I deem it needful to notice but a few things from the beginning of the book of Daniel, to the third chapter in which the subject of this letter is contained. The reign of Jehoiachin over Judah is spoken of as evil in the sight of the Lord, as was the reign of his father and his father's father before him. This evil reign must represent in some form, a phrase of our experience in which we are disobedient. This must be so because Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, (the world) came and besieged Jerusalem and Jehoiakim was given over into his hands, by the Lord. In other words, this king as a representative character is given over to captivity, to all the snares of the world in their false worship of God, as set up by their own hands, all of which is typified by the image of gold which Nebuchadnezzar set up that all might worship it. I regard the worship of his gods, as identical with the false worship of to-day. God's people now often fall into the same error, and at times are given over into their own ways, by which they are always taught an important lesson, when by the power of the Spirit of God they are again made to know that salvation is of the Lord, and that righteousness is by and through him, and comes not through anything that we can do. Babylon, as before stated, stands for the world, and is representative of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, out of which the people of God are called. The dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, and their interpretation by Daniel, show how the power and glory of man in all things come to naught before the power of God,

when it is his purpose to make his power known to men, and to show before the world that he has in their midst an elect people, each one of whom will in his time acknowledge his power, and will bow in worship to him alone, and will not participate in the false worship of the world, just as Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego, refused to worship the gods of Nebuchadnezzar, but instead worshiped the God of the Jews, according to their custom. Nebuchadnezzar took great pride in the work of his hands, but he was brought down from that power and pride, and was made to know the power of God, and to praise him, just as any other man stripped of all creature power and pride and works, must do. In this condition the Lord's people are always thrown prostrate at the feet of Jesus, begging for mercy, and there worship God in spirit and in truth. The manner in which it was made known to Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom had passed from him, is very interesting. It was brought about in the same way that is seen in all of the children of God when they are driven from the kingdom of their own power, by the power of God.

The king had a dream, and the interpretation by Daniel was indeed a manifestation of the spirit of prophecy. But at the end of twelve months, when the king was walking in the palace, and while he was worshiping the works of his own hands, the knowledge of the departure of his kingdom from him, was made known to him, with power. The king spake and said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; the kingdom

is departed from thee." Now following this we find that he was driven from men, that he dwelt with the beasts of the field, and that he did eat grass as oxen. This experience went on with him until he lifted up his eyes unto heaven, and said, "Mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him, that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation." The chapter closes thus, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." Do not we see all this fulfilled in our experience? Did we not all have a kingdom over which we were king, and from which we were driven by the word of the Lord? Yes, we were driven in, our wretchedness even from the company of men, for we no longer had pleasure in their enjoyments. We were driven where we felt to be dwelling with the beasts of the field, and to be eating grass as the oxen, for the food that man in his natural state gives to a hungry soul, is but grass, for he tries to feed that soul with himself, and all flesh is grass. This, man gives, for it is all that he can give. He does not, and he cannot, give the body of Jesus. Isaiah declares, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever." At the end of these days, Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes, and his understanding returned. And in the fullness of God's time he also opened our eyes; the eyes of our understanding, and enabled us to lift our eyes

unto heaven, and behold Jesus as our Savior. Then we could feed upon his precious truth, and the promises, and we no longer did eat grass, but Jesus gave us of his own body, which is bread from heaven.

Now what can we see in the Scripture of which you especially spoke? These three men, Shadrach, Meschack and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. These men were Jews by birth, and in experience came under the following Scripture, "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." They were of that remnant that shall be saved from idols, from the worship of golden images, and from the service of false gods. They were among those who shall receive power, and be witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and in the uttermost parts of the earth. The prophet Ezekiel also speaks of them, saying, "Yet will I leave a remnant, that ye may have some that shall escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the countries. And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me." And so, notwithstanding that these men were in captivity, they were chosen vessels of mercy, among the Jews at that time. Again, we remember that King Jehoiakim, of Judah, was given into captivity to Nebuchadnezzar, with part of the vessels of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure-house of his god. Paul says, "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the

vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory 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." In the captivity of Jehoiachin, was included vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and vessels of mercy, of which these three men were representative, in that stage of the Jews' history. Although these three men were in captivity through the evil ways and disobedience of the king, in the sight of God, yet they refused to worship according to the decree of Nebuchadnezzar, because they had faith in God that he would deliver them out of the hands of their enemies. The record of their experience which follows shows that they were vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory, in whom God intended to and did make known the riches of his grace, and the brightness of his glory. So they were bound and thrown into the burning fiery furnace. The command was given that the most mighty men in the king's army should bind them. It does not say that they were bound hands and feet, but that they were bound in their coats, and in their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments. We will presently notice the difference between these two things. What do these most mighty men of the king's army represent? To my mind they are a figure of the many temptations that come upon the people of God, the most mighty of which bind us not hands and feet, but with our garments, and cast us into a burning fiery furnace of affliction, and we are thus tried as gold, and purified as silver. These temptations do not necessarily have to be the worst forms of wickedness, speaking after the judgment of men, but the most trifling temptation, seemingly, may become the most

mighty man of the army of the king, our enemy, and may bring us into subjection to the law of sin, which is in our members. Here is the warfare going on in our members. But the mighty men were slain by the flame of the fire, and so the word of God, which is as a flame of fire, consumes everything which is enmity to him in the christian's heart. But who may abide the day of his coming? Who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap. Thus our temptations, which rise up as mighty men, to bind us in our coats, our hosen, our hats and other garments, and cast us into outer darkness, gloom and despair, shall be consumed, and removed by God's holy word, when we by faith look to him for deliverance, as the three Hebrew children did. "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me; for thou savorest not the thing that be of God, but those that be of men." These are our temptations, all of which come from the evil spirit or Satan, that dwells in us all, but which is put behind us by the word of God, the power of which is felt by faith. No man ever made such a declaration as the above, from the heart, except by faith; hence it is the word of truth, or of God. The prophet declares concerning this word, "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 send it."

Now let us notice the manner in which these three men were bound. When Jesus called Lazarus from the grave, he came forth, bound hand and feet, with graveclothes, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, "Loose him and let him go." This was a great display of the power of God,

and beautifully sets forth the manner in which those who are authorized, loose the the children of God in his own time, and at the command of God, whereby they are received into the full fellowship of the church, to worship God, not only in Spirit and in truth, but according to the gospel order as taught by our Lord and Master; being no longer bound by the fetters of the law (hands and feet). But now at the command of Jesus they arise and walk. We read however the three Hebrew children were bound in their garments, their coats, their hosen and their hats. They had already been loosed from their graveclothes, which bound them hands and feet, and had come to worship in Spirit and in truth, before the present captivity. But they had worshiped according to the custom of the Jews, which is to be regarded as a type of the order of the gospel, in the church. These men refused to worship according to the decree of Nebuchadnezzar, thus teaching us the lesson of faith, and of obedience to God. But at the same time they were in the captivity of Jehoiachin, whose deeds were evil in the sight of the Lord. They were bound in their own garments, which to my mind, means they were bound in their form of worship according to the custom of the Jews. They were prevented by Nebuchadnezzar from worshiping their own God. But they refused to worship his god, and did really worship the God of Israel, in Spirit and in truth, as was show by the spirit they manifested, the spirit of faith. When they refused to bow down and worship the golden image, they were bound and cast into a burning fiery furnace, which was literal, but which represents the affliction into which we are all cast, from time to time, during our pilgrimage in this world. Under such circumstances, we often see the faith of

our brethren manifested so strongly that we almost envy them.

There were these three men walking about in the furnace, and with them the form of the fourth, like unto the Son of God. By faith, which was given them for this ordeal, they had been assured that their God would deliver them out of the hands of their enemies, which he did by his Son, to show forth his power to the king, and that it might be left on record for the instruction and edification of his people, by his Spirit, from generation to generation. The fetters that bound these men, were quickly consumed by the fire, so that they were free, and walking in the furnace, with the Son of God. But their clothing and their flesh was unharmed, so that there was not the smell of fire upon them, and they came forth as gold, and purified as silver. The dross was all consumed, and they came forth in the strength and power of God, thus showing the riches of his grace, and that they were chosen vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto this glory. So, when we are cast into the furnace of affliction, by our sins and the lusts of the flesh, God, who is able to deliver us, sends his Son Jesus Christ into the furnace with us, and by his word, which is as a fire, our fetters are all burned off, and we again walk with Jesus by faith, and our garments have not the smell of fire upon them, and our flesh is unharmed, and God is glorified.

Now, sister Beauchamp, this is disconnected and rambling, but it is the best I can do. I would suggest that you read the whole book of Daniel up to the end of the history of Nebuchadnezzar, before reading this letter, and perhaps you may get more of my meaning.

I am your brother in hope of eternal life,
SAMUEL T. CUBBAGE.

HAMPSTEAD, Md., March 7, 1898.

MY DEAR PASTOR:—If you will still allow me to thus address you. I suppose that you will be surprised to hear from me, after so long a silence. I thought you had grown tired of my doleful letters, and as it is difficult for me to get my thoughts on paper, I decided not to make the effort again; but I heard from a friend, who came to see me, that you had been inquiring after me, and I felt a great comfort from this assurance. It verifies the words, that we should communicate often one with another. I often feel like one who is out on the hills, far away from the gates of gold. Your inquiry for me also brought to my mind that portion of the Scripture where it is recorded that they appointed brethren to care for the poor and needy and afflicted ones of the household of faith, that the ministry should not be hindered. It was last fall that my friend was here, and I have been wanting to write ever since, but there has always been something to hinder; but I have written many times in my mind, when lying down to rest. It is not likely that amid the many busy scenes of your life, you ever give the time thought, but it is twelve years since I was brought into the fold, upon the first Sunday in February, and was led down into the watery grave, at Black Rock. When I look back and think how different my life has been from what it should have been, it is a sad reflection, but still it does not take my happiness away for this time, for this is one of my bright mornings. This is why I felt like writing this morning. Although alone, I feel to be in the house of God. Many times since last summer have I been blessed with his holy presence, and made to say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. I love the Lord, as

I hope, but I want to love him better still. I do not think that you can know how I am lifted up by these blessings, after being so long in the low valley, with only just a ray of sunshine now and then to let me know that life was not extinct. It is not only bright within, but beautiful without, but the thorn in the flesh still abides. While I behold the beauties of nature, my thoughts wander to that beautiful city where the beauty and brightness will not be obscured, sorrows, and trials, and afflictions, will not come. No longer will I have to pray so often each day, O heavenly Father, keep me near unto thee, but I will rest upon his loving breast. It looks now as if it was only a little ahead, when after a few more sorrows and trials, life will be over, and I hope to reach the golden shore. Aunt Lizzie Kemp is just across the street. You know that we are the only two Baptists in this town. I have wondered if she was brought here just to be near to me. She comes over to see me right often, and I do so enjoy our little talks. She was over to see me last week. She had received a letter from sister Kelley, and it did her so much good. You know that the aged and afflicted are the ones that feel lonely and neglected. I have been finding comfort and beauty in some portions of the Scriptures of late. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered. If the Son of God must suffer to learn obedience, can I expect to be free? While asking to be brought nearer to my Savior, the thought occurred to me, And are not the trials, which you find it so hard to bear, bringing you there? I believe they are, and I pray that I may be sustained by his dear presence, as I have been for a while past. I have also found beauty in the first chapter of Ephesians. Did you ever find

special comfort in these Scriptures? When I read the obituaries in the SIGNS, I am made to wonder why I cannot be like some of those dear old folks. Christ says that what is not of faith is sin. Then truly sin is mixed with all that I do. Then I must look away from my poor self, to him who is my righteousness. He says, Because I live, ye shall live also. I will remember their sins and iniquities no more. Whom he loveth he chasteneth, but he will not withdraw his loving-kindness from them. Finally, all things work together for good to them who love God. I do not suppose that I have quoted correctly, but you will know just what I mean. My letter is quite lengthy, but you know that I have not the pen of a ready writer, and it takes up much space for me to tell the old, old story. And now, before I close, I have a favor to ask of you. I want you to publish my dear friend's letter. I have not asked her consent, but know that it will be all right. While reading her letter I wished that I were able to help her myself, but this thought just occurred to me the other day, If God's people who have an abundance of this world's goods, knew of the circumstances, they would gladly help her. Does it not seem mysterious that one who can write such lovely and comforting letters, should be deprived of the privilege of hearing the word? I suppose that you will remember that I have written you about her before. When I sent her some of my SIGNS, you know, she said that it was like a visit from an old friend, and brought her back to her childhood days, when her father would read them to her mother, while she would sew, and how much they enjoyed them. I think when you read her letter this explanation will be sufficient, and that you will not hesitate to give it a place in the

SIGNS. If she is not benefited it will certainly be pleasant to the readers.

It is two weeks since I commenced this letter. I did not feel like writing this morning, because the body is weak, but I wanted to send you Miss Chiswell's letter. Writing is a task. I feel as if I wanted to rest, and meditate on that peace which still abides with me. May your prayer be that it continue until that perfect day. Aunt Lizzie joins in love to you all. I would be glad to hear from you, if you could spare the time to write to the aged and afflicted.

Your sister,

GEORGIA D. ENGLAND.

NEW LONDON, Md., March 1, 1898.

DEAR FRIEND AND SISTER:—Your kind and sisterly letter of February 2d, was most gratefully received, and appreciated, for I knew that I did not deserve such a favor. I am such a delinquent. But it is sweet to the afflicted and oppressed to be remembered, and sympathized with. I certainly appreciate your desire to know of my state, both temporally and spiritually. This mutual fellowship is God given. It comes from above. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. The law of Christ is a law of love, "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Yes, I would be thankful if we could exchange letters as often as we think of one another. For I assure you, that even if I do not write to you very often, you are very often in my thoughts. How much I wish it was in my power to step in and make you a visit: I feel as if we should do each other good. We have both been called to pass through the deep waters of affliction, and have experienced much of sorrow and suffering, and at the same time, much joy in the

Lord. We have been able to count that it is good to be afflicted, knowing it is the hand of our loving Father, who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. We know that he knows just what is good for us. The rod may smart, but the disobedient child is surely thereby corrected. When I was a child, I used to wonder what that meant, when I would hear my dear mother sing, with tears in her voice,

"Afflictions grow not from the earth,
Nor sorrows come by chance;
For we are born to tears and woe,
A sad inheritance."

It would make me sad to think these things must be so, for of course if I was born to them, they must be. But since those sunny days of childhood I have learned some of these things by experience, but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, I have learned also that the end shall be glorious. Yea, it hath not entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, but Paul goes on to say, that God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. By your precious letter it is plain that the blessed Holy Spirit has been revealing some of these things to you. Like Jacob of old, you feel like calling the place, Bethel. Ah! my dear sister, is it not worth all the suffering which we may be called upon to endure, to have a little glimpse of the glories to be revealed, and to know that yet a little while, and we shall be where sin, and sorrow, and suffering, can no more touch us? When we shall, through the grace of God abounding to sinners, have entered that glorious city, the new Jerusalem, whose builder and maker is God, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, at the full, and per-

fect, and complete redemption, which is in the atonement of Christ.

"No sin can enter that city, you know,
And nothing that maketh a lie."

O blessed and glorious prospect, just a little ahead of us! Let us with patience wait for the glad summons.

Now, I must tell you why your dear letter was not sooner answered. I am greatly afflicted with failing eyesight. I fear I am threatened with total blindness. I have been suffering intensely for the past month or so, so much that I could not endure to look at the paper, long enough to write, without the most intense suffering. For a day or two my eyes may feel a little better, but if I strain them beyond a certain limit, they grow worse. This condition has been gradually growing upon me ever since I was hurt. I am hoping, however, for some benefit, if I can afford to try the absorption treatment. It has wrought wonders in many cases: But it will be quite an expensive matter if I do go to the sanitarium for treatment, and I think this would be the thing for me to do. But the eyesight is invaluable, and I would willingly give every cent, if I had it to give, to have my sight improved. I wish there were somebody, or something that could help you back to health. Sister joins me in christian love. The Lord strengthen and comfort you in every trial.

I remain your sincere friend,

AUGUSTA CRISWELL.

[We gladly accede to the request of our sister, to publish her friend's letter. And with it we take the liberty to publish such portions of her own letter as we think of general interest. These two letters contain the testimony of the afflicted, to the power of grace to help and sustain. Sister England has, to our personal knowledge, been an invalid for many years.

Yet she has been sustained to the present, and can bear testimony that the Lord is faithful. We remember well, and so will the members at Black Rock, the time when our sister came through deep snow, and stormy weather, many miles, to that church, in order to confess her Savior, and follow him in baptism. A total stranger when she came, yet that day she found a place in the hearts of the people, which is found only by those who know the fellowship of the Spirit. May God bless and comfort still, these two afflicted ones, and the dear aged sister Kemp, to whom she alludes, who has also been sustained greatly under heart-breaking trials.—ED.]

OPELIKA, Alabama, March 31, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—After reading your editorial in the SIGNS, upon Job fearing and serving God for naught, I want to say that I indorse the same, and as it is a subject which I think is important just at this time, in connection with what you have said, I will say, that any obedience rendered without the proper motive is but dead works, and I cannot believe will be acceptable to God. We are to worship God in spirit and in truth, and when we worship him for reward, we are not in the proper spirit of obedience. I believe that his people serve him from a principle of love, and this only is true gospel obedience.

The chief sign however is not the doing of good works, but rather the manner in which they are done. When grace is in the heart, and faith and love work together, then we can be said to do works of righteousness. Truly, by the grace of God, we are what we are, but not by our prudence, and vigilance, and foresight in view of the reward. We should insist that a man shall be blessed in his

deed. *In* keeping his commandments there is a great reward. The mere outward sign of works is by no means a certain evidence of internal christianity. For these works which are outward, are performed by different individuals, from different motives. He that performs them to gain worldly advantage, is a hypocrite. He that boasts of them, is a Pharisee. He that contends that there is merit in them, is an Arminian. He, and he only, that maintains good works because he loves them, and loves Christ, is a christian in whom there is no hypocritical guile, Pharisaic pride, or Arminian blindness. It seems as though some have run away, and gone wild on the time salvation question. When Paul asked the church at Corinth, if Christ was divided, it was a rebuke to their carnal notions. And as Christ is the salvation of the people of God, would not the question, is salvation divided? be a rebuke to those who seem not to know whereof they affirm? If my salvation, both for time and eternity, is not of grace, then I am mistaken. And to tell me it is not, confuses me, and I do not know where to look. These must be teachers of a Judaizing strip. And Paul has already met them, and set the question in a clear light. Let us take Paul rather than these teachers, who confuse rather than edify the body. The old bond woman and her doctrine can never be enjoyed by the free sons. Sometimes I think that such articles as your editorial are like the meal which the prophet put in the pot. When one who tasted the bitter gourds of the law in the pot, said, O man of God there is death in the pot, then the gospel meal counteracts that bitter taste, and destroys the evil effect. Gospel meal from true love, and faith, and indwelling grace, can counteract the evil effects of the

bitter law. Some who are taught under the law cannot tell the difference between gospel herbs, and law gourds. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.

Yours in hope,

WILLIAM LIVELY.

[PAUL speaks much about liberty from the bondage of the law. James speaks also much about liberty, but he means liberty from the bondage of sin. One is not without the other. He that is freed from the bondage of the law, is also freed from the bondage of sin. This has at all times been a hard lesson for men to learn. It has always seemed to natural men, that to say that men are in Christ freed from the law, leaves them to go on in sin. But not so. He that is not freed from the bondage of sin, has not been freed from the bondage of the law. If a man loves sin, he does not love the law, which condemns sin. He that loves the law of God, will hate sin. And he that hates sin can no longer live therein. Therefore there is a divine harmony between these great truths, freedom from sin and freedom from the law. Just so far as we are entangled in the bondage of the law, we are also entangled in the bondage of sin. O, then let us magnify grace in both deliverances; as brother Lively says. If any man shall strive to make a cloak for his sin, under the ground that he is not under the law, or if he shall strive to make a similar cloak, on the ground of God's predestination, let us not therefore deny the freedom from the law, nor the doctrine of predestination, but rather conclude that he who can seek such shelter, is yet in love with sin, and knows neither the freedom from the law, of which Paul speaks, nor the freedom from sin, of which James speaks. The doctrine is not condemned thereby,

but the man himself, who thus shows clearly that he yet loves sin. And lovers of sin are not lovers of God; are not saved from their sins, and ought not to be held in the fellowship of the church of God.—ED.]

KANSAS, III., March 23, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—From some cause I feel like writing you a few words. It may be that I am unnecessarily stirred up in my mind over things that I have been reading recently, in some periodicals. The old theory of conditionalism, and the capability of man to keep God's law, has found advocates very recently among some who claim the name of Old Baptist. How new, how strange, and yet how true, that there are some claiming the name, Old Baptist, who yet are denying some of the most fundamental principles always held dear and sacred as Bible doctrine, and adopted as Baptist faith. If God is not sovereign, if predestination with all that it means, is not taught throughout the Bible, I for one, who have read its pages carefully, and I hope prayerfully, for over fifty years, have been reading in vain. If man, in any sense whatever is given the power to use his will, and thereby can serve God, without first having God given faith, I fail to find it so recorded. Men may write and theorize lengthy and continued articles on the will of man, and his abilities, but it only tends to bewilder and confuse the dear people of God. Some are even now going into the protracted meeting practice, and then at the close of them, write and say so many were baptized at the meeting. If they do not preach Arminian doctrine, which I sometimes fear they do, it sounds much like the Arminian churches of the day, when they say so many were converted during their

protracted meeting. One such meeting is in progress in our town, conducted by the Campbellites, in which they are claiming to convert so many every night. This is on the free agency plan, and man's ability theory. Theories are of very little value, but sound doctrine is very valuable. Paul commands to hold fast the form of sound words. Let us then continue as you do, and as the SIGNS does, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Let us not have itching ears heaping to ourselves teachers of these new isms, but with Paul may we be determined not to know anything among the people save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Let us preach election, predestination and the final perseverance of the saints through grace to glory, and we are on solid ground, Christ Jesus the rock, and chief corner stone.

Your brother in hope,

JAMES M. TRUE.

481 QUINCY ST., CLEVELAND, Ohio, March 7, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—My mind has been impressed to pen a few lines for publication, that my brethren and friends may know that I have reached my new home, and although far removed from all church privileges, my desire is still for the prosperity and welfare of Zion. None but God knows what a trial it was for me to leave my church, and all the sweet privileges I there enjoyed, and come among strangers, perhaps to spend the remainder of my life. How much I desired to be reconciled to God's will. How many times I asked for strength to go forward in the path marked out for me. And here I am. Why I have been brought here I know not. It is one of the mysteries of Providence. What has kept me thus far is an abiding trust in

the unerring wisdom and love of God, though his ways and purposes are hidden from me now. But some time I may see the wisdom of it. What God does is surely right. This truth I must maintain, yea, though my path in life may prove rough, thorny and full of pain,

"My heavenly Father's arm shall be
My never failing stay,
And naught I fear while this I know,
He ordereth all my way."

A few days ago while engaged with my work these words came sweetly to my mind, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." How often, in the experience of the children of God, are they led down through this valley and shadow of death. Indeed the greater part of my journey I fear is spent in the valley. But at times I am enabled to say with the psalmist, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." I have had a few reflections upon what is meant by the rod and staff. It is presented to my mind that the rod is used in correction, or in chastisement. But one says, David said that the rod and staff comforted him. Surely there can be no comfort in chastisement. Let us see what David says in the twelfth verse of the ninety-fourth Psalm, "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." And Paul in Heb. xii. 5, says, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Herein is our comfort, in the evidence it gives us through our chastisements, that we are children. The eleventh verse of the same chapter reads as follows, "Now 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." Now the staff, as I understand it, is a support. It is something to lean upon. And what is it that the child of grace rests upon? Is it anything that he has done, or ever can do, to merit eternal life? Does he look for justification through the deeds of the body, or of the law? No, he looks alone to Jesus as his righteousness and redemption. He looks to a finished and complete salvation for the people of God, wrought out on Calvary by the shedding of the precious blood of Jesus. He rests upon the evidence that he receives through his tribulations, and chastisements, and afflictions. In Isaiah, forty-eighth chapter, we read, "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

Now, in conclusion I will say, if any of the dear children of God, who trust alone in Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, are passing this way, they will find a warm welcome at our home. Will also be glad to receive letters from any of the dear ones.

Yours in the hope of life eternal,
JENNIE CROSS.

WAVERLY, Pa., March 3, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find a letter from sister Attie Curtis, full of praise to Almighty God. If you have space you may publish it for the benefit of the family. Such letters will not harm the cause of Christ.

Your brother,

D. M. VAIL.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, Jan. 2, 1898.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—MY DEAR BROTH-

ER:—I hope that you are enjoying that peace which Jesus gives, and which the world cannot take away. This is the time when we are wishing our friends a happy New Year. I feel like writing to you, and hope that with earthly happiness, God has given you also a view of Jesus, and made you to realize that to know him is life eternal. The Lord has blessed me with a long season of rejoicing in the work of that redemption which Jesus finished. I expect that you have read my letters to Elders Beebe and Chick, about the meetings, but somehow it is all so fresh and sweet in my mind to-day, that I want to talk with you about it. The truth was preached in its purity, and it has been the Lord's will to lead my mind to dwell upon it, as the days and months have passed away. The name of Jesus is so precious to me, I cannot hear it exalted too high, neither can I exalt it as I would like to. I have not been to the meeting since October, but the two meetings that month were so rich and full that there is no room for me to complain if I must now wait awhile. The conference meeting, the preaching and the communion, were such delightful seasons to me, words cannot express the joy which was given me. I have felt many times a great desire to have a talk with you, but each day has brought its work and cares, so that I could not seem to find the time for the pleasure of writing you; for it is a pleasure to speak to those of like precious faith, of the exercises of our minds. I have often found relief when speaking of the darkness, coldness and distress, of my mind. If I had never been in the depths, how could I have known of the joy of his salvation, sung the song of deliverance, and been given the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ? All the way that we are led is

the right way to honor and glorify the God of our salvation. The Lord leads his people in a way that they do not know, and it is always in paths they have not known, so that the song in their hearts is always praise unto God. It cannot be any other song, for we are led in such a way that we have no confidence in the flesh, and our rejoicing is in Christ Jesus. Do you not think, my dear brother, that those who have been brought into a knowledge of the truth, and have been made to see what Jesus is unto us as our Savior, our hope of salvation, bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, rising from the dead, and living for evermore, and that in him we are complete, and that without him we can do nothing, are never found questioning the ways of the Almighty, nor disturbed for fear that our God will be proved the author of sin? There is such an abiding trust in God felt in the heart that we feel sure that what he does is always right; he has declared the end from the beginning. There can be no way possible for anything to take place contrary to his will. It seems to me that it can only be of the flesh, this claiming that God predestinated the good things, and had nothing to do with what we call evil things. I can only say with Paul, "But I have not so learned Christ." A God of all power has been my defense. A God of all wisdom has been my song. His ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. Nothing can be added to his works, and nothing taken from them. I do rejoice in the assurance that what he does is always right.

I did not think that I should write in this way when I began this letter, still these things have been in my mind so that the power and wisdom of God have appeared beautiful to me. In all my experience his power shines forth, and in

all my path his wisdom can be seen. I want to hear from you very much, and hope that this letter will stir you up to write me a few lines, if nothing more. We all send love and fellowship for you, and all the saints whom you meet. I hope I have written of the things you have known, and testified of the things which you have seen. May we be made submissive to the will of God, is the desire of your unworthy sister in hope,

ATTIE A. CURTIS.

EDINBURG, Miss., April 5, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Inclosed find two dollars for our subscription for this year, as I feel like we could not well do without it, as it comes regularly, full of good news from the dear saints from different parts of the country, without which we never would hear of. It is so comforting and cheering to read such communications and letters from such able writers as write for the dear old SIGNS. I cannot find words to express my appreciation of the SIGNS, and the way it is conducted, and the doctrine it contains. I have been reading it for a long time, and have read the old editorials written fifty years ago, and it has the same old sound as far as I can see. There can nothing suit me better than the doctrine it advocates on predestination. May the Lord keep and direct, as he has heretofore, the dear editors and correspondents, that they may be enabled to continue to write so ably.

As ever yours,

A. J. RICHARDSON.

DOVER, Mo., April 19, 1898.

IF any of the loved ones in Zion should travel this way I would receive them with open arms.

ELLEN F. STARTZMAN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

NUMBERS XXXII. 32.

"AND be sure your sin will find you out."

These are very solemn and awful words. The circumstances attending their utterance by Moses were these, Israel had now finished their journey in the wilderness. They were about to enter into their inheritance in the promised land, but the land was full of enemies who must be conquered and driven out before them. A sore warfare awaited them. Now, as they stand upon the borders of the promised land, soon to cross over Jordan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, seeing that the land upon this side of Jordan was good for pasturage for their flocks and herds, came to Moses asking that they might have their inheritance here, and not on the other side of the river. Moses replied, Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here. This land was already conquered, and conquered by the arms of all the tribes. Should they now sit down here, and leave the rest of their brethren to still fight for the possession which should be theirs on the other side of the river? He also reminds them that to do so would be to discourage those who should go over to the conflict. He reminds them that thus did their fathers when from Kadesh Barnea he sent them to see the

land. They brought back such a report as discouraged the people, and the anger of the Lord was therefore kindled against them, and he swore that none of those who came out of Egypt should ever enter the land, who were from twenty years old and upward. He goes on to recount that the Lord made them wander forty years in the wilderness. And now, he says, Ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men to augment yet the fierce anger of the Lord toward Israel; for, if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people. Then they came to him, and promised they would go over with the rest and help them until their enemies were conquered, and then they would return and dwell in this place. Moses gave them this permission, but said that if they did not fulfill this promise, they should have sinned against God, "and be sure your sin will find you out." This is the narrative in brief of the event which gave rise to these words.

The truth taught here is in no wise different from that which is taught all through the Scriptures. In Genesis iv. the Lord said to Cain, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." That is, your sin is ever ready to meet you. It shall, like a wild beast, leap upon you at any time. It is the same truth, that Paul taught in the following words, "What a man sows, that shall he reap. If ye sow to the flesh, ye shall of the flesh reap corruption." The sin of the brethren of Joseph met them when they were face to face with him in their distress in Egypt. Judah said, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." There is no truth more clear than this. In some way, sin always finds out the sinner, and he reaps his reward. There are some things

in the text, and in its connection, to which we wish to call attention.

First. Moses said that in doing as he had said, that is, in neglecting to aid their brethren, they should sin against God. It was not in the judgment of Moses, against their brethren that they should sin, but against God. All sin is against God. Thus David felt, when he had been brought to a conviction of his sin, in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba. In response to the searching words of the prophet of the Lord, "Thou art the man," he said, "I have sinned." And in that wonderful confession in the fifty-first Psalm he said, "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." He did not, under the sense of the enormity of his guilt, say, I have sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba, or against my fellow-man, in any way, but against thee. The anguish of his soul was deeper in this view of the matter by far, than it could have been had he thought only of the harm done to his faithful captain and his wife. The vice in which he had engaged, and the crime of which he was guilty, was all swallowed up by the force of the far greater thing, sin against God. So Moses, in the text, and in the connection, does not lay stress upon the wrong which their brethren might suffer at their hands, but solely upon the sin against God. The wrong which we do to our fellow-man may be made good again, but we cannot make our sin good. Thanks be to God, there is one who has paid even that debt, the sin against God. But there are some reflections concerning this, which we wish to present. The whole testimony of the Scripture, and of our own experience, is to this effect, the one who suffers the wrong is not to be pitied so much as the one who willfully does the wrong. Sin is

a far more fearful thing than any other thing can be. He that observes lying vanities, forsakes his own mercies. The man who does his brother wrong, injures himself still more. Thus the Savior said, that it were better that one should be drowned in the midst of the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones which believed in him. His care was not so much for the little ones who believed in him, and who suffered the wrong, as for that disciple, who might be led under the dictates of the flesh, to do his brother wrong. Such an one should find that it is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Thus David felt when he made his confession. We may be sure that the wrong against his faithful captain seemed none the less, because the sin against God seemed so great. He who fears to sin against God, will fear to wrong his fellow-man. It is impossible that he should do the one without the other. The wrong against our fellow-man may endure but for a moment, but who shall limit the duration of the sin against God? The one may be measured by a little time, or by the bounds of its results against the man who is injured, or we may make reparation, but who shall atone for his sin against God? As love to God must always be accompanied by love to our fellow-men, so an abhorrence of sin will be accompanied by an abhorrence of wrong against our fellow-men. The one is not and cannot be without the other. There is also another side to this matter, which is most important. He who suffers the wrong, will be helped by remembering this fact that all sin is against God. It will serve to make him patient and submissive, and prevent him from revenging himself, since the wrong-doer must appear before the Judge of all, against whom he has sinned.

The heavenly Father may, and will, make up to him who has suffered the wrong, in other ways, more than he has lost, yea, he may make the very wrong itself the medium of still greater blessings. Out of it he may cause to grow, more patience, and trust, and faith, and more of the spirit of forgiveness, but for him who has done the wrong, and so sinned against God, there remains the rod of his displeasure. There also is this in it, viz: the wrong rebounds to the hurt of his own soul. He reaps the very thing he has sown. He has sown the wind, and he shall reap the whirlwind. A child in a family, stronger than his brother, may rob him of some gift which his father has bestowed upon him, but the child must not seek revenge; he must not take the case into his own hand. The father will settle all that. He who has robbed his brother, has sinned against the common father. He must settle the whole matter. He can make up to the weaker brother more than he has lost, but who shall make up to the wrong-doer the smiles of his father, which he has for a time lost? O! if we, when we feel we are wronged by another, could but remember that God sees it all, and that he will visit the transgression with the rod, while he will bind up the heart that is broken, should we not feel very different from what we sometimes do? Where, in view of these things, would be room for any spirit of revenge, or malice, or resentment? Would not all this be swallowed up by the greatness of our pity for the one who has done the wrong, seeing that he has fallen into the hands of the living God, on account of his sin?

Thus Moses would put the matter upon the high ground of sin against God. If this reflection will not avail to prevent a man from doing the wrong, surely nothing

else will. In this view of the matter, both he who has done the wrong, and he who has suffered the wrong, must fall at the feet of the Lord of all, and leave themselves with him. How quickly would strife cease between brethren everywhere, could this be remembered. Thus Jesus, our Lord and life, and example, committed himself to him who judgeth righteously. And he was heard in that he feared. The whole spirit of what we have been trying to say, is summed up in the prayer, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Also in the prayer of the first martyr, Stephen, "Lord Jesus lay not his sin to their charge." A second thing which seems to us to be taught in the text is this, no man can live to himself. The people of God cannot withdraw themselves to themselves, and think alone of their own interests, without committing sin against God. The tribes of Israel were taught that they must stand together in mutual love, and helpfulness. They were one people. It is true to-day, that if one member suffer, all suffer in their measure, with that member. So if one member be wrapped up in himself, and so that he has ease and prosperity, it matters little about how others fare, the harm will not only fall upon him, but upon all the body. Because of the false report of a few, who brought back discouraging news of the land to which the tribes were journeying, all Israel suffered in the wilderness. And so here, Moses tells them that if they do not go over to the battle with the rest, they all will be discouraged, and the anger of God will fall upon them. How close is the union which our God has established among his people. It is compared to the union between the members of the body. The church at Laodicea was in this condition. She said that she

was rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing, and as she needed nothing, it is evident that she also cared little for the love and fellowship and help of her kindred in Christ; and that help which she needed not, in her estimation, she would not bestow upon her brethren in their need. And the Lord said that he would spue them out of his mouth. This is as true to-day as it has ever been. It is a sin against God, when we do not feel a readiness to bear each other's burdens. To bear each other's burdens, is to fulfill the law of Christ. This law is love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. If we do not as churches, and as individuals, find our hearts going out to our brethren in their need; if when we are well supplied for instance with the word of the gospel, we do not think of those who are destitute of such privileges, and stand ready to minister help to them, we are guilty of sin against God. Love for God, and for each other, will solve all this, and solve it upon the right side. If we love enough, the rest will follow. It would be no task for these two tribes to go over and help the rest in their warfare, if they loved God and the rest of the tribes, as well as they did themselves.

Moses accompanies the word of commandment, with a word of warning. If they should not do this, then they might be sure that their sin should find them out. Its results should be sure. All sin reacts upon the guilty one. We cannot hide from the consequences of our sins. That which is evil, indulged in and followed, will be found to eat into one's own soul, as does a canker. It will abide there, and lead to still more ungodliness. We may forget the sin, but it has not forgotten us, and will lie in wait for us, and meet us at our own door. We have often thought of the peculiarity of the language

of the apostle: What a man sows, that very thing he shall reap. He may reap sorrow for his sins. It is sure to be so, and it is well when it is so, but he shall reap more than this, he shall reap just what he has sown. From sowing the wind, he shall reap a mightier wind; the reaping shall be the whirlwind. The evil that we do fastens itself upon our own hearts. The little foxes that seem so small, soon grow to be large foxes. If we are careless toward our brethren, in their need in any way, we shall grow poor in soul. Our sin will find us out, in poverty, and leanness and barrenness. Who has not found it so in his own experience? Ungodliness leads to more ungodliness. One begins to neglect his privileges in the house of God. How rapidly this grows, and how many companion evils come into that soul, and abide there. The sin has found them out. This comes in the way of that discipline which the Lord holds in his own hand, and which he visits upon the disobedient. This is the rod, and these are the stripes, with which he visits them. It is their sin finding them out. Such discipline is good for the disobedient child, but he has this also for his strength, that he be not overborne with sorrow. His redemption is secure. Though he has the rod, yet it is the rod of love. The blood of Jesus Christ has put away all sin: therefore his loving-kindness he will not take away from him, nor from any in him. Their sin shall indeed find them out, but so shall redemption find them out, yea, it has already found them out, and none can perish who are embraced in this everlasting covenant. We will leave the subject. The field is very broad; we have but glanced at it.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS X. 26.

WE understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As he had told them in chapter sixth, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance, according to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained farther sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour—what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, "They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." What then shall be devoured by the "judgment and fiery indignation," which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? "The adversaries." The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly be devoured; but says the apostle, "We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, "But

we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? and even if he is not, he feels afraid that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath committed far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and if judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a christian, under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it reads thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is certain, however, that he will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

HEBREWS II. 15.

WE confess that we have no special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of the flesh, for Paul says, Romans ix. 7, 8, "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." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations."—Romans iv. 16, 17. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his "many sons," which he was to bring to glory, and for whom, "by the grace of God he tasted death." And they are also in this connection called "the children," and "his brethren." These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was

against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for every one of them. And thus was he, through death, to 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.

In this work of redemption and deliverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground they receive the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. And they are exhorted to "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage."—Gal. v. 1. The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The object therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and under the law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisoners are brought out of their prison houses. And there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. viii.)

"Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. v. 28.) "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."—Isa. lii. 2.

"IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD?"

JEREMIAH VIII. 22.

FROM infancy we have been in the habit of hearing this passage referred to as implying a full provision in the gospel to meet the necessities of the Lord's people, and the Gileaditish physician has been supposed to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. That there are healing virtues in the gospel for all the complaints of God's people, there can be no doubt, and that Christ is a great, good and infallible Physician, is equally certain, but that the passage refers to the gospel as the balm of Gilead, and to Christ, as the Physician there, is to our mind by no means so clear.

The striking language of our text is used in a connection which seems rather to forbid that application of it. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord charged Israel with gross idolatry, and threatened to visit upon them the severest judgments, to break them up and scatter them as a nation, and surely to consume them. Under these circumstances the prophet Jeremiah takes up a lamentation over them, saying, "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me." And then he demands, "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" Balm was one of the productions of Gilead, and an article of commerce, from the time that Jacob sent balm to Egypt in exchange for corn; it possesses a medicinal property for soothing and healing diseases which are common to the children of men, and skillful physicians were in the habit of prescribing it successfully to their patients, for physical diseases. But those medicines which hu-

man science can understand, prepare and apply successfully in natural diseases, fail entirely to effect a cure for the depravity of the human heart, and are equally abortive in averting the judgments of God. The children of Israel, in their wicked departure from the Lord, like all Arminians, had relied on their own resources for comfort and deliverance from afflictions, and now in the time of their calamity, the prophet demands of them the reason why the hurt of the daughter of his people is not healed? Why they have not applied their balm, or why their physician had failed? How natural it is for us, when left to our own wisdom, to conclude that we have within our reach some power by which to secure the favor of God, some balm to cure us of the leprosy of our depraved nature, some medical skill to direct us in the application of our medicines, to make them effectual. But when taught by the Spirit to feel that we are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon us, we soon lose all confidence in our own balm, and in the skill of all human physicians. Miserable comforters are they all, and they are all physicians of no value. Then the text, Jer. xlvi. 11, seems more applicable to us: "Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured." Thus are we taught to discard all our own plans, and schemes, balms and physicians, and being completely cut off from all our own reliances, to fall down before the Lord, exclaiming, "Lord, save, or I perish." There certainly is no balm short of the Savior's precious blood, nor any physician that can apply the healing medicine effectually to us, but Jesus Christ.

"There is but one Physician
That can cure a sinsick soul."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Nov. 1, 1855.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder A. B. Francis, April 6th, 1898, Mr. Wm. N. Hearn, of Salisbury, Md., and Miss Augusta C. Hastings, of Delmar, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Rachel Hill departed this life January 5th, 1898, aged 65 years, 4 months and 2 days. She was the wife of Robert Hill; daughter of Elisha and Sophia Reynolds. She was stricken with paralysis, on Saturday, and died on Wednesday, the 5th, at 9 o'clock. She quietly fell asleep in Jesus. She left one son. She was of a lovely disposition, and loved to talk on spiritual things. She was a member of Harford church; baptized by Elder Wm. Grafton, several years ago.

HER SISTER.

DIED—At her home in Flanagan, Livingston Co., Ill., April 9th, 1898, sister **Mary Richardson Moulds**, in the 62d year of her age. Sister Moulds was born in Huntingtongshire, England, Oct. 20th, 1836. Her parents came to America with their family in 1853. She was married to brother Wm. Moulds, Sept. 25th, 1856. Received into the Primitive Baptist church twenty-one years ago this summer. They had lived together in the same vicinity for thirty-nine years. Sister Moulds has been quite a sufferer, and in delicate health nearly all her life, and for the last three years and a half has been a great sufferer. At that time she suffered a stroke of paralysis, and never after was able to walk. Her faithful husband had to lift her from her bed into a reclining chair daily, and in all her suffering she was surely a model of patience. In all that time she was never heard to murmur one word, but was of a peaceful, quiet spirit. "Thy will be done," seemed to be present much of the time with her. But she is gone to rest, leaving her husband, one sister and two brothers, with many other relatives, to sorrow, but not as others without hope.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to a large congregation at the time, from the words, "I am the resurrection and the life."

JOHN DOWNEY.

DEPARTED this life, March 31st, at her home, Treadwell, N. Y., our dear sister, **Mary H.**, wife of Hermon **Brownson**, aged 69 years. Deceased was the daughter of Francis and Prudence O'Connor, who have been dead some years, but whom many of the brethren and sisters, as well as ministers, can still remember as faithful, devoted followers of their Lord and Master Jesus Christ. Was united in marriage to Hermon Brownson, in 1852. For more than thirty years our sister had been in feeble health, more or less, at times brought very low, but would recover

again so as to enjoy quite comfortable health, though not strong, could attend to her household duties, and attend the meetings of her choice, though ten miles distant, and over hills. At the commencement of her last illness, about six months ago, we fondly hoped she might recover, but her disease had become chronic, (gastritis) and baffled the skill of the physicians, and notwithstanding all that loving friends could do for her recovery and comfort, she suffered more than pen can describe, and steadily failed, and wasted away, till but a mere skeleton, when the end came. As we stood and viewed her emaciated form, and thought of her sufferings, we could not wish her back. We feel assured that our loss is gain to her; that she has entered into the fruition of that hope which was as an anchor to her soul, sure and steadfast. Sister was given to hope early in life; was baptized by Elder David Mead, and united with the Middletown Old School Baptist church when only twelve years of age. About twenty years ago, as nearly as I can recollect, she took a letter and united with the Primitive Baptist church of Otego, N. Y., where her membership still remained at the time of her death. While she ever pleaded her unworthiness, her chief delight was in the assemblies of the saints, where she was found when health and circumstances permitted. Elder Bundy, according to her wishes, was called upon to conduct the funeral services, but on account of ill health was unable to attend, consequently their own minister at home, (N. S.) where the other members of the family have their membership, endeavored to speak words of comfort to the mourning ones. She leaves to mourn their loss, a devoted, sorrowing husband, two daughters and one son, beside brothers and sisters, with numerous other relatives and friends, for she was of a loving, genial disposition, and made friends with young and old.

May the Lord grant us all needed grace.

HARRIET N. HARKNESS.

Archibald Colstand Spears died recently at Arlington, Texas, at the good old age of 90 years. He was born in the State of Georgia, on the Savannah River, near Augusta, in 1807. At the age of eight years he lost his father. He was married in his twentieth year, to Miss Elizabeth Nelson, with whom he lived a happy life until Feb. 20th, 1886, when she died, in the triumphs of faith. They had eleven children—seven sons and four daughters, the sons all growing to manhood, and two of the daughters to womanhood, the other two having died in early childhood. In 1828 he was baptized into the fellowship of Poplar Springs church, in what was then Stuart County, but what is now Webster Co., Ga. Afterwards a church was organized in his house, and was named by his wife, Poplar Springs church, and bears that name to this day. In 1837 he was ordained deacon, having served the church as clerk for several years prior to

his ordination. He represented his church as messenger in the Association for nineteen years in succession. In the "split" on missions, in 1834, he sided with what are known as the Primitive Baptists. In 1854 he removed to Alabama. He lost four sons in the war. In 1865, immediately at its close, he moved to Limestone Co., Texas. In 1866 he moved to Johnson Co., Texas, and in 1870 he and his wife joined the Primitive Baptist church near Alvarado, Texas, where his membership was at the time of his death. Prior to the death of his wife, they visited the churches of their faith, far and near, and were well received and highly honored by their brethren wherever they went. For the last few years of his life he has been residing with his children, until Sept. 5th, 1897, when he breathed his last without a struggle, in the full triumphs of the christian's faith. In his life we have a model of that sweet spirit which should characterize every child of grace. He did not become childish and hard to please, as is so common with people who attain a great age, but was docile, gentle and obedient, retaining his mental faculties in a very marked degree, and was unusually vigorous and active for one of his age. He was born in June, 1807; married in 1827; died in 1897.

A. C. SPEARS.

DALLAS, Texas.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Harford Church, beginning on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1898, (18th, 19th and 20th).

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren. Those coming by way of Baltimore, will take train at North Avenue Station, Baltimore & Lehigh (or Narrow Gauge) Railroad, on Tuesday before at 4 o'clock p. m. Conveyances will meet passengers at Long Green, Baldwin, Fallston and Forest Hill, to convey them to places of entertainment, and to the meeting.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, Pa., on May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1898.

Those coming on Tuesday afternoon by Pennsylvania Railroad, will go to B. F. Coulter's, 1910 N. Twenty-second St., (or to places where they are acquainted.) Those coming by Reading Railroad will get off at Columbia Ave. Station, and go to Mrs. Margaret Craven's, 1735 N. Seventh St. All who come on Wednesday morning will walk from Broad St. Station and the Reading Terminal to the place of meeting, southeast corner Broad and Cherry Sts., between Arch and Race Sts., (Odd Fellows' Temple, entrance on Broad St.) All lovers of the truth are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

B. F. COULTER, Church Clerk.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J., commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1898, and continue three days.

The brethren and friends coming either from Philadelphia, New York or Trenton, can reach Hopewell on Wednesday a. m., in time for the beginning of the Association. Those who come on the afternoon trains, on Tuesday before, will be met and cared for by the friends here. Those who come on Wednesday will come direct from depot to the place of meeting.

A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren generally, to attend with us at that time.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the New Vernon Church, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1898, and continue three days.

A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends. Those coming by way of the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. from the east, will be met at Howells, on the arrival of the Orange County Express, which leaves Chambers St., New York, at 4:30 p. m., on Tuesday, June 7th. Those coming from the west on the same road, will take the train leaving Port Jervis at 3:30 p. m., on Tuesday, and stop at Howells. Those coming on Wednesday morning by the same road, will be met at Howells, on the arrival of the Milk Train from the east, at 7:02 a. m., and from the west on the arrival of the Mountain Express, at 8:15 a. m.

Those coming from the north, on the Ontario & Western R. R., will be met at Winterton, on the arrival of the Milk Train, 5:34 p. m., on Tuesday.

HIMAN S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

M E E T I N G S .

THE Mill Creek church, of Burlington, Hamilton Co., Ohio, will hold a two days meeting on the third Saturday and following Sunday, May 21st and 22d, 1898, beginning at 10 a. m. each day. A cordial invitation is extended to those desiring to meet with us.

WM. SATER, Clerk.

E R R A T A .

PLEASE correct mistakes in the obituary of Elder F. Odom, in the SIGNS of March 1st, present volume. First, his father's name was Kinching, not Reeching; second, he married Miss Eveline Hatcher, not Eeline; third, brother Polk's initials are K. F., not R. T.

F. LODEN.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1898.

NO. 11.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW.—REV. XXI.

NUMBER SEVEN.

THE STREET.

“AND the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.”

If one part of this sublime vision might be regarded as more important than another, we have now reached that part, for here I understand to be presented the way of salvation, and all the walk of the christian, which is “by faith and not by sight.” It was while meditating upon this street many years ago that I became convinced that the city here described was not intended to be understood as a literal city. The mind cannot entertain the thought of a city existing literally of such unexampled dimensions, in which there is only one street, any more than it can entertain the thought of a man as existing upon the earth out of whose mouth goes a sharp, two-edged sword. Regarded as literal existences, such things would show no usefulness, nor any meaning, either naturally or spiritually. Where would the one street be placed in a city of such great size to be of use to the in-

habitants, and not to allow some much more of its advantages than others? If in the middle of the city some of the people would be six thousand furlongs from it. If at the surface of the ground on which the city is built, as in literal cities, some of the inhabitants would be 1,500 miles above the street. Nor can we imagine how it would be with those in that large portion of the city away from any street or lane. If we regard it as literal in one particular, we must in all, and then these questions will necessarily arise in the mind, and these incongruities will appear.

But when we regard all that appeared to John in this revelation as emblematic, signifying to him the spiritual things of the kingdom of God, then the incongruities disappear, and we see a beautiful and harmonious meaning in all the wonderful description. This city represents the gathering of the people of God unto Shiloh, which is one of the names given to Jesus, and means “tranquil,” “a place of rest.” “Unto him,” said Jacob, “shall the gathering of the people be.”—Gen. xlix. 10. This gathering of the Lord’s redeemed in the gospel day by the dear Savior unto himself, as their everlasting

dwelling-place, is often foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures in many different ways. In their gathered state, as thus foretold and described in prophecy, they are spoken of and spoken to as Zion, Jerusalem, "the city of the great King," "the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." In one place it is declared that in the gospel day "the name of the city shall be, The Lord is there."—Ezekiel xlvi. 35. The manner in which the inhabitants come to that city is variously described according to the point of truth which is especially presented. In one place it is said, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them." In another place they are said to "flow unto it." Again, it is said, "They shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." Again, they are said to have been "born in her." The psalmist says, "Jerusalem is builded as a city which is compact together." In all the many places where Zion is thus spoken of in her glory, the people of God are meant in their gospel state, as "risen with Christ," and established in him, and seeking those things which are above, (the law) where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. They are said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. 20-22. This is that city "which is builded compact together." The saints, who have been called by grace, and have been given to believe in Jesus, have now come, in these gospel days, unto that Mount Zion so gloriously spoken of in prophecy, 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, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—Heb. xii. 22-24. This is the gospel church in its perfect state, as presented in the New Testament Scriptures; and unto this perfection in doctrine and order, in walk and conversation, the saints, when directed by the Spirit of Christ, strive together to attain. They reach forth to it, and press toward it, as "the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Nothing to them is so attractive, so valuable, so precious, so greatly desired, as this perfection in Christ, in which it was the aim of the apostles in all their preaching, warnings and instructions, to present every man to whom they ministered. (Col. i. 28.)

To John this same city, in all the perfection and glory which the prophets foretold, and which the apostles presented in the commandments and ordinances of Christ, was shown as coming down from God out of heaven. The church is here shown to eyes of faith in her perfect gospel state, and all the preparation of the saints thus presented in their perfection, as a bride adorned for her husband, is shown in the emblem as of God, as being the workmanship of God, with no possible help from man in the least degree. The same thing is declared by the same apostle in his epistle, "Ye are of God, little children."

"The city was pure gold, like unto clear glass." Temples, places of public worship, add much to the beauty of an earthly city, and are generally built of

costly material, but no temples were here, "For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." Are we to think of houses built of gold? A house of suitable breadth and length to compare with the height would occupy the whole space of the city. But no houses are spoken of, nor are any needed, for he who is the temple is also the sure dwelling places of all his people. All the beauty of worship, and all the home comforts, shelter and rest that temples and houses can suggest, are assured by the very name of the city, "The Lord is there."

"The Lord says of his people, "I will try them as gold is tried."—Zech. xiii. 9. Peter speaks of the trial of their faith as "much more precious than of gold that perisheth." Gold is one of the perishing things of earth, but it is the most precious of all metals, and well represents the faith of God's elect, which is the most valuable and essential of the blessings which belong exclusively to our time state. Faith ends with our mortal life, yet "without faith it is impossible to please God." By faith we know Christ, and come to him, and dwell together with all the saints in him. By faith we experience his salvation, by faith are justified, and "live the life that we now live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us." By faith we experience righteousness in Christ. By faith every "two or three" are gathered together in the name of Jesus. One may be with the saints in body, and yet not be gathered with them in that blessed name; and one may be on a sick bed, or in prison, and yet by faith may be sitting together with the assembly of the saints in heavenly places in Christ. All spiritual knowledge, and all spiritual experience, are by faith; therefore, "Faith is the substance of things

hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Here then is the pure gold. It is the faith by which we live in Christ, and dwell together in him, and hear the preaching of his gospel to profit, and obey his commands, and walk in his ordinances, and sing praises to his holy name. All that pertains to the church, the city of God, the bride, the Lamb's wife—all the substance of it in this mortal state, is faith, which is pure gold, like unto clear glass. The things of faith are clear and plain to faith. "It is all plain to him that understandeth." There are darkness and confusion in our carnal minds, but there is no darkness or confusion in the revelations of faith. The Son of God gives the understanding by which he is known, and those who know him are in him. (1 John v.) To this understanding the things of Jesus are clear. Our natural reasoning about our spiritual exercises may be wrong, but our *feeling* will be right. Concerning the revelation of these things to our souls we are babes, not wise and prudent and able to do for ourselves, but helpless and dependent, and resting in Christ.

And for all this great assembly, this multitude that no man can number, gathered out of all nations, there is but one way in which to walk, only one street in all this vast city. "I am the way," said Jesus. "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him," said the apostle. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," the Son of God declared. As it is by faith that all of the redeemed come to Zion through Jesus Christ, the highway of holiness, so "by faith, and not by sight," they walk in him in that holy city. There is no other street, no other "path of righteousness," for any inhabitant of Zion, but Jesus seen

by faith. And this is the "pure gold, as it were transparent glass." So clear and transparent is the pure truth of Jesus revealed to faith, that the wayfaring men, though fools, as all of the redeemed are, shall not err therein. No superior natural powers or learning are necessary in order to make good progress in this golden street. The best walkers here are those who feel the weakest, poorest, most ignorant and unworthy of all, the most like little, helpless babes. The wise and prudent of this world do not find this blessed way; it is revealed to babes. What we search out by our natural powers is full of contradiction and confusion, and never brings true assurance and peace to the soul. What we receive by faith is pure, free from fleshly taint, and transparent as glass, and brings quietness and assurance forever. It is not the wisdom of this world, but that wisdom which is from above, whose "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

This emblematic city differs essentially from cities built upon the earth, as it is intended to represent a church and kingdom which is diverse from all earthly kingdoms, and to present and illustrate laws and ordinances, and principles of government and union, differing from those of any earthly nation or society. As the river that flows from the throne of God and the Lamb within this city differs from all earthly rivers, having streams issuing from it to reach and make glad all of its inhabitants, so this one street, instead of running directly from one extremity of the city to the opposite extremity, leaving some of the inhabitants far from it, is so arranged and extended by the infinite power and loving wisdom of God as to be equally near to every one of the redeemed, reaching to

each of the dwellers in the great city, and leaving none without a way especially provided for his own use and comfort.

The Lord said by the prophet, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness. The redeemed shall walk there."—Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. This one high way of holiness, which is Jesus Christ, becomes a special way to every poor, trembling soul, who feels utterly unworthy to walk with the saints in the King's highway, as though it were another way provided by the tender and merciful Lord especially for himself. But when the Lord has brought the poor soul forth out of sin and darkness in this special way, by what appears as a special provision of grace for himself as the chief of sinners, and a special application of the word to him as the poorest and least of all saints, he is surprised and delighted to find that all of the redeemed are here, and that instead of walking by himself in a special way of holiness provided for himself, he is walking in the King's highway, the only way ever opened for sinners, a new and living way of access unto the Father, where all the ransomed family of God have ever walked, and shall forever walk, in the light of his countenance.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 25, 1898.

STATE ROAD, Del., April, 1898.

BRETHREN EDITORS:—We have just been having a rather special meeting here in Wilmington, one object of which was to call attention to the travel and experience of this church during the forty years past, throughout which time I have served continuously as pastor. We had a two days, Saturday and Sunday meeting, (the first Sunday in April,) and had Elders

Durand and Meredith with me. In addition to two discourses from each of them, we had a brief sketch of the travel of the church during the above mentioned forty years. The travel of gospel churches is always more or less eventful, but it seldom falls to the lot of any church to pass through as many and as sore conflicts as this one has. I have been requested to write a sketch of this travel for the SIGNS. If it is done at all it will devolve upon me, as the generation of forty years ago have mostly passed away. As I was raised and grew up seventy-five miles away, I knew nothing of this church, not even of its location. Shortly after my ordination, which was in 1856, I received a letter from two of the sisters in this church, urging me to make them a visit. As soon as I could I arranged to do so. They had for some years been a divided house, and were now in considerable distress. A preacher by the name of Earle had been employed by them at a fixed salary. He was not an Old School Baptist, but was connected with one of the New School or Missionary churches of this city. This church had withdrawn from the Delaware Association some years before, and was not connected with any association, nor in condition to be connected with any. Mr. Earle had gathered several in, I think about fourteen, whom I found to be not in sympathy with the others. They all knew what I was, and they not only gave me a unanimous call, but they told me that they had not been as well united on any one man in thirty years. The Earle party took no part in this action, nor with the action that was understood to be connected with it, viz: to go back to the Delaware Association. The Earle party at once withdrew, and we never saw or heard any more of them. Their preaching had cost

them much more than it was worth to them, and they were still owing what they were not well able to pay. They had been in disorder and confusion long enough, we might suppose, to learn the value of good order and peace. I accepted their call, and it looked to me then like an open door to us to go on in the enjoyment of spiritual health and prosperity. The association was invited to hold her next session with this, Wilmington church, and the invitation was accepted, and the association kindly entertained. So far all was going well. But now, and on for some years, I shall have a different story to tell. We had four male members, and they every one proved to be unstable. They did not have any idea of order. If we had had one sound, reliable man, we should have fared much better, but we did not have even one. There was no trouble with the sisters; it was to them that trouble came. One of the men was deacon, and another was clerk, and both these were trustees at the time when I consented to serve them. If they were not suitable men we had no others. We had to go outside the church, and outside the city of Wilmington, to fill out a board of trustees. We had gone on but a few months when we learned that a schism or division had taken place in one of the New School churches, and that the minority party intended applying for admission with us. They had never been to a single appointment at our place—had never seen me or others of our preachers, and were not acquainted at all with our members, or with the different order maintained among us. But they need not care what we were; they were not coming to our order, but to set up their own over our heads. There was said to be sixteen of them, so there would be enough of them to have control.

When this word came to the sisters, they were all apprehensive of trouble. I told them we need not receive them if they did not give satisfaction, but they knew what we had to deal with better than I did. At the first church meeting but four came. I suppose they thought for so many to come at once would look like taking the place by storm. They failed to convince us that they were Old School Baptists, or that they even knew anything about us. When it became apparent what would follow, the male members all showed their sympathies were with the new comers. To show patience and forbearance, we laid the matter over to another meeting. I would see them, and give them some further opportunity. It amounted to nothing; the vote was as before. There was not even honesty in their pretensions, and nothing but what candid men of the world might have seen through. There was nothing else to do but to reject them. But those voting for their reception were not in good humor. Entire satisfaction with the preaching so far with all our preachers was manifest, so far as showed outwardly. Now we come to an act of treachery, and of utter disregard of church authority, of which we had no suspicion, and the like of which I have not known even among unprincipled men of the world. An arrangement was gone into with not only those who had applied for admission with us, but with any and all others who were willing to share in the plot, to meet with these dissenting members, and they would vote them in, and put their names down in the book. This meeting was not only not published, but it was arranged with the most profound secrecy, and so close was it kept from myself and the other members, that to this day not one of us ever knew when or where it took place. Then

they published a church meeting, being now in condition to defy us. That meeting was appointed to be held when I could not be there. Our people were apprehensive of mischief, and came out to see me and insist on my attending. I consented to it, although it was on a Saturday night, and my Sunday appointment was forty miles away, and it kept me out all night. As those two men had the keys and the church books, they had it in their power to act the part they did. I never felt to charge this to those new comers. I think overtures were made to them. They did not come in by the door, but climbed up some other way. I did not recognize them in any way, and as they were in possession of the house for the time, we held our meetings at another place. They took all our men (four) and eighteen of themselves, and applied to the Philadelphia Association, and our church name appears on their list, in 1862, with twenty-two members. I do not think they ever reported afterward, and in about two years the name was dropped. So soon did all this disorder overtake us. In a few weeks those two men came back to our meeting, and reported that they were all scattered away, and the house unoccupied, and begged of us to come back. As might be expected, they wanted to be taken back as members, and probably some will fault me for consenting to it. But it seemed a necessity of the case. A valuable property was at stake, and we were still destitute of other men. They were still trustees. We admitted them as members, but not as officers. For some years we were without deacon or clerk. Sometimes a deacon of one of the other churches served us. Through all this one colored man was a faithful, consistent member. He was diffident, extremely modest and retir-

ing, but spiritual minded, and always on the right side. Another colored man was baptized, and he, too, proved to be an excellent man. But we were not out of the woods yet. Another of the New School churches got into a quarrel, and the minority party played the same upon us that the others had done before. This time they did not go through the form of applying to the church, or even attending a church meeting, but they were put in possession of the place, and of all the books, as the others had been. Some of them were men of business and of means, but they found public sentiment against them. Their business was injured, and they could make no progress. This time, although the house was virtually in their possession, they did not attempt to disturb us. We kept up a full board of trustees, kept our record straight, and our appointments regular and invariable. Some families moved into the city, from Welsh Tract and London Tract, and though they did not bring letters they were substantial material, and added to the congregation, and we could have trustees who could be relied upon, and to whom the cause was dear enough that the responsibilities were cheerfully and promptly met. One family having several members brought letters, and a brother and his wife from Southampton moved into the neighborhood, and brought letters of dismission to us. They all found such a home as they wanted, and as they had left behind, and it brought us the help and the encouragement that we so much needed. It was a turning point with us. We not only increased in number, but we met and worshiped together in love and fellowship. For some years we did not have singing that was worth anything; it was rather an annoyance than otherwise. From the time I now

speak of we had good singing, and it has been improving. But what about the party that had crept in unawares, to get possession of the house? Why they dwindled. A blight seemed to rest upon them, and eventually they surrendered the books and keys, and sought quarters elsewhere, leaving a heavy debt for us to pay, and the carpets soiled or worn out, the house requiring a new roof, new stoves and a thorough cleaning up. They had even collected what they could from the cemetery, and carried that away. But all fear of further molestation went away with them. We had now good, sound brethren for officers, a board of trustees that knew their rights, and would maintain them. Having nothing further to fear, we set our house in order with zeal and diligence.

I have not told you yet what became of those first invaders. I do not know. We never saw or heard what became of them, but suspect that they all went to nothing. It seemed like a special providence that preserved that property for an inheritance to be enjoyed for generations to come. The Book says that he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap. The Lord said to his disciples, that he sent them to reap, and that they not only should receive wages, but they should gather fruit unto life eternal. The one day which commenced the forty-first year of my serving, as I saw the house filled with brethren, sisters and friends, from Trenton, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Newark, London Tract, Bryn Zion, Petersburg and Delmar, gathered together to show the interest they felt, and to share in the general joy, I felt that I had full reward for all the toil, and labor, and sacrifices, that had attended me for forty years. A kind Providence had prolonged my life to see the day.

Now I have but little more to say. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." For a quarter of a century we have gone on in the enjoyment of the goodness of the Lord's house. I know of no more enjoyable meetings anywhere. Traveling brethren, and gospel preachers, can always find a home and welcome here. The old members warred a good warfare, and it should be recorded as a testimony to them, that through much tribulation and discouragement they stood steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the word and work of the Lord. All honor to their memory, they have gone to their reward. I have seen them in their distress turn back from their meals to weep, but the cause of weeping with them, and also with us, has passed away.

"In Christ, the Rock, let those who dwell,
Prepare a song to raise."

In gospel bonds,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

2 CORINTHIANS XIII. II.

"FINALLY, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

I desire to say a few things in a general way to those whom I esteem highly for the truth's sake, upon these words. I think this subject is applicable to the saints, individually and collectively. We can have no doubts or differences about the author of these words, or about the cause of them, if we all feel an interest of the same magnitude, because we feel the same spirit working in our own breasts. Though we are but learners, yet we feel to say that the conclusion reached by this judge in Israel, is a correct one. Over and above all our differences in word or practice, we have this benediction of this

judge in Israel, in connection with the walk and order of the gospel, as it was given to him to declare, as the apostle of the Gentiles. He says, "Finally, brethren, farewell." The evidence that any one lives in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is given in this conclusion of the apostle's language, as well as in other words, wherein the apostle commends his brethren, or the church, to God and the word of his grace, who, he declares, is able to keep you from falling. Because of his knowledge through revelation, that the divine power was engaged for their protection and preservation, he said this. For Jesus had said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Yet no amount of reproof and admonition, or correction, would assure one that he was a subject of the grace of God, and as such entitled to the concluding words of the apostle in this farewell. It often, I believe, seems to the people of God that everything comes to them in a contrary manner. Instead of its being from top to bottom (nature says), it is from the bottom to the top. For, in nature, the order of life is from the earth upward, but the embodiment of eternal life is found in Jesus Christ, who came down from heaven to earth, as the Son of God, to do his Father's will. God's will being done in the suffering life, and cruel death, and glorious resurrection of his Son, in whom is all power in heaven and earth, he brings this cheering truth to his people, and so feeds his flock like a shepherd, sending by whom, and speaking by whom he will, for their comfort and upbuilding in the truth, which he is to them. There is no one to this day who has a living faith in him as their Savior, who can say he has not fared well. The fruit of the tree of life cannot be independent of its branches, or body, or root. For the fruit

of the spirit borne by the branches, which are attached to the body or vine, is supported and produced by the life in the root. So, in Paul's conclusion, whether taking leave of them, or trusting in God for their welfare, all was safe to them, and to him, because both he and they look to the same almighty source for succor. Upon this ground he could well go on and say to his brethren be perfect. Perhaps no other word causes more inquiry among the people of God than this. To be perfect in a scriptural sense, means, I believe, the same as to be holy. How shall one child of God, or two or three gathered together, be counted holy, when they, one and all, feel to be so imperfect, so unholy? It is written, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." And "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Then, it follows that the work of God in the heart of a sinner is a perfect work. For the testimony is that salvation is by grace through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For he has become to them the author of eternal salvation. Thus they are saved in him with an everlasting salvation, world without end.

They are saved in Christ (not in themselves) and they have Christ in them the hope of glory, as the evidence of this wonderful work. This feeling moved the psalmist to say, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" He viewed the work as a perfect work. It is the saving power of almighty God, in delivering his people out of the power of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of his dear Son. It is all a spiritual work. The will of God is wrought there by his holy Spirit. Now there is joy in believing. This is the work of God, that we believe on him

whom he hath sent. And those who believe this in truth confess that they believe according to the working of his mighty power. For he works in them, both to will and to do according to his good pleasure. This is the nature of the perfection or holiness required of his people, in this imperfect or unholy condition by nature, that they be obedient to his holy mandate as their king in Zion, and that they walk in the ordinances of the Lord's house, blameless. All is the result of love and life from the eternal God, whose work of righteousness in the heart of the sinner, is peace. Yes, peace which flows like a river. The manifested effect is the grace of quietness and assurance forever. The love of God shed abroad in the saved sinner's heart, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him, causes him to love God, his word, and his people, and the law of Zion. As the law of the Lord is holiness in the inward parts, so will the attraction be to the place where the honor of God dwells. Those who walk in his commands, because of the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, are of the perfect ones, or of those who are going on to perfection, as the apostle has said in Hebrews. We can be perfect in this life, only in connection with life, doctrine and walk, which is embraced in the faith of God's elect, in the doctrine of God our Savior, and in walking in his commandments, and in keeping his statutes. In these things there is perfection and holiness. For if ye be followers of that which is good (or which God has bidden you to follow), who is he that can harm you? In all this there is nothing added to, or taken from the word, or the book, and hence there can be no charge of imperfection. But all this is taking the word of God, in the letter and in the spirit, as the man of our counsel, our

guide of life, our rule of faith and practice, and letting God be true, and every man a liar. And men are liars when they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, deceiving many of the Lord's little ones, and causing them to dwell in an imperfect state. This is the reason of the admonition, "Beware, lest any man deceive you." We cannot be perfect if deceived in word and doctrine. Nothing will suffice but truth. Yea, if any man come unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house (the fellowship of the church). Yea, more, if any man, or angel, preach any other gospel than that which shows the perfection of the Savior, and his glorious work in his church, which is the perfection of beauty, let him be accursed. For the Redeemer of his people has said to them as a church, "Thou art all fair my love, there is no spot in thee." And he has the glory from the song of praise in her heart. "My beloved is one, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely." So be of good comfort. The provisions which Jesus has made for his people, or church, are equal to his love and mercy. He has made provision for her trials and disappointments, and has told her, that in the world she shall have tribulation. But he also said, "I have overcome the world," and "In me ye shall have peace." So that good cheer or comfort is given her. Therefore all the comfort that is good in this life for us as christians to receive, comes to us in connection with the fact that God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us our sins, having removed them from us as far as the east is from the west. The grace of God that brings salvation, teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present evil

world. Hence, there is good comfort in the thought, that our God does abundantly bless the provisions of his house, and satisfy her poor with bread. For Jesus is that bread which came down from heaven. His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed. What more does a poor sinner need to induce him to crucify the old or outer man, with his affections and lusts? In this his comfort abounds, as he, through the Spirit, does mortify the deeds of the flesh. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." This calling is a holy calling, and is not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Now then, be of one mind. Yea, let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. This comes to us largely in sorrow, yet also there is a fullness of joy. This joy is unspeakable and full. For we, in time, with all its changes and gloom, embrace a measure of his fullness, already received, and then we expect to be with him, and to be like him, beyond.

This of all things should create in the hearts of the Lord's people a desire to live in peace. This above all else is the teaching of the Spirit in their hearts. They are never properly or truly gathered together, only as they are gathered in the name of Israel's God. His name is the Lord our righteousness. This also is the name whereby she shall be called, the Lord our righteousness. It is well then to notice the nature of that peace which the people of God are to live in.

First. It is that peace which Jesus Christ has given, and which passes all understanding. This we know to be true in our experience of it in our hearts, in its power, as the one heart and the one way

is given to us so mysteriously, when a love for the brethren is felt, and a desire to be with them as the members of the body of Christ is felt. We then found not only that we loved them, but to our great astonishment that they had fellowship for us. We found that our interests were mutual; and anon we were with them through the door of baptism, and felt the force of the poetic strain, "O how happy are they who their Savior obey." The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. They have also been given a banner, and it is displayed because of the truth. And in the name of their God, the people of God set up their banners. Such I believe is the faith of the Lord's people through the gift of peace by their Savior to them, at so great a cost that nothing is too hard to bear. Though they have a weak nature, and a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, yet they are prepared to endure hardness as good soldiers. To live in this blessed peace which is given them, is their highest aim.

Second. The law of the Lord in the heart of every loving son or daughter of the Lord Almighty, is love itself; and love has never worked any ill to his neighbor, but has been proving and fulfilling itself in a marvelous way since time began. It has withstood the assaults of sin and Satan, and the fraud and deceit of designing men, because founded on the base of peace, which is God given, and is to be lived in and taken good account of because of its effects or results. Flowing from the dealings of God with his people, they are enjoined to walk in Christ Jesus the Lord, as they have received him. That is, they are to walk as being helpless in themselves, and without him able to do nothing. To live in peace

is to let brotherly love continue; to be followers of God as dear children; to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. It is to know that if the will of God be so, it is better to suffer for well doing than for evil doing. Yet the apostle says, Let no man suffer as a thief, or as a busybody in other men's matters. But if he suffer as a christian, there is happiness in it. The Spirit of grace and glory rests on such an one; and such an one, or such a number of believers, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, with the love of Jesus in their hearts, and following him alone, will be likely to heed the admonition of the apostle. Finally, brethren, farewell; be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. This is all that the church of God needs for time and eternity. All the enjoyment that I know in the church is the freedom of feeling and liberty of speech which I have there in connection with the work and purpose of God in my heart, as I have come to trust in him as the God of my salvation. May the Spirit of God predominate in all the realms of the household of faith, and may the saying of the Master impress the minds of both ministers and members, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," for their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. It were better that a man should have a millstone hanged about his neck, and he be drowned in the depths of the sea, than that he should offend one of the little ones which believe in Jesus. For they are the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Your brother,

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLEYS CORNERS, N. Y., Jan. 5, 1898.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 14, 1897.

DEAR MOTHER:—Your letter of Sunday, received this a. m., has suggested some thoughts to me, and I feel a little like trying to write again, though whether I can say anything worth saying, or as I should, is quite another question. Forgive me if I say that your letter impresses me most forcibly as an illustration of the inconsistency of the life that we live in the flesh. How? Every line and word breathed the spirit of a living, longing child, who earnestly desires and yearns for the feeling presence of the Father, and yet is doubting, fearing and unbelieving. Here is manifested so clearly the warfare, the struggles of the flesh against the spirit, and the evidence is made so clear, that the natural mind is not made subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, but is always prone to sin, the sin of unbelief. You say if you could hear such a sermon as brother White preached, it might stir up your bad heart. How inconsistent, and how like the child of God in the flesh. The dead know nothing at all. They are not troubled as other men. Where there is death there is no trouble, no longings, no desires, nothing but the stillness of the grave, and decay. We know how this is in nature, and that nothing would be more conclusive of the fact that one was not naturally dead, than to see or hear that one manifest a longing for food, or a desire for the company of the living. We would know that life and not death was there. Is not this also true spiritually? Can a dead sinner desire the company of the living in Jerusalem? Can he or she who is dead in trespasses and in sins, desire the heavenly food, the broken body, and the shed blood of Jesus? Can such an one wish, ever so faintly, for the presence of the Comforter, for the in-

dwelling of the Spirit? We know that they cannot, but that the presence of such desires, no matter how apparently faint and weak, shows that life, the life of Christ, (for no other life desires such food) is present. As the faint cry of the new born babe is evidence that another living (not dead) child of Adam has been manifested in this sin-cursed world, so the faint cry of a child of grace, too faint perhaps to be manifested other than by groanings which cannot be uttered, is evidence that a living child of the kingdom of God has been born. Can there be any disputing of this? I think not, if there be any truth in the gospel, any reality in christian experience. Can this heaven-born child ever die? Can the life of Jesus once manifested in these mortal tenements ever perish? We know it cannot. Things of time wax old and perish, but the life of our Savior once manifested, is immortal, having triumphed over death, hell and the grave. Do we not know this to be true? We do. Then "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?" We fear, we doubt, we tremble, we long for brighter evidences. And where do we look for them? In the flesh. We would fain prove the truth of God a lie. We would not have it, that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing. We would not have it that our carnal mind is enmity against God. We look into our carnal hearts for the indwelling of the Spirit, to our human natures, to see them walking in the path of the just. We want evidence visible to our earthly, fading eyes, that we are called and chosen, and we look to the flesh to find them. We rebel at the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, suffering and groaning because of sin, and because we feel that suffering, and breathe out these groans, we

are ready to deny him. We are not content with the faith of God's elect. We do not want to live by faith, and the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, is not enough for us. In our blindness and weakness we turn our eyes from the glorious evidences which it has pleased the King in Zion to give us, that we are his. The breathings of our heart for him, our soul weariness of sin, our desires for his presence, our remembrance of his love and mercy in times past, our hatred of the world, and of ourselves for his sake, all these I say, we turn away from, and desire an evidence tangible to our natural, carnal, earthly minds. We feel that it is not with us as it once was. We cannot any more live in the world; our hearts pant after him whom our eyes have seen, the King in his glory, and we abhor ourselves for what that glory has revealed in us. We feel new desires, new yearnings, new hopes. We love his doctrine, the assemblages of his saints. We know that his word is sure, and that having begun a good work in us, he will perfect it, but we want more evidence. We see the law of sin still in our members. We find that our Adamic nature is still carnal and devilish, and because this old nature has not been changed to a new one, because we still feel the motion of sin, and find that we cannot do the things that we would, because our fleshly eyes do not see what flesh and blood never has and never will see, we are ready to deny the Lord our Savior, and say with Peter, "I know not the man." O, this sin of unbelief, this doubting, denying spirit! Though our gracious Savior has so often come to our relief, has so often given us tokens of his love, though we long for his appearing, and know that none can so long for him who have never heard his

voice, though we know that the love we feel for his truth, and his people, is not of the world, or of the flesh, still we want more evidence. We see these things in our brethren, and we feel that they are indeed the Lord's, but we cannot see the name in our own foreheads, and are ready to sink in despair; and so we should, but for our gracious Lord. He remembereth our frame, and he will not suffer us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear. The wickedness of our earthly natures must be made daily manifest to us, that we may not lose sight of our vileness, and that his power, and the glory of his grace, may shine the brighter. We must fellowship his sufferings; and sin was the cause of the woe of our glorious Redeemer. In the path that he walked we must go, mourning and burdened because of the sin which doth so easily beset us. And here is the evidence, the only sure evidence that we are bought with a price. Earth cannot counterfeit the sorrows of a child of God because of indwelling sin. If we are made to groan because of what we see in ourselves, it is a sure token that the Lord is dealing with us as a child. The natural man is either satisfied with himself, or that he can change himself when, and to what, he will. The Lord's little ones know that they are in his hand as clay in the hands of the potter, and none know this but they who are the Lord's. Those he has given this knowledge he will never desert, but will bring them off more than conquerors. This is everlasting truth. This is his immutable covenant. "Why then art thou cast down, O my soul?"

You speak so sweetly, dear mother, of your desire to feel the power of Christ within you, and of your yearnings for spiritual life. You do not want to see so much flesh. I understand you, and hope

that I can echo the wish for myself; but does not that very desire prove the indwelling of the divine life? What does that life within reveal save the foulness of the flesh? The more we see of the King in his glory, the blacker do our own natures appear. The more brightly the Sun of righteousness shines in our hearts, the more does it show the vileness within. Were there no light in our hearts, did not the Spirit of Christ dwell within, would we know that we are unclean, wretched, poor and altogether sinful? Would we yearn for the life of the Spirit, had we not in our own hearts that Spirit, the Spirit of the Most High? Had we never tasted of the joys of salvation, had the water of life never cooled our parched tongue, had we never eaten of that bread which came down from heaven, had we never known the fellowship of the saints, had we never felt ourselves bathed in the ineffable glory of the smiles of our risen Redeemer, and heard his angelic voice, in melting accents, saying to our troubled hearts, Peace, be still, had we, I say, never known these glorious things, could we long for them? Ah no. We know from what we have handled and tasted, that he is precious, and so we ardently long to drink again and again from the wells of salvation. In this knowledge, and this experience, the Spirit beareth witness that we are the sons of God. What more glorious evidence can we have or want than this? He makes it plain to us just as we have need. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. May he enable us to wait upon him, and give us grace to stand still and see the salvation of God. May we feel that he doeth all things well.

I fear that I have not written as I should. I know that I have not written as I would, but I would desire at all times

to glorify the name of Jesus. The failure is in the infirmity of the flesh.

Affectionately,

FRED L. COX.

HENDERSON, Texas, Dec. 29, 1897.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Inclosed you will find a letter which I have received from a sister, and which was comforting to me, and perhaps it might prove so to others of the poor, afflicted people of God. I will leave it to your better judgment, to do with as you may deem best.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

LAURA STRONG.

MARGARETVILLE, N. Y., Nov. 9, 1897.

MISS LAURA STRONG—DEAR SISTER:—After reading your letter published in the SIGNS, I have felt a desire to write you, but something has seemed to be in the way until the present time. I think I can sympathize with you in a measure, for I myself have suffered a great deal of pain for the past eight years, and sometimes have feared my reason would be darkened, through having such extreme pain in my head, but the Lord, who is good, has been better to me than all my fears; he has been good to me in all my troubles. He has promised he will be with us in six troubles, and that in the seventh he will not forsake us. And since I have been afflicted, my mind has been stayed upon him. David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." I had been trying to be a Methodist before my health failed me, although I had a love for the people whose God is the Lord, I could not understand the doctrine of election, and I also was too proud to go with this despised people, who are everywhere spoken against. I wanted to be a little more popular, but

God who is rich in mercy, saw fit to humble me seven years ago. After one year of suffering, this sweet doctrine of his everlasting love, was revealed to me. It was a wonderfully happy season, for I had been in the dark for a long time; I had been down in the deep waters, which had nearly overwhelmed me, and at times nearly drove me to despair. Sometimes I felt to give up all for lost, but thanks be unto God, he put a new song in my mouth, which was as sweet as honey to my taste. How great and wonderful is his name, and he is greatly to be praised for his wonderful works to the children of men. This was nearly seven years after I received a hope in Christ, which was fourteen years ago. It has been five years since I have had a home with this people who are dearer to me than life, and many precious seasons have I enjoyed with them. I am not well enough to attend many meetings, yet I have been highly favored this season, for I have met with them five times, but I may not have the privilege again until warm weather shall come. Our cold season is now upon us, but I think I feel grateful for what the Lord has given me to enjoy, and for all the numberless blessings he has bestowed upon me, a poor, worthless worm of the dust, who has not one good act to plead. Helpless, I look to him for grace. He can make the wounded spirit whole, and calm the troubled breast. He is manna to the hungry, and rest to the weary.

"Dear name, the rock on which I build,
My shield and hiding place,
My never failing treasury,
Filled with stores of boundless grace."

I am very sorry for you, to think that you have to lie in bed all the time, while I have been able to get around and wait upon myself the most of the time, with the exception of a few months. Some of

the time it has been all I could do to get around, but I do not wish to complain, but rather praise my Maker, who doeth all things well, and who hath done great things for me; mighty things, whereof I am glad. Praise his most holy name; he will give us strength equal to our day. I trust the everlasting arms are round about and underneath you. His loving kindness will not fail. He will guide, keep and save you, unto the end. Let us "praise God from whom all blessings flow." Some of the hours when I have been in greatest pain, have been my happiest ones, when I have been upon the hilltop, in that land flowing with milk and honey. I am so glad the brethren meet with you, so you can hear the preached word. I have always felt so insignificant that I never dared to make that request, and then again, I have never known when my head would take one of its bad spells, so that I would have to be alone. I may get stronger than I now am, but it will be just as the Lord wills. He knows what is best for us. He will temper the wind to the shorn lamb. I was thinking to-day that I need not be dreading the cold winter so much, for it will quickly pass, unless I should have to suffer a great deal of pain. It is best we do not know what is before us, for we should become disheartened. Twelve weary years you have passed, and we do not know how many are to follow, ere we quit this earthly pilgrimage, but we do know that the will of the Lord is best. He will give us strength and grace equal to our day. It does not seem to me that if I had passed through what you have, I could manifest such a spirit of resignation to God's will. Yet he is a precious Savior, and I oftentimes feel I cannot praise him enough for what he has done for my soul. I know just how precious

those visits which you received from the brethren were, for I often hate to see them drive away. I have lately enjoyed an excellent visit from a brother and sister of a neighboring church. It greatly revived my heart to read that you had been gathered into the fold, and that now you were with believers enrolled, with them to live and to die. It seemed that after I was baptized my happiness knew no bounds. For two years I had been longing to go with this people, and it seemed hardly possible that I should have a home with this dear people. It seemed so sweet to be called sister, by them. I had a time of feasting, like the Jews when they had rest from their enemies, as we read in the book of Esther. It was a good day, and a time of joy and gladness. My joy was full, and my cup was filled to overflowing. I cannot begin to describe it, but you know all about it, I doubt not. How sweet it is to feel at home.

"No more a stranger, nor a guest,
But like a child at home."

Where they dwell shall be my home, and theirs the God whom I adore. Their Redeemer is mine. It is a sweet rest with the people of God. This is our second rest. I am so glad you can rejoice in your afflictions. It is sweet to know no will but God's, to lie passive in his hands. I desire to ever be kept humble at his feet, and to live and to die unto the Lord. But I come far short of what I profess to be. I am so little, and so filled with unbelief and sin. "All within seems vain, and dark, and wild, can I be deemed a child?"

It is very tiresome for me to write. I can write much easier sitting, but I have written this while reclining, as I am not strong, so that I am compelled to lie down frequently. I should be very glad to receive a few lines from you, to know

how it is with you both physically and spiritually. Do you have our paper to read, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? It has been of great comfort to me during my sickness, especially when I could not get to meeting. Please accept my sincere sympathy and love.

Your sister,

PHOEBE J. FAULKNER.

[THESE two afflicted sisters have learned great things out of the deep troubles of their lives. The wonders of his love and grace have appeared to them. Only through such affliction as the Lord appoints for us, can we learn these wonders of salvation.—ED.]

BROOME CENTRE, N. Y., April 4, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The inclosed letter will explain itself, I feel that it may comfort many, to see the faith, submission and grace given her, and how she gives God all the glory and honor, for all his goodness and mercy. Truly he will never forsake them even in old age.

"When hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall in my bosom be borne."

May God give us, with her, grace sufficient for our day. My heart goes out to all the tried ones. I have not her consent, but I feel she will not object to the publication of it, if you think proper.

Yours in hope,

D. M. LEONARD.

SOUTH WESTERLO, N. Y., March 30, 1898.

DR. LEONARD—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your kind letter, and was very happy to hear from you. I feel very unworthy of such a privilege. I cannot tell you how lonesome it seems to me, being deprived of my eyesight. It is almost eight years since I could see to know one person from another. I know it is all right; the dear Lord knows what

I need, and I want to be reconciled to my lot, and wait with patience till my change comes. The dear Lord has spared my unprofitable life almost eighty-nine years, and for what is only known to him. It is seventy-five years since I indulged a hope in the mercy of the Lord. If I am saved it will be all of grace. It is seventy-two years since I united with the Baptist Church, at South Westerlo, N. Y. It was then a large church, but they have nearly all gone to their long homes; but one old sister and myself are left in this place, a few have moved away to distant parts. I enjoyed many precious seasons with them for about two years, then I was laid on a bed of sickness, and was confined thirteen years, but was raised up again, and enjoyed many precious seasons with them again.

I have lived all my life in South Westerlo, except seven years, which I lived in Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y. After Mr. Elmendorf's death I took a letter from that church and moved back to South Westerlo, and united with that church again. That is almost thirty-six years ago. My dear friends that I had a home with have gone to their long homes. I am now living with a dear nephew and family, at South Westerlo, where I have lived almost seventeen years, and have been kindly cared for.

Why my unprofitable life is spared so long the dear Lord only knows. I am quite feeble from the infirmity of old age. I can help myself off of my bed to my chair with the help of a cane; I want to be thankful for that.

Nothing but an almighty power could have sustained me thus far. Were it not for the little hope I indulge in the mercy of the Lord, I should be very unhappy. If I am not mistaken, I have some crumbs from my Master's table that cheers my

lonely hours. Some nights I sleep but very little, when my mind is carried back to the time my Savior spoke peace to my troubled soul.

I cannot tell any one what to write as I would write myself, my mind scatters so. I have been a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES almost from their commencement, until deprived of my eyesight, and now friends read them for me, and they are a great comfort to me. I would be very happy to hear your voice if I cannot see you, but I feel very unworthy of such a privilege. I humbly beg an interest in your prayers.

Your unworthy sister, in hope of eternal life,

RUTH A. ELMENDORF.

LANCASTER, Ohio, March 6, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS:—As I now send my remittance, I feel like writing a few lines. If I could only write and tell the good things as sister Curtis and many others do of the dear people of God, it would be a great pleasure to me to spend many hours writing. If I tell anything it can only be my groaning. If I could do as Paul said, leave the things which are behind, and reach forth to the things which are before, and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus, how glad I would be. But O! I must be looking back over my wretched life. I have been a professor of religion for forty odd years, and I see my need of a Savior just as much to-night, as I ever did in my life. I would like to feel that there was something good in me. I search and search, and cannot find it. And I am one of those who "can't help it." But O! could I charge God with all my foolish, vile thoughts? No. I loathe myself, and feel that I ought to creep on the earth. I think, if I was a child of God, I surely would have holier

thoughts, and my cry is daily, Lord save or I perish, and if I am lost, I am one of those who cannot help it. I can take old brother Mount's admonitions to myself. But will I live them out? I wish that I could. I believe that we all ought to watch ourselves. And how condemned I feel every day of my life, that I do not walk more godly. "O, for a closer walk with God." I cannot kindle a spark to warm myself by. I cannot help all this. I try hard, but can it be it is of a fleshy motive? I do not know. One thing I do know, I am a poor, helpless sinner. If I am not saved by grace, I cannot be saved at all.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,
SARAH B. PEARCE.

OTEGO, N. Y., April 29, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—At Elder Bundy's request, will you please give space in the SIGNS for a few words from him? as he is unable to reply to the many excellent letters from dear friends, that he is receiving often. In this way he wishes to thank each one, far and near, who have so kindly remembered him, and to say to all his friends and kindred in Christ, that his love and fellowship for them is unabated, and that he appreciates their thoughtful kindness highly. The many messages he receives cheer and comfort him greatly, though he feels in every way unworthy of their kind notice, and he cannot think he has ever been of much use among the churches and brethren, and to those who have visited him. He wishes to say, their attentions have been most welcome, though wholly undeserved, and his love and regard for them is undiminished. He would be so glad to send a few lines to each one, but it is impossible, as he can scarcely ever control his mind and hand at the same

time, though he has made the attempt several times, but failed.

With love to you, he is a brother in affliction, and can sympathize with many others of the "called according to his purpose."
BALAS BUNDY.

Per. G.

EDITORIAL NOTICES.

WHO WILL ANSWER?

It is now more than a year, if we mistake not, since we have appealed to our delinquent subscribers, to make a payment on their back dues. Last year we called for a loan from our brethren and friends, and by this means raised about one thousand dollars; but that was only temporary aid, for it had to be returned with interest last January. The payment of these loans has left us short of funds for the present volume, so that we are compelled to ask those who are behind on their subscription, to please make a special effort to send us a payment on the same. If you are but a few months in arrears, and cannot make a remittance at present, but expect to soon be able to pay something on account, we will gladly continue your subscription, and wait for the payment, as we can much better afford to do so than lose the patronage altogether.

There is now due on our subscription list several thousand dollars, and we have got to realize from it about fifteen hundred dollars, or be compelled to borrow, or failing in that, we shall have to make an assignment.

Each subscriber can tell just how their account stands by referring to the date next to their name on the little pink slip pasted either on the wrapper in which their paper comes, or on the margin of first page of the cover. This date denotes the time at which the subscription *expired*. Please, brethren and friends, do all you can for us, and it will be highly appreciated.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHASTISEMENTS.

Is the chastisement which the people of God receive in consequence of their transgressions intended of God as an atonement for their transgressions?

We suppose the reading of the above question will sound strange to our readers. The assertion that it was so intended, which we saw a few days ago, from one who professes to be in the fellowship of the Old School Baptists, sounded indeed strange to us. There are some things of which, for years, we have not been led to speak often, because we understood they were so well settled as facts, among our people, and so well understood by them that it was not needful. To argue for them, in our paper or in our preaching, seemed like fighting over ground that was all settled, and concerning which there could be no dispute. Among these things, is the matter suggested by the question at the head of this article. We do not recall that we have ever thought it needful to say that chastisements for our sins, as believers, was not an atonement for them. We had not supposed any Old School Baptist could ever think it was. We do not believe that any believer in the finished work of Jesus, ever thought, when he was being

chastised, that this was an atonement for his fault, so that at the end of it he could count the debt paid, and the account closed, and therefore he never need be sorry for it any more. If any man owes a debt, and pays that debt in full, by any means, he owes no gratitude to anybody, neither has he any reason any longer to be ashamed of having been in debt. All accounts are squared off, and the credit is on his side. But, as we said, to our astonishment and sorrow, we have recently seen in print the assertion that our chastisements are an atonement for our sins.

The sufferings of the people of God, under the gospel dispensation, do not atone for their sins. We do not hesitate to make this assertion, and to make it with its broadest meaning, because to say otherwise is to say, that Christ did not die for our sins according to the Scriptures. Is there anything or any place in all our salvation, in which Christ alone is not to be honored? When we shall stand before the throne of God at last, shall we plead that Christ our Lord atoned for our original sin, but we ourselves atoned for our actual sins? O! how can any one who has known the Lord in the pardon of his sins, ever think of saying such things? As far as the assertion which we are combating goes, Christ is rejected for human merit, and his sufferings rejected for human sufferings.

Our heart has been stirred deeply within us by this assertion. We cannot help feeling deeply about it, for it seems such a slander and outrage upon our best Friend, our Savior from all sins. Because of this, we wish to present a few reflections to our readers.

First, our chastisements cannot be meant as an atonement for our sins, because the chastisement never could meas-

ure up to their enormity without cutting us off from all life and hope, and sending us to endless despair. Nothing can atone for sin but the death of the sinner. Let us reflect, that the one transgression of our first parents has plunged all the noble race of Adam into eternal punishment, or what the Scriptures call eternal death. Reflect also that we, who to-day believe and hope in the mercy of God, were under the same condemnation. Eternal death was our just due, had not almighty and free grace interposed in our behalf, and through the atonement of Christ, saved us from it. We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. If then, one transgression of our first parents not only brought upon themselves the sentence of eternal death, but also brought upon all their unborn posterity the same just and awful fate, only where grace has interposed, and the atonement of Christ has availed, how can the present chastisement, which at the longest is but for a few years, or perhaps days, or minutes of natural time, be supposed to render satisfaction to the outraged law of God? No! chastisement cannot be atonement, because it does not slay the sinner, but is that which on the other hand, yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby.

Second, let us remember that in many places the Scriptures say that Christ died, not for original sin, but for our SINS. Let us quote, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanses us from all sin." "He shall save his people from their sins." Not SIN, but SINS. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." "He shall bear their iniquities." "She hath received of the Lord's hand double for all

her sins." "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, * * * to make an end of sins." "Which is shed for many for the remission of sins." "Whosoever believe in him shall receive remission of sins." "Blessed are they whose * * * sins are covered." "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." "Who gave himself for our sins according to the Scriptures." "When he had by himself purged away our sins." "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." "After he had offered one sacrifice for sins." "He bear our sins, that we being dead to sin," &c. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins." "He is the propitiation for our sins." "He was manifested to take away our sins." "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." We have not paused to name the places of these Scriptures, nor to quote whole verses, for want of space. We have only desired to enforce upon the minds of those who may read this, one thought, that the word in each case is SINS, and not SIN. Often the Scriptures speak of sin in the aggregate as one sin, but in so many places the plural is used. Therefore the atonement of Christ covers our actual transgressions, as well as our sin through Adam, which we speak of as original sin. This doctrine of the atonement covers all our sins before we have come to believe, and also all our sins after we have come to believe in Jesus. Sin, after we have believed, is as much sin against God, as sin before we believe. It is all sin against God. Whether it be against the law given in the garden, or given by Moses, or given in the new covenant, under the gospel, it is still sin against God. He who sins but once is guilty of all. If one command-

ment be broken, the Lord has said all are broken. It is upon this ground that all men are equally guilty in the sight of God. Each sin is a transgression of his commandment, and shows a heart at war with him. But we need not stop to argue this matter; the word of the Master, by the inspired apostle, is, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and offend in one point, is guilty of all." By one transgression the law is set aside. So far as what we are considering is concerned, it matters not when this sin is committed. In the type, this truth that the atonement covers all our sins, both after and before we believe, is clearly set forth. Without taking space to extend our remarks upon this part of the subject, we will call attention to the ashes of the red heifer, which, after she had been offered and burned, were laid up in a fit place to be mingled with water, and used for the cleansing of those who might become defiled by contact with some unclean thing. This was to be a daily source of cleansing. The blood of bulls and goats presented the first application of the blood of Christ, to those who were Israelites, but the ashes of the red heifer were for constant use during all the succeeding year. Now Paul says expressly in Hebrews, that this represented the blood of Christ, as well as the other types of which he speaks in the text, or the blood of bulls and goats. Therefore it is not chastisement which cleanses the conscience of the disobedient child, but the blood of Christ alone. Our chastisements can then no more atone for our daily transgressions after we believe, than they could before. We need not only the blood of the antitypical bulls and goats, but we need the ashes of the antitypical red heifer. We need the blood of Christ to be applied, not only to the conscience at the first, to bring peace, but

we need it to be applied whenever we sin, if we are to ever have peace again. If the brother, who made the assertion which we are contending against, ever found peace through chastisement, as though that chastisement had made things even now, between him and God, so far as his transgression was concerned, he has found what we have never been able to do, since we first believed in Christ. We have often received chastisement, and believe that it is good, and an evidence of the love of God, but we never once have thought it blotted out our sins, as a thick cloud. It has never occurred to us, that because of this the Lord had cast all our sins behind his back, nor that this was the ground upon which this sin should not be imputed to us. In the connection of the assertion about which we are speaking, the writer said in substance, that if chastisements do not satisfy for sins, or atone for the sins for which we are chastised, then why chastise at all, seeing that no good results from it? Near the end of the article he adds, that we do not atone for the sins for which Christ atoned, nor did Christ atone for the sins for which we suffer. He adds that to take such a position, would be equivalent to saying that God required the payment of the same debt twice, which of course could not be true. Again, we would most earnestly say, that no chastisement which we could possibly suffer, could atone for one sin, though that suffering were to extend to all eternity. Sin against God is such an awful thing, and is so exceeding sinful. Who can measure its enormity save God only? How natural it is for man to want to make a light thing of sin. How natural to say that eternal death is too heavy a punishment for the sin of but a short lifetime, but God does not measure sin as we do. According to his measure-

ment, one sin is sufficient to send a whole race to ruin forever. What folly then, to talk of atoning for our own sins. But how blessed to believe that Jesus died for our sins, all of them, and that by his atonement we are justified from all things charged against us.

Chastisement has its uses, notwithstanding they do not atone for the transgression for which we are chastised. God deals with believers as with children. When a father chastises his child for some act of disobedience, does he intend it to be a satisfaction to his honor, his justice or his law? We should pity the father who had such a view of his relation to his child, and such an idea of what the chastisement was meant to accomplish; and we should most certainly pity the child. If our heavenly Father punishes in that way, his child must forever die. Even under the gospel, sin is no less sin, and his law is no less strict. When we learn that a natural father has punished his child to obtain satisfaction for the insult to him, and to cause that that child shall make atonement for his fault, the common judgment of men is that he does not deserve to have children, and does not understand at all his relation to them. He is called a brute, and other names, which will express the horror and detestation of men at his course. No, a wise father does not even intimate to his child, and does not for a moment think the chastisement is an atonement for the fault, but that it is for correction, that he may learn wisdom, and so forsake the paths of folly, and seek the ways of right. Correction, and not atonement, is the object. Those fathers and mothers who beforehand say to their children, if you do so and so I will punish you, are not wise. If the child gets the idea in his head that the punishment is a payment which he

must make to his father for his act of disobedience, a great injury has been done that child. He does not regard the chastisement as meant to be in love, but in the light of an exaction upon him, and after the chastisement is over he will feel, "Now my father and I are equal." "I owe him nothing more." No, our God does not deal in that way with his children. He gives them to see that their sins are all blotted out through the atonement of the Lord, and that nothing can ever be laid to their charge, because Christ has died. But now he shows him his fatherly love and care for him, by dealing with him as a child. He shows him that he uses the rod upon him, for his restoration to the right way. Thus David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." The chastisement which now seems grievous, afterwards yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to all who are exercised thereby. After the chastisement, the child must ask his Father's forgiveness. He cannot hold up the chastisement and say, This is a full satisfaction for what I have owed, and therefore I need not to ask forgiveness, but rather, the chastisement has brought him to see the folly of his ways, and his need of fleeing to the blood of the atonement, and of seeking forgiveness at the foot of the cross. If the child of God comes to believe that he must himself atone for his faults, after he believes, his hope will die at once, and in despair he will go down to death, because of the burden of sins not blotted out through the blood of the Lamb. Thank God there is a better prospect than this. As Satan brings to his mind every transgression of his whole life, he can say as exultantly with Paul, Who shall lay anything to my charge? It is Christ that died, &c. This shall

be his only plea. Neither heaven nor earth (the spiritual earth wherein dwells righteousness), shall ever hear the sound of a divided atonement. A legal atonement by the death of Christ, and a gospel atonement by the sufferings of his people.

We leave these remarks. We would be faithful as a watchman upon the walls of Zion. We do not want to alarm needlessly, but there is need when the sentiment is advanced among those who love the Lord, that by suffering they atone for their transgressions under the gospel. We pray that none who believe in Christ may be ensnared by such Christ-denying teaching.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOEL III. 14-17.

MULTITUDES, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."

In the connection of this text, we have a prophecy which was quoted by the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, and applied to the outpouring of the Spirit on the Jews and Gentiles on that remarkable occasion. See Acts ii. 16-21, compared with Joel ii. 28, 32. From the application made by the inspired apostles of the prophecies of Joel, we are fully authorized to regard them as relating to the present dispensation, and especially relating to things which transpired on and subsequent to that day. The outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh, or on those out of all nations, was to precede

what was called by Joel, and also by Peter, "the great and terrible day of the Lord," which day probably had reference to the day wherein God's judgments should be visited upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judea, in the terrible execution of which we have a striking type of the final overthrow of mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth. "For," says the Lord, by the mouth of Joel, "Behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." The valley of Jehoshaphat and the valley of decision, evidently are the same. The valley of Jehoshaphat literally is a deep, narrow glen, which runs from north to south, between the Mount of Olives and Mount Moriah. But as the name Jehoshaphat in the Hebrew signifies the judgment of God, it is probably used in this case symbolically to signify the place of judgment, or where the Lord would execute his judgment on the enemies of his spiritual Jerusalem, and as his judgments are final, allowing no appeal from them, they are consequently decisive, and in our text the place of them is called the valley of decision. It was near Jerusalem, and so may set forth the scriptural idea of the mediatorial throne, in the true and spiritual Jerusalem, where God has set his king upon his holy hill of Zion.

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision." These words present to our mind the same that was expressed by our Lord in the parable of the sheep and goats, Matt. xxv. 31-46, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all

the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," &c. In the exaltation of our Redeemer to his mediatorial glory, he is crowned with a royal diadem, and power is given him over all flesh, (multitudes truly) that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. The place of his throne is upon his holy hill Zion. The valley of Jehoshaphat, or of decision, is at the base of Mount Zion, and may signify not only the exaltation of Christ in his government, but the humbling of the nations before him. All things are put under him. (1 Cor. xv. 27.) The multitudes are in the valley, but Christ is exalted, and sits upon the throne of his power. The Lamb stands upon Mount Zion.

"For the day of the Lord is near," &c. The day in which he should display his power in judgment, in decision, and in separating between the precious and the vile. When the temple worship should be abolished, the building thrown down, and the old Jerusalem should be destroyed; when he whose voice once shook the earth, should also shake the heavens, and in which the things that can be shaken should be removed, as things that are made, and the things that cannot be shaken should remain. (Heb. xii. 27.) The day of the Lord, in which the saints should receive a kingdom that cannot be moved, and have grace whereby they may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. In this valley of decision we may contemplate all the nations of the earth, including all the children of men of all the tribes and kindreds of mankind before the throne and power of the exalted Son of God, to be separated the one from

the others, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. No place but the valley of Jehoshaphat, or of God's judgment, will answer the purpose. The Lord alone knows them that are his, and he therefore alone is competent to judge and make the decision, by calling his own sheep by name, and leading them out. This discrimination is final and decisive, and it is made in the judgment of the Lord, in the valley of decision.

"The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining," &c. The old heavens and earth with their luminaries should pass away, their elements should be dissolved, they should be rolled together as a scroll, and like a vesture they should be laid aside. But the Lord maketh all things new. The new heavens and the new earth appears, wherein dwelleth righteousness, or wherein Christ, who is our righteousness, dwelleth. The Lord God himself, and the Lamb, are the light of this new covenant dispensation. All the legal lights are put out. This holy city, new Jerusalem, which comes down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband, needs not the sun for a light by day, for there shall be no night there. The law and the prophets which were until John, they have attained their designs, and passed away with the receding heavens and earth; the types and shadows no longer aid the vision of the saints. The Lord God is the light, and in his light the saints have light. The perfect day is ushered in, for the Day Spring from on high hath visited us. The people which sat in darkness have seen a great light, and to them that dwelt in the shadow of death, a light has sprung up. The Judge descends from heaven, the throne is set, power is given him over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father has

given him. Judgment proceeds; he call-eth his own sheep by name. The dead hear the voice of the Son of God and live. His sheep hear his voice; he knows them, and they follow him, because he gives to them eternal life; and this is life eternal, that they may know the true God, and Jesus Christ our Lord. His own sheep are put forth, and he goeth before them, and they follow him. Thus the decision is made, and the line is drawn with infallible accuracy between the precious and the vile.

"And the Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem," &c. Zion was the city of David, and the place of his royal palace in Jerusalem, and denotes to us the place of the mediatorial throne of the king of righteousness. His voice, which once shook the earth, shall again not only shake the earth, but also heaven, and effect the removing of everything that can be shaken, that the things only which cannot be shaken may remain in the kingdom which he came to set up and preside over. His voice is figuratively presented in many parts of Scriptures in a variety of modulations. When on Sinai he spake in trumpet tones, and the thunder of his voice shook the mountain; and the mountains skipped like rams, and the hills like lambs. He spake to the prophet Elijah in a still small voice, or sound. And in a voice familiar to all his flock, he calls his own sheep by name, and they know his voice, and they follow him. The hour cometh, and now is, in which the dead shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. His voice has power to allay the fury of the tempest, and allay the raging tumult of the sea. With his voice he speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. And the hour shall come in which all that are in their graves shall hear his

voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life eternal, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. But in our text it is said that he shall *roar* out of Zion. This figurative term seems to agree with the account given by John, Rev. i. 15, "And his voice as the sound of many waters." Also Rev. x. 3, "And cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth; and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices." As the multitudes, nations and tongues of the universe are figuratively called waters, the voice of our God, when sounded through his saints in all the various languages and tongues of the nations where they are located, though the voice be the same, yet uttered through the gifts bestowed on Zion, resembles the sound of many waters. Roaring and unintelligible to the enemies, but known and well known by his saints. This figure also indicates power to send terror and consternation to the enemies round about Zion, as when a lion roareth. But blessed are they who know the joyful sound. "And he shall utter his voice from Jerusalem." In the proclamation of the everlasting gospel, especially through the inspired apostles, they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and preached his gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

"And the heavens and the earth shall shake." This shaking, at the introduction of the new heavens and new earth, as we have seen by reference to Heb. xii. 27, 28, signified the removing of the covenant which waxed old, with the things which could be shaken, which were not immutable; and it may also relate to the breaking in pieces all the kingdoms of this world, as set forth by the prophecy of Daniel in the interpretation of the king's dream of the stone taken from the moun-

tain without hands, &c. Not only in the abolition of Jewish rites and ceremonies, in the introduction of the gospel ministration, but throughout all time where a vestige of legality is found, it is shaken by the voice which the Lord utters from Jerusalem through all his saints. It may also relate to the judgments of God by which the man of sin and the powers of darkness shall be shaken, and finally consumed by the Spirit of his mouth.

“But the Lord will be the hope of his people.” Under all these trying circumstances, God’s people shall not be left without hope, nor shall they be sustained on a false or precarious hope. The Lord himself, who is the hope of Israel, and the Savior thereof in time of trouble, shall be the hope of his people in the day referred to in our text. They shall see the folly of hoping in anything else. All other hopes must utterly fail; but the hope of his people is like an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entering into that within the vail, for it is no less than Christ in them the hope of glory. Well did the apostle say, “Who hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.” Though the earth be shaken, and the heavens also, though the mountains be removed and cast into the sea, and the waves thereof roar and be troubled, though the nations of the earth be, as they are at this day, convulsed with war and carnage, though the thrones of mighty monarchs crumble and totter to their fall, and though even the church of the living God be afflicted with wave upon wave, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early. The shaking of the earth and heavens shall remove every refuge of lies, and take away every other dependence, so that the hope of God’s people shall centre in the Lord alone. This hope is

among the things that cannot be shaken, and which shall remain in that kingdom which cannot be shaken; for it is in God, and full of immortality, and confirmed by the immutable promise of God. We can then adopt the words of Paul, “In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.”

“And the strength of the children of Israel.” God is no less the strength of Israel than the hope of his people. They are truly in themselves considered a feeble folk, but their house is in the eternal Rock of Ages. The Lord has been their dwelling place in all generations, before the mountains were brought forth, or the world formed, or the earth, even from everlasting to everlasting. (Psalm xc. 1, 2.) They have no other strength to rely upon. He is their strong tower, and their trust is in the shadow of his wing. While their enemies trust in horses and chariots, and go down to Egypt for help, and while they rely upon their own will and power for salvation, and upon their men and money, their schemes and plans for the conversion of the heathen world, and they look to the power of earthly kings and legislatures to defend them, God is the strength and salvation of his children. He is a wall of fire round about, and a glory in their midst. He is the sword of their excellency and the shield of their strength. They cannot be surprised by an enemy, because they dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

“So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain.” In the execution of all that is embraced in these predictions, God will instruct his children, for it is written, they shall all be taught of the Lord. He teaches them effectually, for, “Every one that hath heard and learned of the

Father [says Jesus] cometh unto me." They shall know that he is the Lord, the Jehovah, the self-existent God, by the fulfillment of his word, in which he has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. To know him is eternal life, and that eternal life they shall possess. They shall know him by his voice, for however terrible his voice may be to the enemies, his sheep know his voice and follow him; they are the blessed people which know the joyful sound; and they shall know that their deliverance and salvation is of him, and of him alone. But they shall not only know that he is the Lord, for they shall also know that he is their God, according to the express provisions of the new covenant. "I will be their God, and they shall be my people," and they shall all know me, from the least of them even to the greatest. And they shall also know the place of his abode, and where to find him. "Dwelling in Zion." This is the place of his rest, and here he will dwell forever, for he has desired Zion for his habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. They know him in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, and it is only in Christ that they can know him, for no man cometh unto the Father but by him. He is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and all who have seen the Son have seen the Father also. He and his Father are one.

"Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." When the old Jerusalem, which, like Hagar, was in bondage with her children, should pass away, and the holy city, new Jerusalem, should descend from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband, then should she

be holy and without blame or blemish before God, who is her Judge. Christ is her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and she is freely, fully and forever justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Strangers and aliens sometimes passed through the old Jerusalem, broke down her walls, and defiled her sanctuary, but no stranger can enter this holy Jerusalem. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And although we were all strangers and foreigners once, we are now made nigh by the blood of Christ, and are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. The kingdom of God spoken of to Nicodemus, and this holy Jerusalem, mean the spiritual kingdom which is not of this world, which cometh not by observation, and which flesh and blood, even the flesh and blood of the saints, cannot inherit, because corruption cannot inherit incorruption. We all know to our sorrow that carnal professors who are strangers to God by wicked works, do make profession of religion, and sometimes have a form of godliness, and that they are nominally regarded as members of the church. But although they may have a name to live, they are dead, and they remain as ignorant of the kingdom while nominally members of it, as those who make no profession. They cannot see it without being born again; they cannot enter it except they be born of the water and of the Spirit. This spiritual Jerusalem is the mystical body of Christ. Every member therefore has life in Christ in common with all other members. There is one body and spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. We therefore know no man after the flesh in the kingdom, for we are all one in Christ Jesus. These mortal bodies which are

born of the flesh are flesh, and their inheritance is in the earth. They are under the irrevocable sentence of death. They must be sown corruptible, in dishonor, &c., but they shall be quickened and raised up by the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead; they must put on immortality and incorruption, and be raised spiritual bodies, and brought in by adoption, but not in the relations and distinctions which now exist, for in the resurrection they shall not marry nor be given in marriage; they shall not be distinguished as male or female, young or old, bond or free, as now, but all conformed to the image of the Son of God, who is the firstborn among many brethren.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1855.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, Saturday, April 2d, 1898, at the bride's residence, George Savidge, of Mt. Rose, N. J., and Miss Mary C. Hixson, of Hopewell, N. J.

By the same, on Tuesday, April 26th, 1898, at the parsonage in Hopewell, Albert S. Atkinson, M. D., of Baltimore Md., and Miss Nellie M. Chick, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Anna Tibbs, wife of Elisha Tibbs, died at Elyria, Ohio, March 22d, 1898. Sister Tibbs while on a visit to an old friend's was taken very sick, on the 15th of March, and died on the 22d, at 9 o'clock p. m., of heart disease.

A. McLEAN.

My dearly beloved little nephew, William Reuben Sheldon, was born December 29th, 1897, and died January 10th, 1898, aged 1 year and twelve days. He was beloved by all who knew him; but we sorrow not as those who have no hope.

The little babe is gone to rest,
To reign with God for ever blest;
Its little tongue will always praise
A Savior's love redeeming grace.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

ELIZA HENRY.

BLACK FORK, Ark., April 11, 1898.

Edward Yaney Berry was born in Hopkins Co., Ky., Nov. 29th, 1814, and died at his home in Salt Creek township, Chariton Co., Mo., March 27th, 1898, aged 83 years, 7 months and 28 days. He had been a sufferer of a complication of diseases for a number of years, and about eight months before his death jaundice set in. So his death was not a surprise to his family. He lived in this County for forty-five years, and had made many friends. His honesty and integrity was untarnished. His daily life was to show how a christian should live. He joined the Old School Baptist church forty-one years ago, and remained a member the balance of his life, and was a firm believer in close communion. On Tuesday afternoon his earthly remains were consigned to their last resting place at the old Corinth Church Cemetery, in the presence of a large number of his relatives and friends, who had assembled to perform the last sad and sacred duty to the dead. He was twice married, and leaves an aged wife. He had no children by his second marriage, but leaves five by his first marriage, three sons and two daughters, to mourn their loss.

M. J. BERRY.

DIED—At her home in Fairfax Co., Va., March 19th, 1898, Mrs. Richard A. Kerns, wife of brother Richard Kerns, of the Bethlehem church, at the age of 73 years, 7 months and 19 days. Sister Kerns was a member of the Bethlehem church, near Manassas, Prince William Co., Va., being baptized in its fellowship in 1874, by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington. She with her husband came out from the New School organization, being separated from it by a vital experience of the grace of God, which leads the people of God out of the house of bondage, into the inheritance of the saints in the land of gospel liberty and rest. Sister Kerns was one of those quiet, unassuming souls which wins the confidence and love of the saints and people of God, by a humble demeanor, and a meek and quiet spirit, and an uncompromising love of the truth. Several of the last years of her life were years of intense suffering from neuralgia, which ultimately caused total blindness. But in all her afflictions the grace of God sustained her, and enabled her to bear them with christian patience and fortitude. Fifty-three years sister Kerns and our dear brother Kerns lived together in sweet union and companionship, rearing a family of sons and daughters who bless their mother's memory. Brother Kerns has the loving sympathy of his brethren in his lonely widowerhood, and trust that he may fully realize the sentiment of the following lines:

"E'en down to old age all thy people shall prove
His sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love."

Affectionately yours,

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va., May 5, 1898.

Mary E. Dubois was born in Monroe Co., N. Y., Dec. 3d, 1833. She was married to M. H. Hoffman, in the State of New York, in the year 1859. In early childhood she was converted, and became a member of the Regular Baptist church. She was baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, into the fellowship of Middletown and Wallkill church, Orange Co., N. Y., May 30th, 1869, of which church she was a member at the time of her death. She died at her home in Thetford, Mich., Sept. 27th, 1897. Sister Hoffman moved with her husband from New York to Michigan some twenty years ago, and settled upon a farm in the township of Thetford, two and one-half miles north of Thetford Center, where they have ever since resided. For about twenty years sister Hoffman had been in poor health, and for the last four years almost continuously an invalid; but she was patient and kind throughout all her sickness, and by her sweet christian spirit endeared herself to all her neighbors, and to a host of friends. She was a great Bible student, and took great comfort in her sickness in the study of God's word. She often said, cheerily, and with brave resignation, "I have only to be patient, and wait his time." She died peacefully and triumphantly. Her husband is left alone, and has the respect and sympathy of all his friends in the neighborhood. His loss is but her eternal gain.

The funeral services were held at the hall at Thetford Center, Sept. 29th, at 2 o'clock p. m., conducted by Elder J. W. Gray. She was interred in the cemetery at Thetford Center.

DIED—At his home in Sidney, N. Y., April 20th, 1898, at 7 a. m., brother **James Bundy**, after an illness of two months, caused by cancer in the liver. Brother Bundy was born in the town of Otego, N. Y., May 24th, 1821; was one of the family of twelve children of James and Polly Bundy, all of whom grew up and married, and most of the number lived to be aged. Three brothers and three sisters survive him. Only one of them, brother Peter Bundy of this town, who is nearly eighty-seven years of age, being present at the funeral, which was largely attended at his residence Friday, April 22d, at 2:30 p. m. No man was richer in his sympathy, kinder in his heart, or more genuine in his love for his fellows. Broad in his information, studious, thoughtful, ever guarded in his utterance, frank and sincere in every impulse, his friends deeply realized that he was worthy of all the respect and affection which he attracted. He was sensitive, sympathetic and true hearted, and drew to himself a rare quality of affection, which more intimate acquaintance with him never failed to deepen. His was a delightful, beloved spirit. Brother Bundy was twice married, and the father of eight children, six of whom survive him, together with his lonely wife, who unceasingly cared for him in his great sufferings all the long weeks, with the aid of her chil-

dren, three of whom were present much of the time. Brother Bundy was in poor health most of the time for several years, but was able to manage his business, and kept up his interest in town affairs till confined to his bed. He was given a hope in Christ, and acknowledged it publicly, in 1852, and has been a permanent and consistent member of the Old School Baptist church at Otego ever since. His spiritual gift and graces were very choice, and highly prized by the church, and he wished special mention made at his funeral of his great love for his brethren, and the church, that he had always so highly respected and prized. He knew of Elder Bundy's illness, and changed the arrangements he had previously made, and requested a friend whom he had enjoyed much gospel conversation with, to attend the services; also Elder Bogardus was present, and spoke words of truth and comfort.

Sincerely your sister,

S. C. F. GUERNSEY.

TO MT. ZION CHURCH.

DIED—April 5th, 1898, at the home of her nephew, John I. Davis, in Fairfax Co., Va., our aunt, **Miss Mary Davis**, aged 88 years and 21 days. Our dear aunt was born in Prince Wm. Co., Va., March 15th, 1810; was baptized by Elder James Read, in April, 1824, in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church called Baein Race, in her fourteenth year, before the division among the Baptists. At that time she stood firm and unwavering, with the little flock of the living God, esteeming the reproach of Jesus more than all the treasures of Egypt. Realizing her own weakness, she had no fellowship for the vain works of men. She continued steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints. From my earliest childhood I have known and loved her as an aunt. In the last seventeen years I humbly hope I have known her as a sister in Christ, and truly she was a meek and humble follower of her Lord and Master. She was a kind friend, generous, and ever ready to help the needy, and very industrious. My heart is sad and sorrowful, sorrowing most of all that I shall see her face no more. I went to see her a short time before her death. She spoke of the goodness and mercy of the Lord towards her all the days of her life, and gave all the glory of her salvation to his name. Said she felt the end was near, and she was waiting the Lord's appointed time to take her home. It seemed as though the blessed theme of salvation by grace alone became more precious to her as her natural strength failed. How great and wonderful is the loving kindness and tender mercy of our God to his loved ones, even down to old age. She was a member at Mt. Zion church many years, and her name was there until the day of her death. I have heard her say she was a subscriber to the SIGNS when they were published in Alexandria, Va. At her request we

buried her at Frying Pan, Va. I wrote to brother White to come and preach, but he was attending the funeral of Mr. Poulton, so we met at the meeting-house, and brother Murphy read a chapter, spoke in prayer, sung "Asleep in Jesus," and then we tenderly laid her body in the silent grave. She left one sister, and many relatives and friends.

Your sister in hope,

MARTHA E. BOWIE.

HERNDON, Va., April 16, 1898.

POETRY.

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, thy vision is keen,
Thy weapon is sharp, thy colors are seen;
The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon, too,
Shall smite the proud foeman, and pierce him quite
through.

Thy few barley cakes to others are stale,
But shown unto Israel, his bread shall not fail;
His water is given, provisions are sure,
While Israel sleeps his camp is secure.

But Midian dreams, his vision is true;
The few barley cakes his tents overthrew.
O, Dagon now help me, the Midianite cries,
But Dagon beheaded still silently lies.

The Lord is thy Captain, and he'll see thee through;
Thy God is thy refuge, he's gracious and true.
No weapon formed 'gainst thee shall prosper again,
No tongue that ariseth shall sentence to pain.

Thy God is thy Judge, and his judgments are true;
Christ is thy helper, he'll carry thee through.
Who is it that judgeth when God justifies?
His people are sheltered 'neath his sacrifice.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

AFTER COMING BEFORE THE CHURCH.

My God, to thee my voice I'll raise
In heartfelt gratitude and praise,
That such a worm should have a place
Among the children of thy grace.

That I should be allowed to come,
And with thy people have a home,
Around thy board with them to feed,
O, this is happiness indeed.

But rise my thoughts, and soar away,
To that still brighter, happier day,
When I, through my Redeemer's love,
Shall join the church of Christ above.

There, there amidst the glorified,
I'll shout the praise of him who died;

There no weak nerves shall still my tongue,
I'll sound his praise both loud and long.

Not there a few poor fellow-men,
Will listen to the blissful strain;
But to a glorious company,
I'll tell what Christ has done for me.

There I shall want no tears to start,
To ease the fullness of my heart;
No, on that happy, happy day,
My God shall wipe all tears away.

There with my Savior I shall be,
From sin and sorrow ever free;
Shall see his face in heights of bliss;
What joy can be compared with this?

SARAH A. RUSHTON.

M E E T I N G S .

THE meetings of the Otego Old School Baptist church for June, are to be held the 11th and 12th, instead of the 4th and 5th, when Elder Vall is expected to be present.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY.

THE Old School Baptist church of Middleburgh, Schoharie Co., N. Y., has appointed her yearly meeting to be held the first Saturday and Sunday in June, (4th and 5th,) 1898. A cordial invitation to ministers, brethren and friends, to meet with us.

A. COOK, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the New Vernon Church, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1898, and continue three days.

A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends. Those coming by way of the New York, Lake Erie & Western R. R. from the east, will be met at Howells, on the arrival of the Orange County Express, which leaves Chambers St., New York, at 4:30 p. m., on Tuesday, June 7th. Those coming from the west on the same road, will take the train leaving Port Jervis at 3:30 p. m., on Tuesday, and stop at Howells. Those coming on Wednesday morning by the same road, will be met at Howells, on the arrival of the Milk Train from the east, at 7:02 a. m., and from the west on the arrival of the Mountain Express, at 8:15 a. m.

Those coming from the north, on the Ontario & Western R. R., will be met at Winterton, on the arrival of the Milk Train, 5:34 p. m., on Tuesday.

HIMAN S. COLLARD, Church Clerk.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

ABSALOM THE THIEF.

“AND it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom said moreover, O that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.”—2 Samuel xv. 1-6.

The affairs of the kingdom of Christ, the prosperity and adversities of its subjects, cannot be without interest to those who, being born again of the Spirit, are embraced in the realms of the kingdom. A likeness of some of the things pertaining to the kingdom of our dear Redeemer is set forth in the subject that is introduced by the Scriptures that we have before us. David and Solomon, as kings of Israel, were peculiarly types of Christ. A type or shadow of things to come, is

not the very image of the things, so David, Solomon and Israel, only imperfectly present Christ and his kingdom. The law with its priesthood and sacrifices was not the very image of the things that they shadowed forth. (Heb. x. 1.) So all persons, customs, observances and historical events presented in the Old Testament Scriptures, are not the very image of Christ and the church. This we should ever bear in mind when seeking to present the spiritual significance of such Scriptures. Indeed, we are only safe in expounding any Scripture when the Holy Spirit is our instructor, and enlightens and guides us into the truth. Let our pen lie still, let our tongue be dumb, if it is only some inventions of our own that we would proclaim. May the God of our mercy grant us his grace to be lowly, teachable, bowed in spirit before his throne with fervent longings that the Holy Spirit may take of the things of Christ and shew them unto us. Prayerless writing, and prayerless preaching, is of small account to the household of God. But when utterance is given by the Lord, it will be to the spiritual instruction, encouragement, reproof and edification of as many as to whom the Holy Spirit

sends the word. "David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God: and he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."—2 Samuel xxiii. 1-4. "Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people, I have found David my servant, with my holy oil have I anointed him."—Psalm lxxxix. 19, 20. "Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment."—Isaiah xxxii. 1. These Scriptures typically and prophetically present to us Christ Jesus the King of Zion. David, as king over all Israel, had his throne in Jerusalem; it was the city of the great king, and all Israel came unto him for judgment. Jerusalem is builded as a city compact together, whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. In all this we see Jesus, of whom Jehovah speaks: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." "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."—

Isaiah ii. 3. From the throne of Christ our King proceeds the judgment of all things pertaining to Israel. The law of Christ, the perfect law of liberty, not the law given at Mt. Sinai, not the covenant of Mt. Horeb, for upon the holy hill of Zion our King is enthroned, and out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David to order and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this." David did not have his throne upon Mt. Sinai, but in the city of Zion, and all Israel came unto him to Jerusalem for judgment. Jesus cannot be seen at Mt. Sinai, but upon Mt. Zion in the heavenly Jerusalem he is revealed. Thither all the nations of the redeemed are gathered; to him they repair, (Heb. xii. 18-24,) to spread before his throne all their troubles, for there only by the law of his mouth can their hard questions and controversies be settled. Instances of the people appealing to the kings of Israel for judgment, are recorded in the Scriptures. Two women came to Solomon; (1 Kings iii. 16,) Nathan came to David and called for the king's judgment upon the rich man who took the poor man's one little ewe lamb. (2 Samuel 12; see also 2 Samuel xiv; 2 Kings vi. 26.)

David, as king of the tribes of Israel, was a man after God's own heart, and unto him the people resorted for the settlement of their controversies. They presented before his throne their causes, and his judgment was final, and put at rest every difficulty that arose among his subjects. There were personal troubles, family grievances, disputes about their property, for some removed the ancient land-

marks, and would thus defraud one another, even their brethren. If dissatisfied with the decision of the judges throughout the land, at the foot of the throne of David they spread their cause, and awaited his sentence. For many years David's reign over all Israel had been unto them as the light of the morning. Had he not been just ruling in the fear of God? No one questions this. But now look at the scene; there from the byways, and upon the highways journey the perplexed subjects of the king. East and west, from Dan to Beersheba, from every quarter they come to have their suits determined by the King. Anxious, yet expectant, the troubled ones approach the gates of Jerusalem. Some have come a long distance, and are wearied, but hopefully they draw near, hoping soon to find admittance unto the King. "In the light of the King's countenance is life, and his favor is as a cloud of the latter rain." All expectant they enter through the gates of the city.

"And Absalom rose up early and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel. And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee." Why art thou out so early, O Absalom? Is it the king's business that requireth thee to rise up so early? Dost thou watch at the gate, lest some uncircumcised intruding spy should venture in? O Absalom, we are not ignorant of thy devices. Thou hast been devising iniquity against the king upon thy bed, and when the morning is light thou hast taken thy station at the opened gate to

practice thy mischievous designs. While on their way to the judgment seat of David they are intercepted by Absalom. Who would suspect that he had any evil intentions? His appearance, his speech and behavior would ward off any such thoughts. "In all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him." Whom and what does Absalom represent? Dear child of God, Absalom is the adversary, the devil, anti-christ, thy fleshly thoughts, imaginations, an evil heart of unbelief. Absalom is all fair, a very sympathetic friend on the outside, but inwardly he is a villain. Satan himself is transformed as an angel of light, and the imaginations of thy flesh appear sometimes so piously arrayed, thine unbelieving heart with its counsels appears to speak what seems the truth, and thus intercepted, thou art deceived and turned aside in thy approaches to the king.

"How oft deceived by self and pride,
Has my poor heart been turned aside,
And Jonah like has fled from thee,
Till thou hast looked again on me."

"Absalom stood beside the way of the gate." Satan stood at the right hand of Joshua, the high priest, to resist him. (Zech. iii. 1.) "As he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down and tare him."—Luke ix. 42. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."—Rev. xii. 10. "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."—Luke xi. 52.

"What various hindrances we meet,
In coming to the mercy seat;
Yet he who knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there."

The queen of Sheba came unto king Solomon to prove him with hard questions. So from the ends of the earth the chosen of the Lord come unto Jesus their King. The law, the doctrine, the judgment proceeding from his throne, is supreme. The scepter of his kingdom is a right scepter. His reign over the tribes of the Lord is the only power that yields tranquillity and consolation to his people. When all Israel is found in willing subjection to his law, then the affairs of the children of God go well, in the peace and prosperity of the kingdom. Judah and Israel, as many as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, are found eating and drinking and making merry. (1 Kings iv. 20.) But when turned aside from the law, the order, the doctrine of Christ, then as in the case of the revolt of Israel from David to set up Absalom as king, the end can only be confusion, miseries and humbling disaster. Absalom's hypocritical interestedness was the snare that took captive the tribes of Israel. "It was so that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? and he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel." Then he flatteringly pre-judges the suits and controversies of the people, saying, "See, thy matters are good and right." We are naturally inclined to those whose judgment is favorable to our cause. This insinuating speech therefore was quite congenial to these troubled ones. "But there is no one deputed of the king to hear thee." Astounding tidings! The countenances of the intercepted ones are changed from hopefulness to sad amazement. Fond hopes are blighted. What

after all my sore trials at home, and my wearisome journey to the judgment seat of the king, can it be that there is none to hear me, from the king downward? So says the kind and beautiful prince Absalom.

"And Absalom said moreover, O that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel." O Absalom, thy words are smoother than butter, and thy kisses are deceitful; with thy beauty, with thy fawning ways, with thy cruel lies, with thy hand and kisses, what mischief thou hast wrought. Thou hast turned away the allegiance of the tribes of Israel from David their king. O thou thief and robber, thou hast stolen their heart away from their gracious king. They wend their way homewards again, perplexed, amazed, and filled with hard thoughts against their king. Beloved of God, let us not forget that whatsoever intrudeth itself, and turns aside the children of Zion from their king, is as Absalom standing beside the way of the gate. When Satan and error intercept our approaches to our Lord and King, ah, when our own unbelieving thoughts, when pernicious ways and false doctrines are propagated in the churches, when all is sugar coated, when all is transformed and appears to us in the beauty and attire, with the soft words and caresses of Absalom, then how much we have need of grace to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. When the tribes of the Lord are intercepted by Ab-

salom there is an interruption of the intercourse between them and their God and King. For all true spiritual communion with the Lord is in the truth. Woe to that man that teaches in Israel the inventions of his own heart, (Jer. xiv. 14.) to the subverting of the souls of the redeemed. Dare we esteem it a trifling thing to be found giving utterance to whims and doctrines of our own, or some one's invention, the result of which can only be to the annoyance, the distraction, or the injury of the people of God? Woe be to thee, O Absalom, by whom the offence cometh! Our own times are no more exempt from heresies being propagated among the churches than former times have been. A false charity may wink at this error, and that wresting of the Scriptures to sustain doctrines of our own manufacture, but it is all vile. It is Absalom standing beside the way of the gate. The love of God in us rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. The pernicious effects of error, whether it be simply in our own thoughts, or taught by men among the household of God, will be to bring about estrangement from our gracious King, and confusion and sorrow in Israel. "The vile person will speak villiany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail."—Isaiah xxxii. 6. When in any way we have been turned aside from Jesus our King, to whom shall we go, to whom shall we look for judgment? Shall we enthrone the imaginations of an evil heart of unbelief, shall the doctrines of men and devils be set up and crowned to bear rule over us? Can Israel hope for judgment and tranquillity if Absalom be made king? Vain thoughts, errors, and Satan, transformed as an

angel of light, may promise us liberty, and allure us with much wantonness away from Jesus our King, but the fruit of it all will be a day of grief, and desperate sorrow.

Look at those Israelites who are returned from Jerusalem; there they are nursing their grievances; what evil surmisings, what cogitations aggravate their woes. There has been no settlement of their suits and controversies, because Absalom has interfered. What now will they do? Did not Absalom say if he were made judge every man should have justice? To Absalom they turn, he will redress our wrongs. "The conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom." They revolted from King David, and rallied around the standard of the usurper. O foolish Israelites! What a heart-saddening spectacle to witness dear children of God taken captives, and allured away from the simplicity of Christ, vainly imagining that spiritual health and tranquillity can be found in cleaving to errors. Absalom in many forms is yet in the world. How shall Israel escape his wiles?

A child of God may say, I am so imperfectly versed in the Scriptures, I have so little knowledge of the doctrine of Christ, I have no understanding of the original languages in which the holy Scriptures were written, neither have I an analytical concordance to study the varied meaning of the words of the Bible, and if I had, the necessary cares of this life would prevent my time being so employed, and how can I think of disputing what able preachers and writers set forth, they know so much more than I? Dear child of God, it does not matter how eloquent and popular the great preacher may be, no matter how ably he may handle the pen, no matter how modern or ancient the

articles of faith may be, no matter if from the first number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to the present number, the doctrine has been promulgated; no matter if the doctrine can be traced back in the writings of men to the very days of the apostles of the Lamb, the question is, Did the apostles write it? Is the doctrine found in the precious Scriptures? Ah! says the meek and lowly child of God, how am I, with such little understanding of divine things, to know what the Scriptures teach? Do not all religious writers and preachers endeavor to show that the Scriptures sanction their doctrines? How can I know what is the truth? How shall I escape being ensnared by the wiles of Absalom? I will tell you, dear child of God, when you are safe from all erroneous doctrines, no matter who may utter them to beguile the unstable souls. Are you perplexed and tossed about by what you have heard some one preach, or what some one has written, perhaps that some one is one whom you have highly esteemed, and whom you know is considered by many to be a great preacher, or writer. Perhaps you would be afraid to whisper the thought to another, that he was astray from the precious doctrine of Christ; this you feel would be very presumptuous. What will you do? Will you go and consult some able commentary upon the Scriptures? Will you find an infallible determination of the matter by consulting the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, or any other writer in its columns? No. Do not think I am setting at naught the precious writings of our dear brethren, far from it, but I desire to present to you, beloved of God, that wherein is your perfect safety from the ensnaring power of whatsoever is not the doctrine of God our Savior. "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. This is thy sanctuary. At the mercy-seat. In the pavilion of the Lord, in the secret of his presence the noisome pestilence of error shall not harm thee. It is among the most sacred and choicest moments in the life of the believer in Jesus, to be found as a little child pouring out his perplexities, confessing his need of divine instruction, and craving before the throne of God, that grace that he so much needs. O! I know this is so by sweet experience. The Lord preserveth the simple, I was brought low and he helped me. The Spirit of truth is our guide into all truth. (John xvi. 13.) Let those men whose ministry has been to the spiritual comfort and edification of the church of God, stand forth before us; what manner of men are they? Could we have given us glimpses of their private, secret life, we should find them walking humbly with their God. Much tried with temptations and evil, we should find them often imploring wisdom of God. Though they appear great in our eyes, we should find them feeling to be very small in their own sight, before the throne of God. Just as small, and a little smaller than we, dear children of God.

(Concluded next number.)

"YE SHALL LIE DOWN IN SORROW."

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."—Isa. 1. 10, 11.

The Lord himself speaks in each verse above to his chosen people Israel, yet how differently he speaks to the two

classes of his people! For to the one the Lord addresses good words of peace and comfort, saying, "Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God;" but to the other class his unfailing word is, "This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow." Now this not only applied to the people of God then, but it also as truly applies to them now and always; for in this short and very instructive fiftieth chapter, the inspired prophet personated Christ, and spoke of his sufferings and glorious success and kingdom. Let the reader please read the chapter. Isaiah was in a large measure the prophet of Christ—the gospel prophet. So here at the sixth verse the Spirit of Christ in him says, "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: * * * and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me. * * * Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?" Thus it is shown that the dear suffering Son of man himself trusted in God, knowing that God his Father would help him and justify him, and that his adversaries should not condemn him, but he should overcome them and triumph in God. The holy man Christ having thus spoken, as the Captain and Leader of God's people, and as their Brother in adversity and their example, he then in the tenth verse speaks to those of his suffering saints who fear and tremble before the Lord their God, who in their hearts reverently obey the voice of his servant Jesus, and yet who walk in darkness, and have no light, and cheerfully bids them to possess their souls in patience, and trust in the name of the Lord. For the name of the

Lord is a strong tower, and the righteous (not the self-righteous) runneth into it, and are safe. Yea, let this poor and helpless one, who mourneth in darkness, "stay upon his God." What a strong refuge and consolation this one has! The poor soul is sweetly told by the sympathizing and merciful High Priest, to stay or lean or rest upon God. Ah, this poor one needs this strong defense and safe resting place. Here he finds both safety and rest, and though he is in darkness, and has no light, yet his soul makes her boast in the precious name of the Lord. O, give me the lowly and trying lot of this blessed one, to fear the Lord my God, and obey the voice of his righteous and justifying servant Jesus, though it is to walk in dark trials, and to feel that the clouds of affliction shut out the light, and bow my spirit in awe and fear before the Lord; for then it is my blessed privilege to receive the divine comfort of the text: But how remarkable this is, that those who both fear God, and obey the voice of Jesus, should walk in darkness, and have no light! Can there be any mistake about this? No; for the Lord makes no mistakes. Well, then, some who lay claim to remarkable gospel advancement and light are mistaken, for their word is, that the people of God walk in darkness, and have no light, only when they are disobedient, and that the Lord's obedient people do not thus have to complain of having no light, but they may always have a good time and be happy. For the teaching now is, that it is only the poor sort of the Lord's people, those who do not fear the Lord, nor obey the voice of the good Shepherd, that go bowed down under clouds of affliction, and are left without light. It is held that the good and obedient always are rewarded with the light of the Lord's coun-

tenance, and that this light and joy of salvation, with all our spiritual blessings in the time of our sojourn on earth, are conditional on our part, and dependent upon ourselves. Those who so hold and contend should be accorded sincerity, and the right of their convictions; but the plain testimony of the Lord, not only in the text, but in the volume of revealed truth, and also in the lives of God's holy servant Jesus, and the apostles and prophets, do not support this plausible and man-pleasing position or theory.

Now, dear reader, come with me, and let us hastily follow in the footsteps of the people of the living and true God, who filially feared him, and in faith obeyed the voice of their Redeemer and King. Look at the life of Job, of whom God himself said, "There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil." Yet of this eminent servant of God it could truly be said, in the touching words of the text, that he walked in darkness, and had no light, for no other God-fearing servant, except Jesus of Nazareth, ever suffered a darker or longer night of trial and affliction, inasmuch that it is heart-touching to read his life. Look at the meek Moses, and who except he was divinely sustained and staid upon God, could have endured all the terrible darkness and perils that he walked through? And Paul said of Moses, that he "was verily faithful in all his house, as a servant" of God. Follow the wandering and darksome pilgrimage of Abraham, "the friend of God." David, too, "a man after God's own heart," for long years was in the midst of darkest perils and trials, as vividly told in his mournful psalms. His soul was often shut up as in a dungeon, and the waves and billows of affliction went over him,

so that he was a pathetic type of our spiritual David. Go after the great prophet Elijah, and behold his awful trials, and hear his piteous plaints and cries to God. Read the lamentations of Jeremiah, a faithful servant of God. Then read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, which recounts a long list of the true followers of God, and how deeply they were baptized in suffering and affliction; yet in all this walking in darkness, and through deep waters of tribulation, these all trusted in the name of the Lord. And now follow with bowed head from the manger to the cross, the man of sorrows, who always pleased God; behold him in the terrible wilderness with the wild beasts, fiercely tempted of the devil; hear his all night prayers to God in a dark, chilly mountain, with strong crying and tears, and was heard in that he feared; witness his groaning and weeping at the tomb; hear him say, "Now is my soul troubled;" hear the heart-breaking cry in the garden, "O, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done." In all this great company of God's afflicted and poor people, we have a faithful and touching fulfillment of the text; for through all the dark trials and sufferings of these obedient and persecuted servants of God, they trusted in and staid upon him, and he saved them out of all their distresses and darkness.

Let us now come to our own time, and here as well we shall find that the most God-fearing, faithful and spiritual of the Lord's people have been those who have walked most in the lowly and dark valley of tribulation and affliction; who have had a painful realization of their own insufficiency, sinful unworthiness, weakness and felt dependence upon the Lord and his grace. These are little and lowly in

their own esteem, and one will hear them complain of their own coldness and darkness, doubts and fears, and of the hidings of the dear Lord's countenance. These are the broken in heart on account of their sinful flesh, and the contrite in spirit, to whom the Lord says he will look. David says, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word," saith the Lord. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: blessed are they that mourn: blessed are the meek," are the precious words of our Lord. Not they that were thus in the past, but they that are thus in the present. Standing in the midst of the vast assemblage of the Jews, at the great feast of tabernacles, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." So in the text, the Lord calls out the poor and needy from among the people of Israel, those who were in darkness and affliction, and spoke words of comfort to them, bidding them trust in him, their everlasting salvation, strength and light. For God "hath respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off." So to the others of Israel the Lord says, "Behold," that is, consider it, "all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled." The Lord here gave them up to their own hearts' lusts, to have their own way, and to do their own religious service and work. They had become impatient and tired of the old way of walking in lowly paths of darkness, and of trusting in and waiting upon the Lord; and so they resolved in their

boasted free will and ability to move up on higher ground, that they might be more prosperous, and have a popular revival and a good time, like their worshiping neighbors around them. Yes, and they succeeded to their hearts' content, for they were so zealous in their worship that they ascended up to the high hills of Judea, where they built altars or places of worship, and there they kindled fires, from which the sparks went up in the sight of their worshiping neighbors, and they walked rejoicingly in the light of their fires, and gloried in their works. What a big revival they did have, to be sure, and how they could then jeer and gibe their lowly brethren, who contritely feared and served the Lord, but were in affliction and darkness, and could only hope and trust and stay on him, longing, watching and praying for him to come and drive back the darkness, bid the Sun of righteousness arise unto them with healing beams, revive and bless them. But those on the high places, who in their fervor were kindling fires and rejoicing in this great religious prosperity, doubtless blamed them for the darkness and affliction they were in, and taunted them for trusting wholly in the name of the Lord, and staying simply on the God of Israel, like dependent little children. They would be disposed to say to them, "Why do you grieve and afflict your souls on account of what we are doing? Why don't you join with us, and get up out of the low and dark places you are in? You are too particular, close and peculiar, and quite too old fashioned. Look up at us, and see the light of our fires, and then kindle fires in yourselves, as we are doing, and have a happy and good time. We are the children of Abraham, as well as yourselves, but we think it is high time to get out of the old ruts of

our fathers, and accept the good things and more congenial ways of our neighbors' religion and worship, And in doing so, we are far more influential and popular with them, and are gaining proselytes from them, for not a few of their sons and daughters are joining in with us, and walking in the light of our fires." It is a true saying, "History repeats itself." For the above two sorts of worshipers are among the people of Israel today, and the two verses of the text at the head of this humble sermon are very appropriate to the two classes. But whether those Israelites that kindled fires of their own, and were so zealous and active in walking in the light of their own fires, derisively called their poor brethren who trusted in the name of the Lord, "Can't help its," does not appear, but the strong probability is that there is a more modern Ashdod term of reproach. I have a very distinct recollection of often hearing it spoken against all the Old Baptists in my youth, but the religious people who thus derided our people then were known as conditionalists, as opposed to our salvation from beginning to finish being all of the Lord, and by grace alone. So they believed that, as salvation is partly of the Lord, and partly of man, the thing for them to do was to kindle up religious fires of their own, and compass themselves about with showers of sparks, and walk in the light of their own works. And they did it, much to their own glorification, and heralded abroad through their publications their grand success in gathering in large numbers to the help of the Lord. That they might better kindle their fires to a great flame, they got up protracted meetings, and to blow up the sparks, much loud and excited and sympathetic singing was indulged in, and when the fires thus kindled flamed high,

many would run over with zeal, and not a few would fairly dance and shout. O, how different this is from the old way of walking in darkness, "faint, yet persuading," and trusting in the name of the Lord. Here are the two ways, and these are all. Let us see how they each end. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." And to stay on God is blessed; for, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" How shall it be with the other religious people, who do so much for themselves and the Lord, to dispel the darkness? Shall he not bestow upon them a full reward? For all those religious workers, who claim that so much "depends upon themselves," believe that the Lord will bless and reward them for their religious service, and they serve for "the pay there is in it," or for the reward. This is a very selfish motive, to say the least, but it holds good as applied to the religious world the world around. It is cause for grief and mourning that any of our Old Baptist people should join in with the religious world in this claim. For to those of Israel who are thus kindling fires, and depending upon themselves, and promising themselves a large reward for all this zeal and service, the Lord himself fixes their certain reward, saying, "This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow." There is no escaping this. One or the other of the two verses of the text applies to the whole house of Israel.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., March 1, 1898.

DELMAR, Delaware, Oct. 10, 1897.

ELDER A. B. FRANCIS—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—I feel that it has pleased the Lord to put into my sinful heart the desire to write you. The subject I have in mind is recorded in John xxi. 15-17:

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? * * * And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

Peter, as a man of the world, was a poor fisherman, knowing nothing of God until Jesus, as we are told, walking by the sea of Galilee, by divine authority called Peter and Andrew, as they were casting their nets, saying unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. Now do not all of us experience the same things? We were fishing for the things of this life, if not for the fish that swim in the sea. The fish would include all things that man by nature seeks after. We are casting our nets for the things of this world, but when Jesus says, Follow me, we, as did Peter, will leave these things and follow him. As we go along, we, like Peter, many times will not know it is Christ, the Son of God, with whom we are walking. We are made to doubt and inquire along. Often when we catch glimpses of him, we will go to work as also did Peter, when he saw him walking on the water, to find ways to meet him. Peter said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me that I come to thee on the water. What was the result? The Lord said, Come. In this he is about to try Peter's faith. Just so he tries the faith of every child of God whom he calls. When Peter began to walk, his faith failed him, and he began to sink. O! dear trembling child of God, have you not felt this many times, in the very presence of Jesus, when the storm is tossing the old ship, and you hear his word, saying, Be not afraid, it is I? Do

you not sometimes feel, like Peter, that you can walk on the water? But when you start to do so, your faith fails you, and you are made to cry with Peter, "Lord, save me!" But Jesus stretches out his hand and saves him. It seems to me that we are brought right along with him in this experience. There are many things along here that I shall be compelled to pass over, yet I will try to take up a few points to show something of how the Lord led Peter, before I come to the subject which I named at the first.

Jesus spake in parables many times. One might say, Had I been with Jesus while he was here in the flesh I would not have doubted as Peter did, but remember that the Lord had the same power to hide these things from those who were with him, that he has from you. Upon a certain occasion he said to his disciples, "But whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which art in heaven." Therefore, as we by faith know that he has all power in heaven and in earth, and that flesh and blood cannot reveal these things unto us, it is not any more strange that these things should be hidden from Peter, than from us. But he brings Peter along just as he brings all whom he calls, preparing them for the work which he will have them to do. Right here I will say a little something about the works. While we are as a people accused of not believing in works, we do believe in works, but not in what the religious world calls good works, such as Sunday School picnics, excursions, &c. The Lord gives us a work to do. First, he gives us a desire to do his work, or what he commands

us. What is this work? It is to deny ourselves worldly pleasures, seek to follow after Christ, walk uprightly, deal justly with every man, and to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father, which is in heaven. But when the Lord is pleased to try our faith, he works many times in a mysterious way. On the night in which the Lord was betrayed, Peter said, I will go with thee to prison, and to death. "Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." What was the result? Peter, like poor mortals to-day, when the trial came did just as the Lord said he would. Have we not had the same experience? When the Lord had turned and looked upon him, he went out and wept bitterly. The worldly religionists say that in this instance Peter fell from grace. If this be so, we all fall from grace many times. I do not so understand it. In this way we are brought to see our utter helplessness. We get to boasting in what we can do, and what we are going to do for the Lord, and the Lord gives us over to Satan to try us, for he said to Peter, "Satan hath desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." He sifts us, that the chaff may be separated. When we come before the Lord, it must be as the poet says,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

After our folly is seen, we are made to weep. Peter did not seem to know that the Lord would rise again. He thought they would not see him any more, but Jesus appeared to them after he was risen, and rebuked them for their unbelief. I feel rebuked many times for my unbelief. But this all must needs be, for

it pleases the Lord to sift me as wheat, and it is all to his glory and honor.

Now I can come to the text. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to him, Simon Peter, lovest thou me more than these? Are we not subjected to the same question, many times? If it does not come in the way it can be heard by the ear, it comes to the heart, in a still small voice. He said, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. Does not the poor, trembling child of God, who feels that if he is a child he is the least of all, feel often that he must say, like Peter, Yea, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. The third time in substance were these words repeated. The thought which is especially upon my mind, is, to ask who are the lambs and sheep. I understand them to be the same poor, trembling ones of whom I have been speaking all the way along. Of these he said, Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people. They are the people who walked through the Red Sea, and have ever been made to walk through many trials and temptations, and are made to hunger and thirst after the bread that comes from above. The sheep of whom he speaks, get very hungry at times, but his sheep never perish. What is the food which Peter must give to the sheep? It is already prepared. Peter has nothing to do with its preparation. The Lord said to his disciples, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, they that believe (here are the sheep) and are baptized shall be saved. This gospel is the food which must be fed to the sheep. Do you not, trembling child, remember many times when you have been fed with the sincere milk of the word, when you have set under the sound of the gospel? Then you have drank from the

pure fountain that proceeds from the throne of God. As I said before, this food was prepared for Peter. Neither does any gospel minister prepare the food. The Lord prepares the food, and gives the desire for the food, and then he prepares his servants to administer it, and gives them utterance, and speaks through them to his people. He says in one place, Thou shalt not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. This is the way that the food comes to his sheep. It is always sent in the right time and place. Not one word will ever fall to the ground. It shall accomplish what he pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached the gospel of salvation by grace, which plainly proves that this was the food which he was to give to the sheep. This food is the gift of God. He has been calling and qualifying his servants ever since there has been one of his sheep on earth, and he will continue to do this until the last one is gathered home. No college of men is needed to prepare his servants, but the Lord calls them as he did Peter, and they follow him, and many times does Satan sift them that the chaff may be cleansed away. He causes them to realize that this work is all of the Lord, and they learn that if they were left to their own strength, they would prove like Job's comforters, miserable indeed. Therefore give God all the praise, now and for evermore. Amen.

Your brother,

JOHN L. HASTINGS.

ELGIN, Oregon, Feb. 20, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—
I will try in my feeble way to tell you of the dealings of the Lord with me. I will say in the first place, that I am not a

good scribe, and like Paul, I come not to you with excellency of speech. In the year 1857, I began to be troubled about my sins, and could not get rid of the trouble at all. The more I would strive against the trouble the greater sinner I felt myself to be. I felt that I could never appear before God. I felt that he was just, and I was guilty, and there was no way for me to ever come to him. But if I am not mistaken, the Lord showed me the way through our Lord Jesus Christ, by his own power, which caused me to rejoice. Many times these words were presented to my mind, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." I thought, Can this be Scripture? I went to the house and took the Bible and read, and it did not take me long to find it. And I found so much other Scripture that was of so much comfort to me. The first verse of Romans, eighth chapter, came to me. "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." There seemed to be opened to me a new volume in this, and I thought it was too good for a poor, lost, ruined sinner like me to claim. Then I read, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not

received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." All this seemed to be constantly in my mind. I would go to the meetings, and the sermons would make me believe that I was born again. Yet I was afraid to offer myself to the church. I went to the meeting on the fourth Sunday in October, and as I went along, these words came to me, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father, in my name, he may give it unto you." Then my prayer was, Lord, lead me where thou wouldest have me to go. And when the minister got up to preach that day, I looked at him, and at all the brethren and sisters, and O, how I wished I was one of them, or as good as they were. I bowed my head in prayer to my God, and asked him to be merciful to me, a poor, despised sinner. I hardly heard a word of the sermon that day, but when the minister called for those who wished to unite with them, he sang this hymn :

"The Lord my Shepherd is,
I shall be well supplied;
Since he is mine, and I am his,
What can I want beside?
He leads me to the place
Where heavenly pastures grow;
Where living waters gently pass,
And full salvation flows."

And I never waited to consult my mind, whether I must go on or not. The first thing that I knew, I was giving my hand to the minister, and the next was, the minister said the sister is at liberty to tell to the church what the Lord has done for her. But the tempter said to me, You are deceiving the church, and I could not say a word as to why I was there. At length my uncle arose and

said to me, "Do you feel that the Lord for Christ's sake has forgiven your sins?" I answered, "I do." As to what else I said I have no recollection, but, to my surprise, I was received into the church, and baptized. I am still a poor, doubting one, and I have felt at times that it was of no use for me to pray, for the prayer of the wicked availeth nothing. I know this is true, but he has said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. * * * Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." So I think that we all ought to rejoice, when we are persecuted, and not weary in well doing, for he has said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Now I will write a few words about the words of the Savior, when he called Peter to feed his lambs and sheep. It will be noticed that he said to him, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs." And this was repeated the third time. But he never said to him, go and bring my lambs unto me, nor warn them to come unto me. It looks very plain to me, that he knows all his family, his lambs, and where they are. 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."

Well, dear brethren, I am afraid that I shall weary you with my scattering re-

marks. There are but few of us scattered over this country, but we have a very able minister in Elder G. E. Mayfield. I have heard Baptist ministers preach in the east, and wherever they preach, I find the same doctrine. We read their writings in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and they are all in harmony with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. I have been a reader of the SIGNS for seventeen years, and if I know myself, I love the doctrine it sets forth. May God bless you, and enable you to keep sending the paper into all the world. For O, what a comfort it has been to this poor, hungry, starving soul. I have often wanted to write, but have feared that I would be a reproach to the paper. Do with this as you see fit, and all will be well with me.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,
MARY A. STURGIS.

GLENWOOD, Texas, May 30, 1897.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—ESTEEMED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your favor of the 17th inst. came to hand yesterday. I was truly glad to hear from you again. I have been in rather a dull, gloomy condition of mind, especially in regard to spiritual things, all spring. I sometimes doubt that I could find another mind just such as mine. I appear at times to myself as a perfect mass of contradictions; sometimes all alive to the world, and to things of this life, without a visible sign of spiritual life, having no desire at all to read the Scriptures; had rather read a political paper or an almanac, as to that, or if I forced myself to read, I could not tell in ten minutes, perhaps, what I had read. I sometimes feel an aversion to spiritual company or conversation. There is some poetry which describes what is often my feelings. I have often sung

and read it, and felt that it was not applicable to me, but for some times past it seems especially so. It reads,

“O once I had a glorious view of my redeeming Lord;
He said, ‘I’ll be a God to you,’ and I believed his word;
But now I have a deeper stroke than all my groanings
are;
My God has me of late forsook; he’s gone, I know not
where.”

Those fiery temptations through which I have been passing, in which I have been sorely tempted to lay down all pretensions whatever religiously, and especially efforts at preaching, it seems would have a tendency to humble me, and subdue the evil passions of my Adam nature. But while shame and sorrow often bring me low, I find all these evil passions still there, and striving for supremacy. I can find some consolation if I can believe for a time that it is “the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye [I] cannot do the things that ye [I] would.” Did the apostle Paul have reference to such a conflict when he said, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” While all the above (and much more that might be said) is true, I find myself ever ready to defend, as best I can, the cause of my Master; in fact often feeling a great love and zeal for his cause and truth. It seems sometimes that the poet Newton somewhat expresses my case:

“I ask’d the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

’Twas he who taught me thus to pray,
And he, I trust, has answer’d prayer;
But it has been in such a way
As almost drove me to despair.

I hoped, that in some favor’d hour,
At once he’d answer my request;
And, by his love’s constraining power,
Subdue my sins, and give me rest.

Instead of this, he made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part."

But enough of this complaining. If I could, with the pen of the most eloquent, paint all "the hidden evils of my heart," or fully describe my wretchedness, it would perhaps be unprofitable and uninteresting to you. The condition of Zion, so far as my acquaintance extends, seems to me to be gloomy. I have been reading a pamphlet written by Elder R. H. Boaz, of Fulton, Ky. The Baptists are all split up there on the subject of "time salvation." An element there is contending for a "conditional time salvation." But perhaps you know more about that controversy than I do. I consider Elder Boaz's work an able and interesting defense of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, both for time and for eternity. The members of our (the Fellowship) Association are, with very few exceptions, predestinarian in toto. While we have never made it a test of fellowship, the limited element has in several places done so. Our preachers in the main are bold and plain in the advocacy of what they believe to be truth. This limited element I think is in the majority in Texas, and of course claim to be the original "Simon pure" Old School Baptists. They have published many charges against us, some of which are true, and some untrue. I think if we could give up the idea of unlimited predestination, the balance would not be much in their way. I think, however, that if we were allowed to yield the point of predestination, we would soon be called upon to yield in something else, and so on, until Arminianism prevailed entirely. While everything looks gloomy from our standpoint, I suppose that it is as it was in Elijah's day. Though the old prophet thought that all the true wit-

nesses had been slain, he was informed that there was yet seven thousand that had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. And in Paul's day, "Even so at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." I believe that the Lord will accomplish all his purposes in his own way, and when this time-world winds up, nothing more nor less will have been done. But how hard at times it is to be reconciled to his way. Only a few more years at the longest, and the tale will be told so far as we are concerned. May God grant us patience to wait all our appointed time, till our change come; then to appear before him clothed in the imputed righteousness of a blessed Redeemer. Then will our sins, with all gloom and darkness, be gone forever, nevermore to appear against us.

Yours in tribulation, yet in hope,
H. B. JONES.

JANUARY 11, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—The SIGNS is a welcome visitor at our home. It contains all the preaching that we have now. I have been a subscriber since 1893. It was through the medium of the SIGNS that I found the people of God. It was August 9th, 1893. The editorial was entitled, "The Footsteps of the Flock." O what a beautiful article that was to the poor, hungry and thirsty child of God. There God made known to me that I was feeding beside the shepherds' tents. I was waiting for the Father to open the door and let me in. Yes, dear brethren, he compelled me to come in. It just seems to me now that I was feeding around till I was so faint and so poor that I could go no further. O what a resting place it is beside the shepherds' tents. To be fed and to drink from the pure water which flows from the throne

of God. To obey is better than sacrifice. When a child of God is made willing to follow their Lord and Master in the watery grave what a sweet resting place it is. "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." If the dear lambs who are bleating around the shepherds' tents could only see the beauty there is in obeying, they would not delay. I know, dear ones, that you feel unworthy. You say you are not fit. But,

"If you tarry till you are better
You will never come at all."

Our God never commenced a good work yet, and left it undone. He will perform his work to the end. What a comfort these words are to the little ones sometimes, when they are feeding around other shepherds' tents, or hovering around the fold. I know there are some who are as near as that. They are around the fold. They are almost starving, too. They have not heard the gospel. How can they hear without a preacher? And how can they preach unless they are sent? The harvest is great, but the laborers are few. I pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his vineyard. One said, "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." I only thought to write a few words to the editors, and thank them for their kindness. I am thankful to know that God has kept them as the apple of his eye. I do sympathize with you in all your troubles and losses and crosses. I do thank God that he is able to bring us off more than conquerors in all these things. I believe that he foreknew all things from the beginning to the end. Now, dear ones, I have many more words to write to you, but I feel too unworthy. If there is anything in this which you think profitable for the SIGNS, you may publish it.

There are some who I feel sure, would like to know how we are getting along.

I trust that you will remember me at the throne of grace.

Your sister as I hope,

ANNIE E. SMITH.

[OUR sister says that she was led to the people of God through the SIGNS. This is an encouragement to us. The editorial to which our sister refers was written, we suppose, by brother William L. Beebe. No doubt this will be a comfort to him. It is a comfort to those who labor in word and doctrine, when they learn that their labors have been blessed to the good of their Master's family. It humbles them, even while it gladdens them. They can say at such times, Who am I, that I should be so blessed as to be a cupbearer to the children of God, even the least of them?

—ED.]

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, Jan. 14, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your letter of the fifth inst. came as a glad surprise. It is so pleasant to interchange thought with one of my kindred in the Lord, and also to be assured that you esteem me for the truth's sake. I had it on my mind to write you before receiving your letter, for I felt that I showed you scant courtesy in my last. I hope that you did not think so. And in recalling it perhaps I can interest you somewhat. When I began to write it, I thought that I could call it a good place, and I could tell you it was my blessed privilege to get away from self. Instead of which, not for a period of years have I passed through such a searching of heart, and of self-abasement, as at the beginning of that letter. It seems, to look back upon it, that the Lord rebuked me. Thus from the depths I wrote bitter things of myself. Now I have nothing to

retract. The subject is vast. But here is where I was troubled afterward, I feared that you would not clearly understand what I wrote, and I could not clearly recall it. I feared that you would mistake it for a morbid repining, or a tendency to serve in the oldness of the letter. For you to have such a thought distressed me, for I felt that I was writing to a comparative stranger. (I shall never think so again.) For this reason when I saw it in print, and also your kindly note, I can truly say that a weight was removed from my mind.

I recall that after writing a page or two, I was providentially called away, and when I again took up my pen, I was enabled to look up to the hills from whence cometh my help, and was thus enabled to get away from out of the miry clay. For many days, about my affairs, I ponder over this old nature, which is never renewed, but comes to be more and more of a burden, and amid the tumult within these words occurred to me, "Black, but comely." If an audible voice had spoken at my side, the reaction could scarcely have been greater. From this my mind was led to the text, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us," &c. Upon this second clause I pondered long, and wished that I might know your views upon it. In a number of the SIGNS, a request was made for your views on these words, to which you responded. I had never heard any views expressed by any one on the subject, and your remarks were very helpful. In connection I thought of the desire to know what is the will of God concerning us, which comes from every believer's heart, from the several bounds of their habitation, which God has foreordained for them. Also their desire to run with patience the race set before them, which

they all feel. I know that it is possible to run with a show of patience, which will call forth admiration from others, and one may be counted as making good speed, when he cannot be satisfied himself. There is a burden, and the work seems a long way off. Again, in the same situation, one can run and not be weary, and walk and not faint, and the burden is light. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," says the apostle. If we could only look, how quickly every burden would drop off. Whether we are on the mount of transfiguration, or fleeing from a persecuting Saul, if we are found with Jesus only, all is well. He of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. From these reflections my mind reverted to the many times in which the word peace is interwoven in the sacred word. The first text that occurred to me was in Romans v. 1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." No doubt, in the space of time in which I am writing this, you can recall scores of places in which it occurs, but I am writing of myself, and a remark of dear old sister Humphrey, of Jay, Me., comes to my mind. In speaking to her of a sermon to which we had listened, I told her that I was full, but that I did not know but the reason was, that it took so little to fill me. She replied that it was a blessed thing to be full any way. It seems that this peace has come into my heart through our Lord Jesus Christ, and from peace with God, the access is easy to the green pastures and the still waters. You wrote me of your meditations on the Psalms. They dwell more frequently upon my mind than any other portion of the word. There is so much there for every frame of mind to gather comfort from, and the many strong and

majestic terms which the psalmist ascribes to Deity, are of themselves praise.

I have nearly lost sight of my perversity in my former letter, but I finished it as nearly as I can recollect with these thoughts, "He asked me to write again. Now I have written, and I think that it will be the last that he will ever wish to hear from me." This was as candid as any thought that ever came into my mind. If there is anything to forgive, I think that you are the one to do it. If you find anything that you wish to publish, dissect and condense it, or if there is any thought which you can appropriate for yourself, it is yours to do with what you choose.

I began this several days ago. It is written disconnectedly, and differently from what I should for publication, but there is nothing, I hope, that I should wish to withhold from my brethren and sisters. I was satisfied with your note at the close of my article. For your kindly thoughts of me, I wish to return thanks. I wish to add that I have had an earnest desire for strength in the inner and outer man, according to the good pleasure of God, and with the desire he has granted its fulfillment. I have had more than a fair degree of health, and a comforting degree of his presence. I have now reached my three score years and ten. I can hardly realize it. Still, in various ways, I am admonished that this earthly tabernacle is being dissolved. I know that changes must soon come which will materially affect me, but like a child in its mother's arms, I lie back upon the promise, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." I think that I have written enough, and although you have proved your charity, again I crave it.

I remain your sister in a precious hope,

ELIZA W. WHEELRIGHT.

ROXBORO, N. C., April 29, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just read "Exhortation," in the SIGNS for May first, and it has done me much good, for it is as I see and have expressed. Truly the true believers in God's unlimited predestination hate sin because the spirit of true righteousness is in them, and in that new man they cannot love any evil thing. Exhortation is in the heart of him to whom it comes in word and power, through the ministry of the word, for the one witnesses to the other. How should I know that an exhortation from you, as a minister of God, was for me, if I did not feel the same word and power in my own heart? Our peace is manifest within us as we are brought into full obedience to the commandments of God. "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." An exhortation spoken by a minister is not to me, except the Lord has wrought that very work in me. Then the word of the minister comes to me as a gospel witness to that which is already in my heart. Thus John the Baptist came to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. The work of God was before John, so that the word spoken by him was with power to those whom the Lord had prepared.

It is predestination working in the heart that prepares us for the word of exhortation. Without this wonderful work of God, we would be just like all other men, and there would be to us no exhortation. Why should a minister exhort one to baptism who has never been made to hunger for baptism, or the joys thereto united? And even so with every duty, we owe to God, in his house. No one can feel that true, spiritual interest in the work of the house of the Lord until the commandment comes to him with

power. Jonah felt the power of the word when the Lord commanded him to go to Ninevah and preach, and the commandment worked in him to its fulfillment. His trouble over the commandment did not precede the commandment itself. So also the word of the Lord to Moses was what stirred him up, and made him feel his inability to do the work required of him; but the commandment continued to work in him until the work was done. It is even so in every case. So we are made to see that the word has gone forth out of the mouth of God for the accomplishment of a certain end, and it works so as to overcome and destroy any obstacle, and does effectually remove everything out of the way, so that at the appointed time the word of exhortation finds free access and a sweet response in the one exhorted, and the will of God is done just as he predestinated it, and just as his word from the time it was first spoken had intended. Therefore, his word does not return unto him void. If there was anything to be performed by us as our part of this work, then there would certainly be a failure, for there is nothing but bitterness, uncertainty, vileness and a body of death, in man. Nothing can be a success in the kingdom of God, but the work of the Lord, and it never fails to do his will, and to accomplish it at the appointed time. Thus the day of the Lord, for none of his works are hindered or advanced by our works, or by our neglect.

The prophet felt very much stirred up about speaking in the name of the Lord. What stirred him? Was it the condition of Israel? No. Was it his desire to save sinners? No. The word of the Lord was in his heart as a burning fire shut up in his bones, and he was weary with forbearing, and could not stay.

This is as soon as any of us will yield to the sweetness of the gospel, and to the good works pointed out therein. We love to exhort the little ones to love and good works, and we love to see them walk therein, for this makes known to us the full assurance of the power of the word of the Lord working in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, by which that one has been constrained to work out his salvation, with fear and trembling. More than this, it is an additional evidence in our own hearts that the word of exhortation, which we have spoken, was from the Lord, and that he gave it free access in the heart of his child, so that that one has had his pure mind stirred up by way of remembrance. Thus both the exhorter, and the exhorted, find rest and peace, and go on their way together rejoicing in the work of the Lord, who has spoken to them, and in them.

Your brother in the gospel,

L. H. HARDY.

NEWARK, Delaware, May 8, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have just read your editorial in the SIGNS of May fifteenth with much satisfaction. And indeed I have always found comfort and instruction in what you have written. In the SIGNS of May first you wrote upon the subject of exhortation, and it met my mind exactly. I always enjoy a letter or sermon that reminds me of my duty. This is what I understand admonition to be. It is something that stirs up the pure mind by way of remembrance. It is in vain to admonish those who have not the law of God written in their heart. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God

looketh on the heart. In the new covenant, which God hath made with his people, he hath put his laws into their minds, and hath written them in their hearts, and he hath declared that he will be to them a God, and that they should be to him a people. I believe that all of God's people love, serve and worship him, and him alone, for he is a jealous God. But do we serve him who is the true and living God with the flesh? No! No! The inspired apostle Paul said, in Romans vii., which is so precious to the Lord's people, in their poverty and afflictions, "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. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after in the inward man." Now I understand the inward man to be Christ in us the hope of glory, who is our life. And the apostle goes on to say, "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God: but with the flesh the law of sin." No doubt all the Lord's people can say with truth, I want to do right, but I come far short of it. Yes, we can all say with the poet,

"Make me to walk in thy commands,
 'Tis a delightful road;
 Nor let my head, or heart, or hands,
 Offend against my God."

We serve the Lord by desiring to serve him. We serve him with the mind. This is as far as Paul could go, and it is as far as any of us ever go, or ever will, while we are in the world. This is acceptable to God. The poor woman whose daughter was grievously tormented with a devil, worshiped Jesus saying, "Lord, help me."

Peter worshiped him saying, "Lord save me." The poor publican worshiped him saying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Those who worship him, are they who are ready to perish. They worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem. Only those who are ready to perish can worship him in spirit and in truth.

Your unworthy brother,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

RIDGEWOOD, N. J., April 24, 1898.

BROTHER BENTON:—I send you by request a letter from a dear lonely sister in Bath, N. Y. She was baptized by Elder Bundy, in January, 1897, in the fellowship of the church in New York city. I met her soon after she was persuaded to join the New School Baptists, but she could not remain with them after reading the SIGNS. I trust you will see fit to publish her letter.

Yours,

M. HILLINGS.

BATH, N. Y., Feb. 24, 1898.

DEAR SISTER HILLINGS:—You have asked me to write my experience for the SIGNS, but it is with fear and trembling I comply, knowing my own weakness so well, and when I think about writing it seems as though I go away into nothing. I remember when I was a child, and attended Sunday School, that I wished to be a christian. I thought it would be such an honor to be a follower of Jesus, although at that time I did not see myself a sinner, but thought I was as good as the most of people, and as I grew older I still had that desire; but after a time God in his loving-kindness showed me what a great sinner I was. I was stopping with an aunt over Sunday. In the evening they wanted me to go to meeting, and the text was, "The heart is

deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." O, what an impression those words made on me that evening, which they had not done before. It seemed it was just for me, and my sins were like mountains. What a sinner I found myself to be, and all my good works were like nothing. I was stripped of my self-righteousness, and saw myself a condemned sinner before God, and from that day I have always seen myself a sinner. O, what weeks of sadness and sorrow I spent, and all I could say was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." In the meantime I came to Bath, and attended the Missionary Baptist church, and the minister plead so long with me to unite with them, I concluded to do so, hoping I was obeying God's command, and would find in it the great reward; but I soon found that I had conferred what I did not possess. I was not as happy as they seemed to be, for the good that I would I did not, and the evil I would not that I did, and I was often made to cry, Who shall deliver me? In God's own time he sent you, my dear sister, and you gave me the SIGNS to read, and then I first heard of Old School Baptists, and found their experience much like mine, but they could give such a bright evidence, when they were relieved, and I could not, which caused me darkness of mind, and at times I felt to give up, although in my heart I know I love the people of God. It has been my privilege to meet with them but three times, and although to have a name with them was my earnest desire, still I felt I should not ask a place among them, until I could tell just when the good Lord relieved me; but in the day of his power I was made willing, and the people were willing to receive me, but how they could I do not understand; but God's ways are not our ways. After I was bap-

tized, the people looked so good to me, and the thought came, Will I ever meet with them again? How I long to do so, but God knows best. I feel thankful it is not good works that saves us. By grace are ye saved; not of works, lest any man should boast. I know that if it is not the grace of God has saved me, does save me, and will save me, I am lost. When it is well with you please remember me in your prayers.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

ETTA HOFFMAN.

WHITEFIELD, Maine, April, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—
DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am about to send a remittance to the SIGNS, I wish to express to you in my feeble way, my sincere appreciation and approval of the able manner in which our dear family paper is conducted. If I know anything about the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our great High Priest and Mediator, that truth is clearly set forth in the SIGNS. I am glad, dear brother Beebe, that you wrote just as you did on page 123, current volume, on predestination. If believing honestly and heartily in that doctrine will cause me to be called a "can't help it," then I am happy to be classed in that number. If God in his infinite mercy has not chosen me in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be an heir of promise, then I must forever remain outside the portals of everlasting bliss.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling."

Since early boyhood I have at times taken much comfort from the preaching and writing of Elder Chick, but his editorials in the SIGNS of late, have come to me with far more sweetness than I can express. I trust, dear brethren, that you

may have the assurance that your labors are blessed of the Lord. May it be his will that you may long contend for the truth which you so ably defend.

Your most unworthy brother,

JAMES E. HUBBARD.

DAVENPORT, N. Y., April 19, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I would like, if the Lord would enable me, to speak of some of the thoughts which exercise my mind from time to time. I feel thankful this morning to our heavenly Father for his great love through which he gave his dear Son, his only begotten Son, that whoso believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Then I feel so thankful that he did enable me, a poor worm of the dust, unworthy of the least of all his mercies, to believe on his Son Jesus Christ, as the God of our salvation, and that it is a finished salvation, and not left to us sinful, erring mortals to perfect or to neglect. Right here I want to say, I have been much strengthened and edified by the communications which have appeared of late, in the SIGNS, with regard to our time salvation. I find myself at times so prone to attribute my trials and other dark seasons, disappointments and mortifications, to my environments, or to a want of alertness on my part, to avoid falling into these pits, rather than to accept them as among the all things which work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose.

Then I am so thankful that God has raised up, qualified and sent forth faithful ministers of the gospel, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation, and the unsearchable riches of Christ; that he is just such a Savior as we need; that nothing less would avail, and that in him all full-

ness dwells. He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness sanctification and redemption. How sweet to recall the precious promises that he will supply all our need. He says, "If I go away, I will send the Comforter." And again, "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you," &c. Daily we are made partakers of so many mercies. Truly the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places. And now, as it appears the whole world, both religious and political, is in commotion, the people of God need have no fear; they can trust the Lord implicitly for all they have and are, and he will protect them through all dangers, seen and unseen. Kingdoms may rise and fall, and nations be destroyed, yet will he bring his people off conquerors, and more than conquerors through him that loved them, and gave himself for them.

I am making this communication far too lengthy, and will only add that I am thankful for this medium of correspondence, the SIGNS, through which brethren and sisters, north, south, east and west, may drop words of comfort and encouragement to each other. While many of them are strangers in the flesh, they are not so in Spirit. Whenever I think of the editorial staff of the SIGNS, I cannot help associating it in my mind with our dear, lamented Elder Jenkins. He was connected with it so long, and the last time I saw him was only a few weeks before his death, and in apparent good health, though not really so. I can scarcely realize yet that he is gone. I should like to be remembered to sister Jenkins. I hope that we may meet again some time. These rambling thoughts are at your disposal, for I have too much confidence in you to fear that you will publish anything detrimental or repulsive to the household of faith.

Yours in hope,

HARRIET N. HARKNESS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1898.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as
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F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN V. 40.

"AND ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

In all the controversies between those who hold that salvation is of the act or choice of the creature, and those who ascribe their salvation to the grace of God alone, the question of the freedom of the human will has been constantly debated. The ablest minds on earth have discussed this question, both pro and con. Much has been said that has been well worth consideration by all, and no doubt much has been said which has been utterly profitless. Some things have for a long time seemed clear to our mind, and we feel like writing them for the consideration of our readers.

It does not seem worth while to spend time in long discussions concerning the state of man before the fall in Adam. That state has been passed by, and we can never return to it again. If we had been restored to that state through the atonement of our Lord, then it might be of interest to ask what the state of man was, as regards the will which God gave him, whether it was free or not. To us it seems sure that a creature who owes his being, and continued existence, to the wisdom and the power of another, cannot

in any true sense of the word be free. Dependence upon another, and freedom of the will, can never go together. Where the sphere of one begins that of the other ends. As said before, we do not have to do with the condition of man before the fall, but with his condition after the fall. And it is sure that whatever his condition might have been before, since the fall man has been the slave of sin. This bondage has been such as held captive every thought, affection, desire, aspiration and imagination, of the heart of man. The bondage has not been that of a slave who longs for freedom, and struggles for it while yet it is denied him. The slave who wants to be free is but half a slave. The body may be held at the bidding of the master, but the mind has not been enslaved, and will still refuse to submit to the yoke. The body bows, but the mind rebels. This has not been the condition of man since the fall. On the contrary the completeness of his bondage consists in the fact that the whole man, heart and will, is enslaved, as well as the body. He loves sin, and the wages of sin are in his view desirable and lovely. This is expressed by the apostle when he declares that man rolls sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue. Also when he says that men are the children of wrath, and when he adds that they are dead in trespasses and in sins. Sin controls the affections, for the apostle testifies that men are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The fall was not partial, but complete. The ruin of man was not in part, but total. The conscience has been perverted, as well as the thoughts and will. Man has a conscience, but it is an evil conscience, and leads constantly astray. It is not then a safe moral guide. It is not a safe guide in anything. There is nothing in the unregenerate man that

tends upward, or Godward. No man can read the first three chapters of Paul's letter to the Romans, and then say any good remains in man. Paul makes no exception; he classes the race of man as one. Even those whose circumstances in life have in a large measure controlled their conduct, and made it to be what we call moral, he classes with all the rest, as enemies of God and of the truth as it is in Jesus. Paul says of all men, that they are without God and without Christ in the world. Nothing more terrible could be said than this. No man can be sunk lower than to be without God and without Christ. Paul asserts this to be true of the immoral and the moral alike. Man does not like to retain even what may be known of God by nature, in his knowledge. He is an alien from God, and a willing alien. He is a sinner, and a willing sinner. He does not seek God, because he does not love him. He does seek after sin, because he finds it sweet, and loves it.

Christ was and is the embodiment of all good, yet men rejected him, because their works were evil. They rejected him and hated him without a cause, for the same reason that Cain hated Abel, whose works were righteous, while those of Cain were evil. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah tells the whole story of the way Jesus appeared to the natural minds of men. He was emphatically, to them, a root out of dry ground; without form nor comeliness. To men who love sin, Jesus can possess no beauty. Therefore men do not and cannot desire him as they are by nature. They are children of wrath, and the ways which they choose are the ways of wrath. This way seems right to men, but the end of it is the way of death. There is nothing, absolutely nothing in the unregenerate man that

tends upward. Everything in him tends downward. If one man does, not go to the same excess of riot as does another, it is because he has been restrained by the power and providence of God. He is not therefore better than the others who are not restrained. When the most careful and moral man on earth is convinced of sin, he sees himself just as great a sinner as does the most immoral man, when he is thus convicted. And the facts of christian experience never lie. Man never is brought by grace divine to see himself a greater sinner than he is. And so we find the moral Paul saying of himself, that he is the chief of sinners. It is not to be thought that he said this in an excess of humility, or out of a sort of mock humility, which would seek to exalt itself in the way of professing deep humility.

No one denies that there are among men of the world those who are honest, just and kind, but this is not towards God, and if it be not towards him, it is not good in his sight. The motive determines all with him. We have known some of the kindest of men who have yet never shown any humility towards God. The fountain within was corrupt, in the sense that it was all of the earthly nature, and rejected God. When Paul speaks of all men, both Jews and Gentiles, as being sold under sin, he sums the matter all up. The source of their lives may be hidden even from their bosom friend, but it is yet evil, because it is of the flesh, from whence nothing but evil can come. Paul does not say nor mean that all men have actually gone with swift feet to shed blood, but he does mean that this is the nature of all men, and if unrestrained they will do all these things. So it is true as the poet sings, "The seeds of all the ills that grow are in our nature sown." Left

to himself, man will go as far as the farthest in all evil courses. So all are indeed totally depraved, or, as has been said, sold under sin. Slaves to sin expresses it all.

The will of man then is not free to do good, neither is it free in doing evil, because it is a slave to sin, or to that principle of evil which Paul calls the law of the members, or the old man, or the flesh. The whole controversy concerning grace and works, the will of God in salvation, and the will of the creature, centers right here: What is the condition of man since the fall? If he still be a free man, not in bondage to sin, then indeed he can and will choose righteousness, but if he be a slave to sin, then he cannot choose righteousness. If man be indeed a slave to sin, then he will always choose the ways of sin, because sin controls his will, and its choice is what sin dictates. This we contend is true in the case of all men. The will is not free.

What would be involved in the idea of freedom of the will? Self determination is one of the essential parts of freedom. The will of God is free. He can be influenced by no reasons outside of himself, in the choice of what he shall do or not do. It would undefy Deity to suppose him influenced by any outside cause or power whatever. That which could influence the will of God would be of more power than he. We know that this is so with our will. We are acted upon by causes and powers outside of ourselves. We cannot choose anything whatever without recognizing that we are moved upon, and that by a power which can control our wills. This belongs to the state of a creature. With God it is not so. His will is free, but the will of no creature can be free. All things either control or are controlled. That which

controls all things is free. All things which are controlled are not free. This all seems so clear that we have been at a loss to know how it could be disputed by any thoughtful man. The will of man is in all cases controlled in its choice of things by things outside of itself. It seems to us an indisputable proposition, that we always choose what, all things considered, seems to us the most desirable at the moment of choice. Many things go to influence the will in its choice. The choice which the will may make at one moment, because then it seemed the most desirable, may not seem the most desirable at the next moment. Still the proposition holds good.

Now, returning to the text, Jesus said, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." This was true then; it is still just as true of all men who reject Christ. This is but a simple statement of fact. When we ask the question, Why would they not come to him for life? we strike right back to the root of the matter, and ask what it is that influences their will, that they will not come to him? The very question, Why will not men come to Christ? of itself presupposes that the will is not free. It at once asserts that the will is controlled by reasons or causes. Why will not a man swallow poison, if he knows it to be poison? Because it will cause him suffering, and perhaps death. The motive presented controls the will, so that he can choose in no other way. The will is not in this case free. It is controlled in its choice by something outside of itself. If we were sick, and were to be told to apply to a certain physician for relief, and should reply that we would not go to him, the question might very naturally be asked, Why will you not go to him? This very question would imply that the questioner recognized that

something was controlling our wills in this matter, and that he desired to know what it was. So when we ask, Why will not men come to Christ for salvation? we admit in the very question that something is controlling their wills, and that the will therefore is not free. To say that the will is free to choose what it chooses, is to utter nonsense. No one could define what such an assertion might mean. It is self-evident that the will does choose what it chooses, but this does not affect the question as to what decides the choice. That which controlled the choice of men not to come to Christ, was first, the fact that they felt no need of salvation from sin, which was the one salvation which Jesus had to give, and second, that they saw no beauty in him, that they should desire him. Nothing could ever cause that they should make a different choice, but to see their need of this salvation, and to find that this salvation could be found in Jesus alone. Until then they will not come unto him, that they might have life. Afterwards they will come to him for what they so much need. So the will is not free in either case, but is controlled by the circumstances as they are presented to the consciousness of those who are concerned. And this is by the revelation of the Spirit of God. To the rich there is, and there can be, no beauty in Christ, but to the poor, there is great beauty and excellency in him. When man boasts of his goodness, and sees not the righteousness of God, he will never come to Christ, but when he sees his sin, and the holiness of the law of God, then he will flee for refuge to this hope set before him in the gospel, which is Christ in him, the hope of glory. Here is the key to the whole matter. In either case the will is not free, but is controlled, and controlled ir-

resistibly, by things from without. Sin controls in the rejection of Christ; and the revelation of God, in the soul, of sin resting upon the soul, and of guilt, and of the beauty of Christ as a Savior, controls the will so that it must choose Christ as a Savior, and as its all and in all. When the work of the Lord has begun in the soul, and he who once cared not for God and his salvation, has come to love God supremely, and to know Christ as the one altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand, we begin to hear another complaint. It is, "The good that I would, I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do." The will now is indeed to serve God, but how to perform that which is good, the soul finds not. The soul is indeed no longer a slave to sin, but it finds a warfare which it cannot prevent, and which will not suffer it to do the good that it would. And all the way along, if the soul ever serves God at all, it is by the sovereign grace which God is pleased to give. Freewill enters not into the matter at all.

"Triumphant grace, and man's free will,
Shall not divide the throne;
For man's a fallen sinner still,
And Christ shall reign alone."

C.

A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.

AT this season of the year the work in our office falls off nearly one-half, and in order to keep our hands employed, we will, for the next three months, do small jobs of work, from the printing of a few copies of favorite pieces of poetry, to a publishing of small pamphlets, at actual cost. If you have any little jobs of printing, now is your time to send it on. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SON.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

ISAIAH XXVI. 19.

"THY dead men shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

We have understood this passage to express a glorious promise given in prophecy, to the church of God, assuring her that her dead men should be quickened simultaneously with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of our brethren however, have taken a different view of the subject. We do not claim to be wiser, or more infallible than they, but whether this text be applicable to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the life of his church in him or not, the apostles by inspiration have established the certainty that the church are risen with Christ, and that God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. We do not, however, understand that this, or any other passage, implies that the resurrection of the bodies of the saints should be simultaneous with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, for the inspired apostles have, since the resurrection of Christ from the dead, assured us of a resurrection at the last day, when these mortals shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles, incorruption, and the saying shall be brought to pass, That death is swallowed up in victory. Then shall the last enemy be destroyed, which is death, and the kingdom of Christ, in all its fullness and glory, shall be delivered to God, even the Father. But in the subject which we understand to be contemplated in our text, and

in parallel texts, the Mediatorial union of Christ and his church is strongly implied. As Christ has carried and borne his members all the days of old, so he carried and bore them when he poured out his soul unto death, when his body slumbered in the grave, and when he burst the bars of death and triumphed over the grave. It was our death which he died, as it is his life which we live. Zion's dead men were quickened together with Christ, and they were raised up together, and sit together in heavenly places.

Omitting the italicised words used in this text, by the translators, it will read, "Thy dead men shall live, my dead body shall they arise," &c. If this be the correct rendering of the text, the promise which it contains would seem to us to apply either to the regeneration and ingathering of the saints as the members of his mystical body, and the bringing them into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man; to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, or to the final resurrection of the bodies of his redeemed people. Which of the three applications is correct, if any, we leave to our readers generally to judge, as in any or all of them the doctrine is established by the plain Scriptures. Therefore, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust." God's people while here in the flesh, dwell in the dust, for their mortal bodies are of the earth, earthy, even as the Lord said to Adam, "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." And Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh [or the dust], I live by the faith of the Son of God," &c. In this sense God's quickened children, while in the house of their pilgrimage, dwell in the dust, and are called

on to awake and sing. But there is another sense in which the words are sometimes, and perhaps more generally used in the Scriptures, as signifying a low condition, captivity and worldly afflictions, and this seems to harmonize with the state of the church as set forth in the chapter of which our text is a part. All their own efforts for deliverance had proved abortive, and they are represented as discouraged, but the word of the Lord comes to them in their lowly condition with consolation, turning their mourning into joy, saying, Awake and sing, thou that dwellest in the dust. As in Isaiah lii. 1, 2, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion: put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: * * * shake thyself from the dust; arise and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." As her day of joy and gladness dawns upon her, she is called upon to arise and sing. Let her tears be dried, and let the bands of her captivity be removed from her neck, let her put on her beautiful apparel, and be clothed with her strength. "For thy dew is as the dew of herbs." The doctrine of God our Savior is compared to dew. Deut. xxxii. 2, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." The doctrine expressed in the speech of our Lord, has the reviving effect on the disconsolate saints, that rain has upon grass, and dew upon the tender herb. It revives, quickens, invigorates the saints, as the rain and dew causes the earth to develop its vegetation. When the precious seed is buried in the earth, it remains there concealed, until the earth is moistened by the showers of rain, or refreshed by the genial dew. Under the influence of the heaven inspired doctrine of Christ, the saints arise from the dust, they awake

and sing, they arise and shine, the lame man leaps like the hart, the tongue of the stammerer speaks plainly, and the dumb shout for joy. "And the earth shall cast out the dead." As the parched ground which contains the precious seed, when cheered by the dew, casts out the tender blade, and finally the full corn in the ear, so shall the earth cast out, make manifest and fully develop the sons of Zion, when the seasons of refreshing came from the presence of our God. And so the fruits of the Spirit are made to appear in the saints who dwell in the dust, when the doctrine of our God descends on them, and their fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1855.

WHO WILL ANSWER?

It is now more than a year, if we mistake not, since we have appealed to our delinquent subscribers, to make a payment on their back dues. Last year we called for a loan from our brethren and friends, and by this means raised about one thousand dollars; but that was only temporary aid, for it had to be returned with interest last January. The payment of these loans has left us short of funds for the present volume, so that we are compelled to ask those who are behind on their subscription, to please make a special effort to send us a payment on the same. If you are but a few months in arrears, and cannot make a remittance at present, but expect to soon be able to pay something on account, we will gladly continue your subscription, and wait for the payment, as we can much better afford to do so than lose the patronage altogether.

There is now due on our subscription list several thousand dollars, and we have got to realize from it about fifteen hundred dollars, or be compelled to borrow,

or failing in that, we shall have to make an assignment.

Each subscriber can tell just how their account stands by referring to the date next to their name on the little pink slip pasted either on the wrapper in which their paper comes, or on the margin of first page of the cover. This date denotes the time at which the subscription *expired*. Please, brethren and friends, do all you can for us, and it will be highly appreciated.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Elizabeth S. Hogeland departed this life Sunday morning, Dec. 5th, 1897, at her home near Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa. She was born Sept. 23d, 1829, at Attleboro, now Langhorn, but moved to near the present home the same year. Was the eldest daughter of Edward and Mary Venartsdalen. She was married to Elias Hogeland, on New Year's day, 1852, and had eleven children, seven of whom, with her husband, twenty-one grandchildren, and one great-grandchild, survive her. Two sons live in Montana, one of whom, brother Theodore Hogeland, was home on a visit at the time of her death. Two sons live in North Carolina; and one son and two daughters live at and near the home. She, with her husband, was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church at Southampton, June 14th, 1885, by the writer of this notice, and truly she has been a dear and highly esteemed sister in the church, devoted to its interests, and loved by all the members. We all feel the loss deeply. In the community she was universally esteemed and loved, and the vacant place will long be felt. But in her home, and to her children who have separate homes, the loss is greater and deeper than any of them could have foreseen. Neither husband nor children could have told before how much they depended upon her—upon her good judgment, and faithful counsel, and tender care, and un-failing devotion.

In the summer of 1895, she and brother Hogeland visited their two sons in Montana, returning late in the autumn, which trip they enjoyed very much. She suffered much during her journey homewards from a serious affection of the lungs, but noticed with interest and animation the varied and wonderful autumn scenery, expressing a wonder that any one should ever doubt the existence of God, when his power and wisdom were so manifest in his glorious works. She was at times much exercised on spiritual things, and as to the true evidences of a good hope through grace. After her return from the west she was prostrated

with pneumonia, and when able to sit up we had a meeting at her house. After the preaching she spoke in a very clear and touching way of her exercises. In our conference meetings she felt a deep interest, and spoke of her own hopes and fears with much interest to others.

During her last sickness I had some pleasant interviews with her. She seemed to feel that her time here was short, and to be reconciled to the Lord's will, and to desire that resignation might be felt by her family; and especially urging upon her daughter left at the home, in the most affectionate way, not to give way to grief and trouble. She was so quiet and uncomplaining that it was hard to think of her as being so very near the close. As the last night was wearing away our dear brother spoke with her, and after a few words of conversation she seemed to sleep, and he arose carefully from her side, not to wake her, and turning to look he saw that she had passed away. Without a struggle, without a movement, her hands lying as when asleep, her eyes closed, she lay as in the softest sleep, with a wonderful look of pleasantness on her face. As the night was passing into a pleasant morning, she passed from the night of this world's care and sorrow, into the morning of eternal joy, closing her eyes upon earthly scenes, to open them upon scenes of unspeakable beauty and blessedness in heaven. The assurance of this cannot but be a comfort in the sorrow of the lonely home.

A very large congregation was gathered at the funeral, Dec. 8th, and the sermon was preached from John xi. 25, 26, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 15, 1898.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, of Oregon, will be held, the Lord willing, at Walker Station, on Southern Pacific Railroad, in Lane Co., Oregon, commencing Friday, June 17th, 1898, and continue the two following days. All are invited to attend.

N. J. SHANKS, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE annual three days meeting of the Big Spring Church of Predestinarian Baptists, will be held at the Highland school-house, three miles east of Elgin, in Union Co., Oregon, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1898. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. We are expecting several ministers to meet with us.

G. E. MAYFIELD.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1898.

NO. 13.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CITY THAT JOHN SAW.—REVELATION XXII. 1, 2.

NUMBER EIGHT.

THE RIVER AND THE TREE OF LIFE.

“AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.”

We are now brought to consider in a more definite manner than heretofore that without which this city would never have been, and would not for a moment continue, the throne of God and of the Lamb. A throne is the place of a king's power. This throne in the holy city signifies the eternal power of God the Father, and the “all power in heaven and in earth,” which is given into the hands of Jesus. All this power, and might, and dominion, and honor and glory of God, is seen and felt and known in the church of God, and nowhere else.

In the closing of the twenty-first chapter, which we have been considering, we are told that “the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it,

and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.” It is not the earthly glory of earthly kings that is here meant, for most of those kings have ever been wicked, and all their glory, as kings, is of an earthly character, not qualified for a city to which even the sun can give no light. Besides, earthly kings cannot bring anything where they cannot come themselves, and none shall ever enter the kingdom of God as earthly kings, but as little babes. Nor could there be found in that heavenly Jerusalem any place for any glory and honor but that of God and the Lamb; for “his glory covers the heavens, and the earth (the new earth) is full of his praise.” The kings here meant are those who say, “Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”—v. 10. The glory and honor of all of these kings is the glory and honor of the only wise God, our Savior. The Lord is a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty unto them, and they are a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty in the hand of the Lord. (Isaiah xxviii. 5; lxii. 3.) And the glory

and honor of the nations of them that are saved, is brought into Zion, the church of the living God, where all of them cast all their crowns at the feet of the dear Savior, "and crown him Lord of all."

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."—Matt. xxviii. 18-20. Here all the blessings of the gospel, the teaching and preaching of Jesus and his commandments, and the administering of the ordinances, are made to result and come forth from the power of Jesus. The apostle says the gospel of Christ "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."—Romans i. 16. What then can be represented by this river flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, but "the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ?" All of the truth of God, every precious promise in Christ Jesus, every command of the dear Savior, and every ordinance established by him in the church, all are in that "pure river of water of life," which is for the refreshing and sustaining of the Lord's people. Water is not to give life, but is to sustain and comfort those who already have life. So we read in the Psalms, "There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."—Psalm xlvi. 4. This is the same city, and of course the same river, showing how all the city, how every child of God, is reached and made glad by the streams of that river of water of life.

Not one of those who have been born of God could find any comfort in anything that does not come from the power of God. The doctrines of men and the wisdom of men are foolishness to them, and all the works of men they know to be vain. They have no confidence in any arm of flesh. Jesus is to them "the power of God and the wisdom of God," and of him alone do they wish to hear. The water that flows from that throne of his power is pure; no particle of earthly power or wisdom in it. God's sovereignty; his eternal purpose whereby he works all things after the counsel of his own will; his election of his people in Christ before the world began, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love; his declaration of the end from the beginning; his everlasting love for them, on account of which he drew them with loving-kindness (Jer. xxxi. 2); his grace that superabounds in them over all the aboundings of sin; the gift of all spiritual blessings to them, according to his eternal choice of them in Christ; his Spirit showing to them the things of Christ; his power causing them to believe, and "working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure;" his love binding them all together in the perfectness of gospel fellowship; all these blessed things, and more than I can number beside, constitute the water of this river.

And this river, like the precious jasper stone to which the light is compared, and like the city of pure gold, and the street of pure gold, is "clear as crystal." This is the peculiar characteristic of the revelations of truth to the faith of God's people; they are definite, distinct, unmistakable. There is a sense in which "we see through a glass darkly," and see and know but in part; but this has reference to the vast difference between the knowl-

edge of spiritual things given to us while in this mortal state, and the immense fullness of knowledge which shall be ours when we enter our glorified state in heaven. It does not imply uncertainty or indistinctness in the truth revealed to us here as contrasted with the false deductions of earthly wisdom. Those things which are hid from the wisdom of this world, and revealed only to babes, are dear and plain to the babes. To the carnal minds of even God's people there arise questions for argument, and apparent reasons for doubt, on many points of the doctrine of God our Savior; but the babe feels no such doubt or questioning on such points, though liable to have doubts and questions as to its own interest in those blessed things. The spiritual mind, the child, the faith of God's elect, feels no question, sees no darkness or uncertainty, as to the absolute sovereignty of God, the truth of salvation by grace, the election of the Lord's people in Christ, the doctrine of predestination and foreordination, and that every good and perfect gift comes down from God. There are depths in these things not to be reached by us while here below, but the truth that all things are of God, is "clear as crystal." All these blessed things, with every word and promise and gift and grace of God, are in that "river of God which is full of water," flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, with which he greatly enriches this new earth of the gospel, (Psalm lxxv. 9,) and "makes glad the city of God."

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

My mind at present is to speak of this,

and thus conclude, for some time at least, my consideration of this subject. The tree of life appears to present that which is essential to the sustenance and comfort of the city. Its fruit is food for the people of God, as the water of the river is to satisfy their thirst, and its leaves are medicine for them, showing the inhabitants of this city to be yet in their mortal state, and therefore having need of provisions to prevent the inroad of disease, to heal the wounds made by sin, and cleanse them "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." This tree of life, then, must be within easy reach of all the inhabitants of the city; yet only in the midst of the street can they find it. Only those who are in the one way, only those who walk in Jesus, can eat of its blessed fruit, and receive the benefit of its healing leaves. No one can enjoy the peace and consolations of the gospel while walking in disobedience to the gospel rule. "If we live after the flesh, we shall die" to spiritual privileges and comforts. Gospel characters have been made free from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, (Romans viii. 2,) and are henceforth "under law to Christ;" and only as they walk in the Spirit, in obedience to that law, can they experience those gospel blessings represented by the fruit and leaves of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the street.

"And on either side of the river." If this river represents the promises and doctrine of God our Savior, fulfilled and declared in the gospel of his Son, then one side of the river would be the former ages and dispensations, and the other side would be the gospel dispensation. Jesus was the life and joy and comfort of his people of old, the same as he is to them now. From him was their fruit found. Abraham rejoiced to see his day;

he saw it and was glad. The prophets felt the power of his Spirit, and spake of him. All the holy men of old, "the spirits of just men made perfect," are in this city. The apostle says, "We are come unto them." "Abel, though dead, yet speaketh" in the church, the heavenly Jerusalem. There we sit down in our experience of gospel rest, with Abraham and Daniel and Job, and all the faithful and holy men of old.

Jesus is the way, the street of pure gold, seen and walked in by faith, not by sight, and he is the tree of life in the midst of the street. He himself met and removed by his death the flaming sword which barred the way to the blessings treasured up in himself for his people, and in his resurrection he brought life and immortality and every spiritual blessing to light through the gospel. In him alone are they found. The inhabitants of this city do not, like those of earthly cities, go into houses for rest, and then go out into the street for business and pleasure. They are ever in the street. There, in Jesus, is their rest, and there their safe abode. He is their shelter and dwelling place, their holy temple where they are found continually.

This is one of the wonders of this wonderful street, that it reaches to every dweller in the immense city, and every inhabitant is at all times in the street. To be out of the street is to be outside the city. Disobedience removes one, in his experience, from the city, from the enjoyment of the sweet fellowship of the saints, to the outer darkness where there is sorrow and weeping. One may be a living soul, and in the visible church, and not be in this city. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the

city." It is an unspeakable blessing to walk in that fellowship which "is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

The twelve manner of fruits does not, I think, represent different kinds of fruit, but the different manner of the twelve apostles in presenting the same truth to the church of God, and showing how the same truth has all needed variety to suit all the various circumstances and cases of need among all the family of God. To every soul Jesus says, "From me is thy fruit found; and as it is exactly suited to every child of God, from the beginning to the end of time, so its supply is constant and never failing. "And yielded her fruit every month." That includes the whole year. At any and every season, in winter and in summer alike, the soul that is constantly hungry for heavenly food, is made to sit under his shadow with great delight, and find his fruit ready to hand, and sweet to the taste. "He crowneth the year with his goodness, and his paths drop fatness."—Psalm lxxv. 11.

And what shall we say of the leaves of the tree, which "are for the healing of the nations" of the redeemed, if they do not signify the sweet words of Jesus, spoken either by himself when in the flesh, or by his Spirit through the apostles and prophets? When the Spirit, the Comforter, takes of these words which are Spirit and life, and applies them unto his people, there is not a wound made by sin that they will not heal, not a malady of soul that they will not cure, not a pain or sorrow in the spirit that they will not alleviate, not a trouble or dissension among all the people of God that they will not thoroughly remove. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of

righteousness quietness and assurance forever."

In that holy city, in the things of Jesus, "which God has prepared for them that love him," within the walls of salvation, in the highway of holiness, in the doctrine of God, and the provisions of gospel grace, there is no sorrow or pain or darkness or dying, nor shall they who are there hunger and thirst any more with that hopeless hunger and thirst which they suffered under the law. Yet being still in their mortal state, and having these new covenant blessings of the gospel church only by faith, they still need to be fed upon heavenly bread by "the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne," the church, and led by him "to living fountains of water," and to receive from him day by day the nourishing and delicious fruit, and the healing leaves of the tree of life, that they may be kept living and walking in the Spirit, dwelling and resting in Christ, "absent from the body and present with the Lord," and so be kept above and free from the power and dominion of the flesh, with its sin and sorrow and dying, until their final change and full deliverance shall come from their mortal to their glorified state.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 13, 1898.

ABSALOM THE THIEF.

(Concluded from page 358.)

ABSALOM is proclaimed king. David, who in truth is the king of Israel, and those whose hearts Absalom has not stolen, take their flight from Jerusalem. Then in a short time, in the midst of the conflict between the forces of Absalom, and the king of Israel, Absalom is slain. What now will the poor dupes of the usurper do? "All Israel fled every one to his tent."—2 Samuel xviii. 17. Let us

follow them to their tents, and inquire how their affairs stand now.

Well brethren, how are matters now? What are your prospects? Ah! we have observed lying vanities, and have forsaken our own mercies, and mercy hath forsaken us. We have sown to the wind, and in truth, as you see, we have reaped the whirlwind. He, whom we in our mad rebellion made king over us, is no more, Absalom is dead. While he was yet alive did he fulfill his promises and settle any suit or controversy among the brethren? Ah no! All remains in dire confusion; no trouble has been alleviated, but our afflictions have multiplied. The troubles of our heart are enlarged, all is hopeless now; sorrows encompass us, and endless distresses we see. Where now is he that allured us after him; that led us away captive by his lying promises? No help can he afford us, Absalom is dead. To whom shall we go, to whom shall we turn? Unto him from whom we have basely revolted? How could a rebel lift up his face in the presence of the king? Were King David to ask, On which side wert thou in the recent troubles in Israel? Wert thou lately in insurrection against my throne? how I should sink down in utter fear and shame before his grieved majesty! What apology could I offer for my conduct? As it was with these wretched Israelites in their tents, so the children of God, in their estrangement from Christ their King, through the subtleties of antichrist, are eventually brought into sore straits. The settlement of all difficulties, the determination of all things pertaining to the house of God, the doctrine, the government that alone yields peace and blessedness to the believer, and to the churches of God, proceeds from the throne of Christ our King. His gospel, the perfect law of liberty, is the

only law of the kingdom. Anything else is alien, is an invasion, insurrection, treason. Let it wear what mask it may, and though attired as an angel of light, it is Absalom. Beware of Absalom, O child of God. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints, and for me, [saith the apostle Paul] that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." To pour out our hearts at the mercy-seat of our gracious God, this is our safe retreat. He will succor us, he will defend us, he will instruct us, he will preserve us from all evil, that we may walk to his everlasting praise. Though unbelief, Satan and antichrist whisper base and cruel insinuations against Jesus our King, the time shall come when these enemies of the church shall be found liars unto us, and we shall tread upon their high places. What was the termination of this insurrection against the throne of David? It ended very blessedly. Here surely we have an illustration of that proverb, "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof."—Eccles. vii. 8. King David did not send his officers through the land to apprehend and punish with death those lately in arms against his throne; but the first step to win back their allegiance was his own act. "Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the

gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent."—2 Samuel xix. 8. This act of the king was well understood by the tribes of the Lord. It denoted that he, their king and judge, was willing to receive his people, to accept their confession of allegiance. It signified that he was their kind and righteous king, to hear all their suits, and causes, and to render judgment unto all Israel. "Behold, the king doth sit in the gate." This was the utter refutation of Absalom's scandalous lies. What else but antichrist would dare intercept our approaches to Jesus, and poison our minds with its pestilential breath, saying, He will not hear thee, there is no judgment and relief for thee; Christ will not hear thee? This did Absalom in the type. Absalom thou art unbelief, thou art antichrist, thou art the very devil, O Absalom, thou liar and thief. Precious Jesus, thou hast said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37. Christ our Redeemer and King surpasses all the types and shadows, for in his infinite understanding he knows our down-sitting and our uprising, and understands our thoughts afar off. When we have turned aside from him he well knows our oppressions, and our low estate when refuge fails us, and no man cares for our soul. Though in our discomfiture we have fled every man to his tent, though far off from God and the Lamb we feel to be, he knows our disconsolation and shame. "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight."

As we pursue the narrative of the reconciliation of the tribes of Israel to the sceptre of David, we shall see very blessedly illustrated the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of God's elect. Jesus has told us, "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." Those Israelites who have fled every man to his tent, have stirred up within them remembrances of former times, "All the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, The king saved us out of the hand of our enemies, and he delivered us out of the hand of the Philistines; and now he is fled out of the land for Absalom. And Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle."

We wept when we remembered Zion. (Psalm cxxxvii. 1.) "Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction, and of her miseries, all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old."—Lam. i. 7. The psalmist also saith, "The enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground: he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me: my heart within me is desolate. I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands. I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land." Read also, dear brethren, the seventy-seventh Psalm, so expressive of the condition of God's people in their desolations. If you, dear child of God, have been in a backsliding state, if through thine unbelieving thoughts, or from the pernicious influence of false principles, thy familiar intercourse with the King has been interfered, ah, then

thou knowest the heart-sickening consequences of chasing delusive shadows. O, there is nothing like our God, nothing can compare with the spiritual worship of the true worshipers of the everlasting God, and that worship is in spirit and in truth. All worship that is contrary to the doctrine of the gospel, is a dismal mockery, and never yielded to any soul peace and joy before the Lord, and should any dear child of God be entangled in errors, he will be brought into sore straits, and in due time, like these Israelites of whom I am writing, we shall be found hiding ourselves within our tents, trembling and ashamed, and covering ourselves with reproaches. But our God will never give us up to utter despair. We remember. The Comforter brings to our remembrance the days that are past, wherein he was our defense. We recount former mercies; we remember how kind our God was to us in our perplexities. O how these memories melt the heart, till we sigh and weep over our wanderings from our gracious King and Redeemer. As one out in the wild, howling wilderness, our bleating voice is heard, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments." Ah, beloved of God, what does any religion amount to where there is the absence of spiritual communion with God? The communion of the Holy Ghost. Suppose that one esteems himself competent to understand and contend for every principle of the doctrine of Christ, what of it all if one is a stranger to communion with the Holy One of Israel? O give to my soul that life divine, with all its attendant moans and desires and fervent cries, and peace and joy, that are inseparable to the experience of eternal life while in this tabernacle. Let me live with thee, and walk

with thee; hold me with thy hand and talk with me by the way, O my God. Those trembling and repentant Israelites within their tents remembered the valiant acts of David, and the deliverances from their enemies that had been their heritage under his gracious and triumphant reign. O, how they must have reproached themselves for their rebellious behavior. "Then King David sent unto the elders of Judah, saying, Ye are my brethren; ye are my bones and my flesh: wherefore are ye the last to bring back the king." What a wondrous and touching message was this from a king, to defeated rebels; Deeper than this type is the relationship and oneness of Christ and the church. The nearest impress of the glorious revelation that Christ and his people are one, is the marriage union of the husband and wife. But even this among creatures, as it is founded and has its subsistence in a mortal life, is dissolved and ends in the death of either the husband or wife. (Romans vii. 2, 3.) But Christ and the church are in indissoluble, indestructible union, subsisting in life eternal, and this life is in the Son of God. And as Adam, who is the figure of him that was to come, said of Eve, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." So the chosen in Christ Jesus are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." O, when afar off, estranged by our waywardness and subtle temptations, and our sweet intercourse with the King is suspended, then our confusion is ever before us. But the message of the King enters our tents, saying, "Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh." Is this

not too good to be true? Would it not seem more fit, after such ungrateful conduct, that Jesus should nevermore mention any relationship subsisting between us? O, if he were not God he would be ashamed to call us brethren, so vile is our behavior. But our King is God and man, the Incarnate Son of God. He rests in his love, and changeth not, therefore we are not consumed. Grace is poured into his lips, and his kind words enter into our hearts. He quells our rebellion against his sceptre, and his messages of love chase from our tents our fears and misgivings, and cast to the ground the cruel insinuations of Absalom. This message from the King tells to the sinful ones his love. "Ye are my bones and my flesh." No man yet hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." Thus he will deal with these subdued and repentant rebels, even as a man would deal with his bones and his flesh, tenderly, compassionately. O, the precious promises of the Lord to his wayward people! How they melt us in loving subjection at the feet of Jesus, when the Holy Spirit remembers them to our souls. Thy word hath quickened me.

"Thou on my head in early youth didst smile,
And, though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left thee,
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me."

"And David bowed the heart of all Judah, even as the heart of one man: so that they sent this word unto the king, Return thou, and all thy servants." O, the love that has conquered us, that has healed our backslidings! Thou hast loved us freely, and we are forever thine, O Lord, our gracious King and Redeemer. For a time other lords may have dominion over us, but our service to all such is bondage. No real relief and enlargement from the difficulties that at-

tend the lives of the children of God can any power vouchsafe to us. Only Christ Jesus our Lord, only the truth ministered to our soul by the Holy Spirit, can afford us spiritual health and peace. Only in affectionate submission to the government of Christ our King, can happiness, peace and prosperity, be found in the churches. Every word of our Savior, every precept of the gospel, is precious, and when by the Holy Spirit our hearts are bowed before our King in affectionate obedience, how blessed is our lot. Consider the following Scripture as an illustration of the blessedness of yielding ourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." How long could troubles, emulations and strifes exist among dear brethren when this royal law is fulfilled? O, thou chiefest among ten thousand, come and reign over us, and bow our hearts to thy sceptre. Have we suits and controversies, and causes that vex us, let us away to the throne of Zion's King, and pour out our hearts before him. He will be a refuge for us. Let us wait for his law, and may mercy and grace be given us to walk in his paths. Beware lest Absalom turn thee away.

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

HICKORY GROVE, Va., April 27, 1898.

ELDER WM. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If one who feels so vile and sinful may claim you as such. I have been impressed to write to you, and I hope that it is from the Spirit above. In and of myself I can do nothing good, for sin is mixed with all I do. "For when I would do good, evil is present with me, and how to perform that which is good I find not." About two years ago I heard

you preach at Bethlehem, and I thought that you preached the best sermon that I had ever heard. I thought while you were preaching, that if I could only speak to you and call you brother, how happy I would be, but that I could not do. After the meeting, seeing an aged sister going up and speaking to you, I followed, when you so kindly spoke to me, and said, May God bless you. I then felt happy for a short time, until doubts and fears came, and made me feel that I had deceived you. I knew that I had not deceived God, for nothing is unknown to him. It was in August, 1894, if I am not deceived, that Christ appeared to me as the Savior of sinners, of whom I feel to be chief, and caused me to forsake my self-righteousness, and to glory in his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and may all that is within me, praise his holy name. Words fail to tell you my feelings, and space would fail to tell all events connected with what I hope are the leadings of the power of God with me. I was at that time confined to my bed, and only able to sit up a short while at a time, but the night I was relieved in mind, and found my burden gone, with which I had been so long burdened, I could sit up until ten o'clock. Yes, dear brother, I had been sick both in body and mind. I could neither eat nor sleep but a little for two years. Often my pillow would be wet with tears. I could find no rest day nor night, at home or abroad. When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

I had been brought up in the Methodist belief, and was told that I had many things to do before God would receive me. I united with the Methodist church some years ago, but never went there more than twice afterward. I was not satisfied. I never communed with them.

Afterward I became troubled more than ever about my sins, and believed that I had committed as great, or a greater sin than ever, in uniting with them. I did not unite with them to make a mock of God's work. I then thought I was serving God, but instead of that I was doing wrong, thinking I could save myself, when Christ died to save sinners, and we have no more to do with the second birth than we had with our first. O, how I was made to call upon the Lord for mercy, and often would feel too wicked to receive mercy, but the Lord is merciful to our unrighteousness, for it is not of any work that we can do, lest any man should boast. All boasting is excluded: by grace are ye saved, through faith. It is the gift and mercy of God that we are saved. I know well that if I am saved, it is by the grace of God, for if left to myself, not one good act would I do, or one good thought would I think. I want to give God all the praise, for in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. * If I know my own heart, I would like to be a true christian, but, dear brother, all that I can claim to have is a little hope, and though that is small, as it seems, yet I would not give it up for the world. I have read my Bible from my youth up, but about six years ago, in trying to read it I would see so much to condemn me that I laid it away, feeling that I was too wicked to read it, and that there was plenty in it for others, but nothing for me; but after being so burdened with sin, and feeling that I could not live, I picked up my Bible again and read, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" and also, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled," and truly I did feel hungry for the bread of life, and thirsted for the water that Jesus promised, and said that

if we drink thereof we shall never thirst, but O, how unworthy of any of it did I feel.

I have not written this as I wanted to, but we are not our own keepers. I went to Mt. Zion the fourth Saturday in September, 1895, and tried to tell what I hoped the dear Lord had done for me, but could say but little. I was not received into the church that day. The brethren expressed themselves satisfied with what little I did say. I was received into the church in May, 1896, and baptized the next Sunday, in the fellowship of Mt. Zion church, by our much beloved pastor, Elder J. N. Badger. I then felt happy, feeling that I had obeyed my Master, but since then I have had many doubts and fears, and often feel so unworthy that I am afraid to claim any of the promises which are made to the children of God. I feel often that I am the weakest one that ever claimed to have a name among the Baptists, but dear brother, it is the greatest desire I have, to know and serve God as I ought, but I often wonder if I know him at all, or if I am known of him, for I feel my sinfulness more and more. I can say with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

I will bring this scribble to a close. I have read some of the SIGNS, and find them both edifying and comforting. I hope to be able soon to subscribe for them. The only reason I have not done so before has been inability. I do love the paper, and to hear from the dear brethren and sisters to whom my heart has been drawn. You can do with this as you deem best, if you burn it up it will be all right. Please excuse all that I have written amiss. It is imperfect like the writer. Remember me at a

throne of grace when it is given you to do so.

From your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

MRS. L. S. UTTERBACK.

STEPHEN, Ark., April, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—You will find inclosed a letter from my aged and venerable grandfather, A. W. Bachus, which afforded me much pleasure, and I believe would be of much interest to the dear people of God generally. More especially would it be appreciated by his many friends. For many years he has been a subscriber for your valuable paper. Do with it as you think best. I subscribe myself your unworthy brother, in much weakness,

A. R. YARBROUGH.

BUENNA VISTA, Ark., January 29, 1898.

MY DEAR GRANDSON:—I received your very kind and comforting letter some time ago, and then thought that I would have answered it before now, and now I feel very barren of anything that would likely be interesting or comforting to you. I feel my ignorance and inability to write more than ever. This being my eighty-ninth birthday you must know that I am both mentally and physically weak. I have read your letter several times. I was so glad and lifted up when I read the exercises of your mind. How truly you depicted the joys and sorrows, the ups and downs of the life of the poor pilgrim in this world. I must correct one error in your letter; you seem to think that I have lived a life of even tenor, without trouble or annoyance, but such has not been the case with me, my life has been very much checkered. I have often thought of good old Jacob, when asked by Pharaoh concerning his age, he re-

plied, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." I have had a name among the Primitive Baptists for more than sixty-eight years, and hundreds of times I have thought that I might have nothing beside the name. I have been in their company much from then until now. I have enjoyed their company very much, and I have had many precious seasons in meeting with them, and have often wished that I could meet them oftener than I have. Many times I have felt that I could not bear to part with them. Right here let me give you a little incident of my life. I was naturally an Arminian, and I clung to it as long as I could. I did not like the Old Baptists much, yet there was something peculiar among them which seemed to draw me to them. I really think that I loved them, or would have done so, if it had not been for their election and predestination. I liked their experimental preaching, and I found that when they were together this was generally their theme. I liked to be where they were. I wanted to hear them talk, providing I could be in a corner where I would be unnoticed. I was about eighteen years old then. I noticed they all talked about what poor sinners they were. Now this would have been strange talk to me a year or so before, for I had thought that christians had no sin to mourn over, but to speak for myself, many and many have been the times that I have felt that if the church knew me as I knew myself they would have no confidence in, nor fellowship for me. I have feared many times that I have deceived them. I did think some few years back, that I would write something of my past life, but have always concluded that it would be very dry and tedious, and not worth the reading, and moreover it might only serve to prove how vain I am.

Were I to attempt such a thing I would have to go back to my early childhood, and continue it to the present day. Notwithstanding I was a very moral youth, and guilty of no gross sin or vice, and never thought there was any fun in doing what would injure others, or give trouble to any one, yet at times I had strange thoughts about the future life. I felt ill at ease, but if I had been asked, I do not think that I could have told why, but as I now know, I had great confidence in the flesh, and thought that if I was not already, I could be, as good as any person. Thus I was a very good Pharisee. This continued until it came to my mind that, "the thought of foolishness is sin," and that "he who is guilty in one point, is guilty in all." To master my thoughts was more than I could do. Suffice it to say, that I not only was made to see the very fountain from which my foolish and sinful thoughts proceeded, but was also made to see, as I hope, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, consequently I have no confidence in the flesh. I cannot tell of a sudden and bright deliverance from my trouble and my burden as a good many can, for if ever I have experienced a change it came gradually, like the dawn of day, and that often has caused me to doubt and fear. Well, my dear grandson, what more need I say? To-day I am eighty-nine years of age; to-morrow, if spared, I will enter my ninetieth year. Do I expect to see the end of it? O no, I am not expecting anything of the kind. I can only say the will of the Lord be done with me, and I feel to know that it will be done, for I learn that he will do all his pleasure, and that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. In him alone I trust; I have no other refuge. One thing I am well assured of, all his judgments are righteous; he will

do what is right. Your grandma, as you know, has been sorely afflicted. She often prays for her change to come, but notwithstanding our afflictions, we feel constrained to say, surely mercy has followed us all the days of our life; and further, I feel to say, that he has remembered us in our old age, and has not forgotten us when our strength has failed.

It has been with some difficulty that I have scribbled this, and I fear that you will have some difficulty in reading it.

From your poor old grandparents, in the bonds of christian love,

A. W. & S. F. BACHUS.

[THE above testimony from the aged brother has been of peculiar help to us. Like him, we have never been able to point to a certain time when deliverance came to us from the burden of sin and the curse of the law, but like him, we have felt an assurance that deliverance has been given. How true it is, that the Lord's people shall bring forth fruit in old age, to show that the Lord is upright. May the blessing of God rest upon this aged brother and his aged and afflicted companion, till the looked for summons comes.—ED.]

VEGA, March 27, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—
DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST, AS I HOPE AND TRUST:—I have been very ill since my last subscription expired, and was given up to die, by physicians and friends. How little we know of the ways of divine providence only as they are manifested to us by him who knows all things. The dear Savior seemed very near to me, and blessed me with much composure and reconciliation to his holy will, so that the fear of death was dispelled. But, as the Lord's time for my departure was not yet come, there came a change, and I began to im-

prove. When it became apparent that I should be restored to health again, I thought, will I ever feel so much interested in, and taken up with the things of the world as I have been? O, my dear friends, I find that nature is nature still, and asserts herself in many ways. I can truly say, in my flesh dwells no good thing; to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not. Sometimes I am led to think all I have passed through in my mind, is but imagination, that there is nothing real, and that I am deceived in it all. The fear of being deceived, and that I have deceived others, has ever been a trouble to me since I first spoke of my feelings to any one. One thing I am well aware of, I cannot deceive the God of heaven. He knows the inmost thoughts of my sinful heart. When I look over my life of almost sixty-nine years, I can truly say,

"He near my soul has always stood,
His loving kindness, O how good!"

If I could only give him his due in thanksgiving and praise to his holy name, it would be a satisfaction to me.

The SIGNS come to me laden with the truth of the everlasting gospel, as I believe it. The gospel brings forth the royal diadem and crowns Jesus Lord of all. When I read the editorials of the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, it seems that I can almost see his form, and hear his voice speaking forth from the stand the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the precious truths of the gospel of the Son of God, as of yore. I have not heard a sermon from the desk for quite a number of years, so that you can imagine what a pleasure a written or printed one is to me. If I could write as some do I would gladly write. But my productions look so indifferent and imperfect, that I am ashamed of them, but who can bring

a clean thing out of an unclean thing? Not one. Neither can perfection emanate from a mass of imperfections.

May the God of all grace give you strength as your day, is my prayer.

Yours unworthily,

PEACE BALLARD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Elders and messengers of the Baltimore Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the church at Harford, May 18th, 19th and 20th, 1898, to the several churches composing the same, Greeting:

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been the custom of this Association at its annual session, to address an epistle of love to the several churches composing this Association, a circular, not with the desire of exercising any authority over the churches, but simply as an expression of love and fellowship, and by way of instruction, calling the attention of the brethren and sisters to the various obligations devolving upon the followers of their Savior, or to points of doctrine that may for the time be subjects of interest or inquiry.

We are enjoined not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but to exhort one another daily, provoking unto good works. This is the object of the preached word, and is necessary in order to have communion, or fellowship. To do this it must be that we associate with our brethren of the same faith and order. We cannot agree with those who would do away with the long continued practice of holding associations, on the ground that the word is not scriptural. All will concede that there is but one church, and that the various branches, like the individuals composing them, are but members, branches of the vine, Jesus Christ. All the chosen are one with him, and

look forward with joy to the glorious time when we shall assemble with him in the presence of the Father. No restrictions are placed on the command to assemble ourselves together, except the natural ones of distance and opportunity. While we heartily agree that we cannot adhere too closely to the word which has been given for our guidance, yet we would remind our brethren that "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life;" and surely it is the spirit of the gospel, that we should conduct ourselves as members of one body. By this loving communion alone, can we help each other to correct erroneous practices, and errors of doctrine. We would ask those who write against associations, if they wish to refuse all associating together, because some one at an association may say something that may not be favorably received by others? Shall the branches of the church not associate, for fear that something may be said or done that is wrong? And do not such things sometimes happen in the various branches of the church? If the associations are destroyed, then we are in danger of being led by self-constituted leaders, and editors, who are in a position to govern their associates, to carry their own special dogma, and exclude all who do not believe as they do. Such a state of things would be very much worse than our associations, where every one can both hear and be heard, in loving fellowship, and an erring brother can find instruction or rebuke. Shall we be deprived of the counsel and guidance of our large body of visiting Elders and brethren, and follow the dictation of some one who may have obtained local influence? Surely we may meet for conference and preaching in larger bodies, where many come from a distance, and have sweet communion, and enjoy the

many varied gifts. Wherever the saints are gathered together, whether there be two, or three, or hundreds, there is the church of God. "Then they that feared the Lord spoke 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." God approves of our assembling ourselves together, and it cannot be his will that the various branches of the church should be isolated from each other, thus cutting off all means of assembling in conference with our brethren. While there is no thought of exercising authority in any way, yet there is need that the branches should confer with each other, for there are many matters that cannot be settled or adjusted so readily or satisfactorily in any other way. As a practical illustration of this fact, we would call attention to a subject which has long been a source of sorrow and anxiety to us, and we hope that the churches will take the matter into earnest consideration. There are many members domiciled in one church, who hold membership in some other church, often a great distance away. This is unjust, both to the church where they live, and to that from which they have come, for the obligations of fellowship should be mutual, and on the other hand, it is unfair to ask their own church to carry their names on its books permanently, while they are living so far away that support on their part, or discipline and oversight on the part of their church, is impossible. In truth they have no church-home anywhere. A member is a member wherever he may be, and a letter simply states that he is a member in good standing in his home church, and all such should be permitted to take a member's part, wherever they may be, in

all that pertains to a member in good standing. Should not such persons be reckoned as members, as soon as domiciled, and admitted to communion, under ordinary circumstances? Upon the ground under consideration, if one has to be dealt with, the branch where he is living has no authority to do so, and he must be sent to the branch where he is a member, and this may be so far off that witnesses cannot be had to examine the case. Thus confusion and hard feelings may arise, the home church not being satisfied with the decision of the sister branch. It should be the practice for each member, on going to another place for any considerable length of time, to carry with him the evidences of his membership, and good standing, and to identify himself with his new home as soon as opportunity offers. Such an expression of fellowship is worth far more than words. Some have said that they felt unbounded fellowship with this church, but that they could not take away their membership from their old home where they had been baptized. In some cases such members have not been able to attend meeting more than once or twice during a year, in their old home, and in others not at all. A member is a member of the church of Christ, which is one church, and he should feel at home with the saints wherever he may be. This matter is very appropriately mentioned in this connection, as these persons seem to hold the same views as those who oppose associations, namely: that the various churches are separate and not members of the one church. We have found that some are thus inclined to shrink their duty, and that it may not be so, we need the assembling of ourselves together, to correct this disorder. Call it by what name you like, for the

name does not matter, but take care to do as our Lord has commanded, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." Call it the "Assembling of the saints," if you like it better. It is simply a time when the various branches are assembled, with their ministers, and with visiting ministers, and members, who are strangers to them, and to take sweet counsel together. Or shall each branch be left alone to drift away under the guidance of designing men? The apostle Paul had to say, "Who hath bewitched you?" Let us stand fast in our ancient practice of meeting together, and admonish one another, so that when we meet we may be members one of another, according to the command. If there be anything wrong in our practice, let it be pointed out, as we have tried to do in this letter. There is no supervision, nor assertion of authority, but the branches of the church, which are together, are the church, meeting in love, for mutual counsel and strength. It is more easy to tear down than to build, and we must be careful not to think ourselves wiser than the saints who have gone before, and who have acted as God gave them grace.

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

The annual letter of the Delaware Association, addressed to the several churches of which it is composed, in session at Philadelphia, Pa., May 25th, 26th and 27th, 1898.

BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—The custom of writing what is called a Circular Letter, has been practiced by this Association for many years. From time to time the question is asked, What is its object? It might be profitable at this time to take into consideration the object to be

attained by such a communication. Because it is a custom that has been handed down from generation to generation, would give room for some to say, that it is merely a form, yet that is not a sufficient reason. Whatever is of the Lord is not in vain; for has he not declared by the mouth of his holy prophet, "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?" If then this letter directed year after year to the churches, is sent of the Lord, it will fulfill the pleasure of the Lord concerning it. The primary motive of all letters of this kind, is the welfare of Zion, and the exaltation of Jesus, the Head of the church, and the life and light of all our solemn assemblies. The church of Christ is careful to do all things that will give praise and honor and glory to its glorious Head. The apostles by inspiration wrote to the churches, the faithful in Christ Jesus, which letters are embodied in the New Testament Scriptures, and are for our edification and learning and instruction. They are laid down as a rule of our faith, and for our practice in the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. If in our yearly Circular Letter, we adhere to the doctrine of the apostles, (which doctrine was foreshadowed by the holy prophets, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and also taught by our Savior while he was in the flesh,) our labor is not in vain. At our yearly associational gatherings, all the brethren of the association cannot meet with us; therefore a letter that will reach every member of the body (through the published Minutes) is not only in order, but we believe it is conducive to the welfare of all the brethren, and in harmony with the purport of scriptural teaching.

All communications directed to the saints of God, and dictated by the Spirit of Christ, present the riches of grace in the salvation of lost and ruined sinners. They declare the love of God in Christ Jesus, as shed abroad in the hearts of the people of God. They call to remembrance the way and plan of salvation as taught and manifested through the work of grace in our hearts, which makes itself known in tribulation, which worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. The hope that is born in us of faith in Christ, and is Christ in us the hope of glory, and which causes us to press forward toward the city of our great King, is the theme of every expression of the christian experience. We have no occasion to write of honors conferred upon men, in our association. We do not pass laws, and make by-laws, the substance of which is give, give, give, that we may send emissaries throughout the world, setting Christ at naught, and exalting the power and dignity of man. Jesus is our Lawgiver; he is exalted a Prince and a Savior, and his name is "the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." As the letters of the apostles were directed to the faithful in Christ Jesus, so our letters are directed to the same company of faithful brethren. They are not a form of words merely, but express the earnest desire of our hearts, in fervent love to all who love the appearing of our Lord Jesus, who by his appearing hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. We do not write that we may commend ourselves in what we do in your absence, neither to recommend ourselves as being something when we are nothing, but we want you to know that we still stand firm and unyielding in the liberty wherewith God

has made us free. We desire that you may judge by our letter whether we have departed from the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our whole desire is that we may know nothing in these solemn assemblies, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Our whole testimony, which has been presented by a faithful ministry, and to which our hearts respond, is that salvation is of the Lord. All creature works emanate from the carnal mind, which is enmity to God, and all are dissolved and perish before the light of divine grace. Creature merit, and corresponding rewards, are not found in the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. Justification by faith is the only ingress to peace with God through Jesus. The foundation of Christ's merits, by which we are eternally saved, is perfect righteousness in fullness of grace. We cannot go to him, but clothed in humility, and with pity and compassion, he approacheth unto us. He enters the chamber of his bride, where "of God [he] is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Recognizing Jesus as our Lawgiver, we desire that we may be found walking in obedience to his law. "His banner over us is love," therefore his law is a law of love. Having fulfilled every requirement of the law, by which we are delivered from under the law of sin and death, Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have love one for another." This is the very essence of the motive which prompts us to send you our greeting year after year. These meetings are precious remembrances, when we call to mind how the Lord has blessed us, and fed us with the bread of heaven, by which we have

gone on our way encouraged and hopeful, and we would that it be told to the coming generations, how the Lord has been our dwelling-place, and our ever present help in time of need. When the children of Israel had been delivered from all their enemies, and the horse and his rider had been cast into the sea, and they (Israel) were being sustained in the wilderness, by the manna which God gave them out of heaven, Moses said to them, "This is the thing which the Lord commandeth, Fill an omer of it [the manna] to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt." Brethren, we are your epistle for Jesus' sake. For through him and by him "we live and move and have our being." And by strength of the grace of God which abounds unto us, we ascribe all power and honor and glory to his holy and gracious name.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Moderator.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

The Elders and messengers composing the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with our sister Church at Hopewell, N. J., June 1st, 2d and 3d, 1898, to the churches whose messengers we are, send christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Our meeting together is not as a religious body, and not as having any authority or controlling power over you, but as a company of brethren and sisters from several sister churches, gathered for social religious intercourse, for better mutual acquaintance and mutual comfort, and for public worship and attendance on the ministry of the word.

We have letters from each of you, not that we may know better how to direct

and control you with regard to your several affairs and condition, but that we may thus be more closely drawn together as we hear of the dear Lord's faithful care to each of you. And we write this letter, not to impose commands upon you, nor to exercise dominion over your faith, but to express our mutual love and fellowship, and to call your attention to some special subject of divine truth, the consideration of which may be for your benefit, and for the fuller manifestation of our oneness in the truth.

If anywhere there are associations which have assumed to have any authority to direct and control the churches, we can understand why the churches have become restless concerning them, and have wished to discontinue them. In the associations of our correspondence such authority has never been assumed, so far as we know, nor would it have been acknowledged as belonging to them by our churches if they had assumed it.

We will say a little to you about love. The apostle Paul says, "And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."—Col. iii. 14. The dear Savior and his apostles never intimate that there is any power in any one to produce love in his own heart. The commands of Jesus, and the exhortations of his apostles, to the saints, to love one another, do not imply that any one has ability to love by an effort of his own, any being or thing which now he does not love. But Wisdom plainly says that "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned." The Savior's command which causes the blessing of life for evermore to be manifested upon the mountains of Zion, (Psalm cxxxiii.) also causes the everlasting love with which the Lord has loved his people (Jer. xxxi.

2), to be in them, and to be felt by them; so that they taste and know "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." But while nothing less than the power of God can cause this love to be in the heart of a man, there does appear to be divine obligations resting upon the children of God with reference to the manifestation of this love toward each other, and toward the Lord.

So the apostle says, "Put on love;" or, in other words, Act it out; Let it be seen in your conduct; Let it be seen as your clothing. There was never clothing so beautiful and lovely for a child of God. All of those who have this kind of clothing do not always wear it for every day dress, but put it on for special occasions. But such make a mistake. When they attempt to put it on for occasion, to be seen of men, they never get the right kind on, but really put on the worst and most ill-looking of all the dresses they have. All who have the love of God in the heart do not always know the sweetness and goodness of dwelling together in unity. They are the losers by this lack; and the apostles have dwelt in many different ways, and by many forms of exhortation, and admonition, and illustration, upon this sacred obligation to love one another in deed and in truth, and not in word only. Paul says, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." This is a sacred debt, daily to be paid, and as daily renewed, so that it is always owed. The more of this sweet debt we feel pressing upon us, the better off we are. All other indebtedness, the apostle would say, avoid. Never keep a dollar in your pocket while you owe a dollar to any man. It is not yours, but his: hand it over to him. But this debt of love is a

comfort unspeakable to pay; and every act of payment leaves the debt doubled. But instead of pressing you down to the earth, as debts of a worldly kind do an honest man, it has an opposite effect, causing your soul to "mount up with wings, as eagles."

Words alone cannot pay this debt of love. Words alone do not fulfill the exhortation to "put on charity." It is the bond of perfectness. Its expression shows the oneness of the body of Christ. If we say we love another, and close our eyes and our hands to his needs, how do we prove that love? If he should ask help of any kind which it was in our power to give, the refusal or neglect to give it would *appear* more contrary to our profession of love, but it would not be so, really. We cannot excuse our dereliction, our selfishness, by saying we did not know his need. We ought to know it. Job said, "The cause that I knew not I searched out." Our hand will not wait if there is a secret pain in any other member of the body, but will be moving about to help or soothe. The mother does not satisfy her love by kissing the child, and singing to it, but is ever attentive to its cry, and seeking to know what it needs.

If we have the love of God in true exercise in our hearts we shall be as careful for each other's welfare as the mother is for the good of her child; as careful as one member of the body for every other; for love "is the bond of perfectness; and only when we put it on in our words and acts toward each other, do we know "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." There is no doctrine so grand, so deep, so mysterious and sublime, but that its utmost depth and glory are fully felt in the heart, and

shown to spiritual eyes in the life, of the littlest child of God.

When we put on charity then we shall "look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Then we shall not turn aside from the evident need of a brother, shut up our bowels of compassion, and say to ourselves, "It is not my duty to look after him or her." We shall not grudge what we do feel constrained to give, but shall know "how that it is more blessed to give than to receive." How sad to see one spend freely, lavishly, for personal luxury and taste, and open the hand slowly, constrainedly, to let the pittance go that is for the help of some of the poor of the flock, who are dependent entirely upon the brethren (or the world) for support, so far as the natural eye can see. The Lord has all such in his holy and tender care, we are thankful to know.

Brethren, may the Lord bless us with the desire and grace to put on charity, and to wear this lovely clothing all the time, and his name shall be praised.

F. A. CHICK, Moderator.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Baltimore Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, convened with the church at Harford, Harford Co., Md., May 18th, 19th and 20th, 1898, to the several meetings and associations with which we correspond, sends her annual greetings.

By this letter we wish to convey to you all our sincere gratitude to God, for the precious love and fellowship that exists with all with whom we correspond, and that the bond of union with those of like precious faith may grow stronger as the years go by. We have been strengthened

and comforted by having such cheering manifestations of God's love to us, in giving his ministers such revelations of his word, and enabling them to so ably declare that salvation is of the Lord, and that the wisdom of God is seen by faith in all his works. We are glad you felt it in your hearts to send your messages of love, which, with your messengers, have, we trust, been received in the Spirit of the gospel, and we greatly desire a continuance of the same.

Our meeting has been especially good and profitable, to our waiting souls.

Our Association has appointed to meet with the Ebenezer church, in Baltimore, on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, 1899, when and where we hope to meet you all again, and receive your messages of love.

WM. GRAFTON, Moderator.

MILTON DANCE, Clerk.

To the several associations with which the Delaware Old School Baptist Association, now in session with the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, is in correspondence, the following letter is addressed.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have received Minutes from your associations, and have a goodly number of messengers from some, to sit with us during our present session, where we are glad to see all in one accord, and eating and drinking of the same spiritual food, and the same spiritual drink, even the broken body and shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The stand has been occupied by preachers from various parts of the country, all contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, which shows that our God is able to and does qualify his people to testify "that Jesus is come in the flesh." No difference how great the distance separating us in the world, we

are one people, having one aim, and an eye single to the glory of God; and they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. We feel that we have been made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and that this is a season of refreshing to our poor and needy souls. We send you Minutes in return, and trust that we may be permitted to have messengers to sit with you at various times and places, to again behold with you the beauty of the order of God's house.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the Welsh Tract church, at Newark, Delaware, beginning on Wednesday before the last Sunday in May, 1899.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Moderator.

B. C. CUBBAGE, Clerk.

Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Hopewell Church, to the Associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which we correspond, Greeting.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have been permitted by the grace of God to meet again together. Your messengers and Minutes have been cordially received, and we believe that you firmly hold fast to the faith once delivered to the saints. Your ministers and messengers come to us with great assurance that the Lord has sent them to tell of his goodness, and declare his power. God, in his infinite wisdom and power, has protected us through another year. We do not hear of any dissension in any way among the churches of this Association, and are glad to find this to be the case.

The doctrine of salvation by grace has been preached from the beginning to the end of our meeting. We desire to still abide in this doctrine, which falls as the

rain, and distills as the dew. It is all of the Lord, and none can add thereto, nor take therefrom. For the Lord says, "My sheep hear my voice," and they come unto me. And they will continue to come, until the last vessel of mercy has been gathered in.

We have had a very precious meeting, and hope that you may be enabled to continue your correspondence, by messengers and Minutes, with us, for it is a blessed privilege to meet together, and tell of our joys, as well as our sorrows.

The next session of our Association is appointed to be held with the Church at Kingwood, (Locktown) N. J., and to commence on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1899, where and when we hope to meet your messengers, and receive your messages again.

F. A. CHICK, Mod.

ELIJAH LEIGH, Clerk.

THE
"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

A pamphlet containing the following articles, viz:
First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28th, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School, and the New School Baptists.

Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England.

Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fourth. "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion, of the same title.

Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Will be mailed to any address on receipt of price.

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G. BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1898.

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

EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REVELATION III. 17, 18.

"BECAUSE thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee 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 eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Some time since, a dear brother in the ministry, requested that we should write through the SIGNS upon these words. At the time we did not feel that we were sufficiently led into the substance of these words to undertake to respond. We wrote him that probably he could write of them more to edification than we could; but he declined to do so, and so the matter has rested until the present time. The text suggested has been recurring to our mind frequently since then. Some things have come to seem clear to us in the words, and so at last we feel to speak of the text as best we may: It has long been our conclusion that if we wait before speaking or writing upon any portion of the revealed word of the Lord until all its meaning is made clear to us, we shall never again speak or write in his name. And still further, to tell all the fullness of meaning involved in any portion of the Scripture would require

more than volumes of writing. Therefore we will suggest such reflections concerning this text as have occurred to us, and leave the matter with the brother and with our readers.

These words were addressed to a church of our Lord Jesus Christ—the church of Laodicea. One thing will occur at once to the careful reader of the addresses to the angels of these seven churches of Asia, viz: that perfection is not necessary to constitute a body of people a church of Jesus Christ. Fault was found with all these seven churches, with but one exception. Most of them are bidden to repent lest the candlestick be removed out of its place. Some are more severely condemned than others. From the whole of these seven addresses we learn that an evil course persisted in by a church of Christ will lead, sooner or later, to a loss of her visibility as a branch of the true vine. The people of God cannot do wrong with impunity. It is true that God is not mocked, and that what a church, as well as a man, sows, they shall reap. We think also that we are warranted in the conclusion that in all ages of the world a very small proportion of the churches of Christ will be found walking blameless before the Lord. In the epistles addressed by the apostles to the various churches, as recorded in the New Testament, we find that some things demanded reproof in them all. We have heard that age spoken of as the golden age of the church, but the narrative of the Acts, and the epistles, shows to the contrary. The churches then were imperfect, as well as the churches now. Perhaps at different times, and in different localities, the faults might differ, but still it is evident that none of them were perfect, or had any right to say that they were any better than the rest. If they

did not possess the faults of a sister church, they were possessed of other faults equally as God-dishonoring. If we read carefully we shall perhaps be astonished at the multiplicity of evils which had crept in among the churches in different places. Some were faults of discipline, some of doctrine, and some of what we might call good morals. The peculiar fault of this church at Laodicea, as it seems, was that she had become satisfied with herself, and her attainments, and so had grown careless, or lukewarm; neither cold nor hot. She was simply living at ease. The woe pronounced ages before was liable to fall upon her. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." It would be a better condition to be either cold, or hot, than to be in this lukewarm state in which there was neither lamentation over her sins, nor rejoicing over the salvation of the Lord. The Pharisaic element which is in all of us, and in all our churches, had in her case sprung up rankly, and had borne fruit. She was thoroughly satisfied with her attainments in the divine life, as she supposed it to be. She knew of nothing that she needed. Some have thought that this church was prosperous in a worldly sense. This is likely, for the riches of this world are deceitful, and calculated to puff up the heart with pride and vain glory. But when the apostle was led to declare that this church was really poor, it seems to us full proof that the fancied riches were riches of self-righteousness, and fancied attainments in the things of the kingdom of God. At all events they were not declared to be poor in this world's goods, for had they been, the Holy Spirit would not have said that they did not know that they were poor. The poverty was in spiritual attainments, and therefore their fancied riches were in the way of self-

righteousness, and boasted attainments in spiritual things. A great truth is stated here. Those who are really rich in the kingdom of God, think that they are poor, while they who are poor in the things of God and godliness, think they are rich. This is an infallible mark by which a man's state before God may be known. The kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor in spirit, while they who have riches of goodness and obedience to boast of, are not able to even enter the kingdom.

We learn from the things said of this church, that even a child of God, or a church of Jesus Christ as a body, may be carried away by a self-righteous spirit, as well as by any other temptation. Those who are carried away by it may be known by their boasting of the things which they have gained by their righteous and obedient walk, and by a readiness to compare their condition with that of others, to their own credit, and to the discredit of the others. This church said first, "I am rich," then, "I am increased in goods," then, "I have need of nothing." Here is a proud and haughty spirit, and it always goes before destruction and a fall, and this church is accordingly warned as to the result, if this state of things continues. Having attained, in her own judgment, to such an exalted state, like any other one who is actuated by a Pharisaic spirit, they despise others. They also feel but little or no need of the grace of God to build them up. They have arrived at the summit, and have nothing to ask God for, and can look with a degree of pity, scorn and contempt, down upon others of their brethren who had not made such attainments. He who boasts before God, will be sure to despise others. Therefore they were lukewarm both toward God and all the rest of the

churches. Had they been utterly cold and dead to the whole matter, they could not have laid any claims to such high attainments. Had they on the other hand been full of true zeal toward God and his cause, then also they could not have been so boastful, for true zeal is always humble, and never satisfied with its own attainments. True zeal esteems others better than himself; false zeal esteems himself better than others. Had they been cold, really cold, the added charge of boastfulness could not have been brought against him. Had they been hot, they could not have thought that they had need of nothing. In either case the God of heaven would not have said that he would spue them out of his mouth, as something altogether unpalatable. Pharisaic pride among the people of God, is to be dreaded more than anywhere else. It made the elder brother, in the parable, object to receiving his prodigal brother. He would say, I have always obeyed, and my brother has done nothing but squander his living, and he ought to be discarded. Jesus rebuked the spirit of the elder brother more than all the faults of the prodigal. So the publican went down to his house with the evidence of his justification rather than the other. Beware of Pharisaic pride in the church, and in our own hearts. This church at Laodicea had come to be full of this spirit. The Lord says that she thought that she had no need of any kind. She had in her own estimation attained to the highest pinnacle. Is it possible that a church of the meek and humble Savior can have attained to such a state as this? Bad as is the unholy zeal which would condemn a brother without remedy, and which refuses to believe in the genuineness of his profession of repentance, when he makes it, that boastfulness of feeling which lifts

one above all care for his brother of any sort, since he is so far below, and so nearly out of sight, is immeasurably worse. Either condition is a woeful one.

The Lord says this church was wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. She lacked every right thing, and instead of needing nothing, needed all things. When we see any church or brother anywhere, ascribing their prosperity to their own obedience, or zeal, we begin to tremble lest this church should be in a Laodicean state. We feel glad indeed to see careful obedience to all that the Lord commands, but we tremble when we see that any one thinks that he is fully obedient, and who attributes his blessings to his obedience, instead of to the grace of God. While it is true that the willing and obedient eat the good of the land, yet it is equally true that those who really eat the good of the land, ascribe it to the mercy of God, and not to their own obedience. Even while they eat they feel as poor as the poorest, and wonder that God should so bless them. When did we ever see thee hungry, and naked, and sick, and in prison, and ministered unto thee? It has always been true, and it always will be, that those who have not done these things will think they have done the mighty works in the streets of Zion, while those who have done them will not be able to remember that they ever have done so. They can see that others have, but never themselves, when they really are the recipients of the blessings of God. When a disciple comes to be under the influence of this self-satisfied spirit, the blessing which he boasts of, is not from the Lord.

Now the Lord counsels this church in this time of her declension. She needs what she has not. He counsels her to buy, not the false riches of her own good-

ness and self-righteousness, or whatever other worldly thing it may be that pleases her, but rather the gold which has been tried in the fire, that she may be truly rich. He counsels her not to buy her own garments of human merit, which are at the best but filthy rags, but rather white raiment, that she may be clothed, and that the shame of her nakedness may not appear. He also counsels her to anoint her eyes, not with human wisdom or vain philosophies, but with eyesalve from heaven, or with the revelation of the knowledge of God, that she may see. Nothing that is of the flesh can make her rich in any true sense. Nothing that she can do can clothe her so as to hide her nakedness from God, and no amount of fleshly wisdom can reveal divine things to her. Nothing can avail before God but that which comes from him. The riches of his goodness, the garment of his righteousness, the revelation of the knowledge of God alone, can present her before God, with acceptance. This will humble her, and stop her boasting, and remove her lukewarmness, and nothing but this will avail. O, how soon one glimpse of our own heart will put a stop to all boasting, and cause us to cry unto God for that mercy which endureth forever.

But wherewith shall she buy these precious things? They are without price. Who can estimate their value? The least blessing from God is so rich that all the treasures of earth cannot equal it. One emotion of love to God is worth more than all the substance of a man's house. If it were to be all offered for love, it would be utterly condemned. Yet the Lord says, I counsel thee to buy of me. Let us be very careful to notice the place where these precious commodities are to be found. I counsel thee to

buy of me. Does the Lord ever sell anything to men? How similar this language is to that in the prophecy of Isaiah: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price." This relates to that experience by which the soul first enters into the joy of salvation. And here no one questions the meaning. We know that it is but an emphatic and striking way of saying, that these things cannot be really bought, but are the gift of God. They are bestowed upon compliance with no conditions upon our part. This every christian experience testifies. We find the same expression used with regard to things pertaining to the welfare of believers, after they have believed and have become members of the church visibly. When the Lord says here, as well as in Isaiah, "Buy of me," it is the most emphatic way of saying that such things cannot be bought. God gives; he cannot sell, and if he could, we could not buy, for we have not the price to pay. At all times we must come empty handed. "Nothing in my hand I bring," is true of the believer in all his times of coming to the Lord for blessing. The substance of all this then is, the Lord says that this church is really poor, and has nothing, and that she cannot supply herself by her own efforts in any direction. There is no refuge, no fountain of goodness and righteousness, save in him. So he speaks, counseling her to look to the only source of supply, and then says, that she must not think to bring any price in her hand. When we need any spiritual blessing of any kind, we can never find it by coming and saying in our hearts, Lord, I have given to thee, I have been faithful and obedient to thy commandments, I have a

right therefore to claim thy blessing. No, but when we buy of the Lord, we come as humble suppliants, poor and needy, and we confess that we have done nothing that merits esteem. We confess ourselves to be just what the Lord has said we are, wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. In all the flesh dwells no good thing. Whatever is good in the spirit, the Lord has conferred upon us, and therefore we cannot bring these things as a price for more. We cannot take the Lord's own gifts, and purchase yet other gifts with them. The sum of the whole matter is, that salvation is of grace, and grace covers all that salvation covers, and all along the line of christian experience, is boasting excluded. One child of God may commend and praise another, but no child of God can, when under the power of the Spirit of God, praise or commend himself, in the sight of God. We cannot tell this as it ought to be told, but we know that the hearts of all who feel their poverty, will respond to the truth that we have here tried to express.

C.

RETRACTION.

SINCE publishing the editorial article in number eleven, of present volume, under the head "Chastisements," the author of the article to which it referred has declared in his paper that he is convinced that he was mistaken in his views, and has therefore published a retraction of the idea which we combatted. We are glad indeed of this. We are glad that he sees the mistake, and glad of the spirit in him which has made him willing to at once admit it. It is human to err, but it is Christlike to be willing to confess the error. We feel it is right to clear the writer, as he has cleared himself by his

acknowledgment of his mistake. This cardinal truth must be clearly apprehended, and always defended, that only the blood of Christ can atone for any and all sins.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

FRUITFUL OLD AGE.

How solemn is the period of old age! When the body is feeble, and bends toward the grave; and the mind, if clear, is filled with the retrospect of time and the prospect of eternity. When the hoary hairs, the wrinkled skin, the dim eye, the dull ear, the silvery voice, the trembling hand, the tottering step, betoken nature's decay and the final passing away from this world, the putting off of this tabernacle, and the entrance into the spiritual and eternal state. How repulsive is old age to the worldly mind! How many strive to keep the bloom of youth or the vigor of manhood! How many would fain deceive others, how many would fain deceive themselves, respecting the advances of age! How perfectly unprofitable do the years of decrepitude seem to the carnal eye! How peculiarly precious, therefore, are those promises and effects of the gospel, which make old age to the eye of faith perhaps the most happy and fruitful period of life.

The psalmist describing the righteous, who are planted in the house of the Lord, comparing them to the palm-tree and the cedar of Lebanon, says, "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing." There is a beauty in the old age of the christian. "His leaf shall not wither." The frosts and storms and droughts of a lifetime have not checked his growth. He is, like the

cedar and the palm, ever green. Where on earth is a lovelier sight, to the eye that can discern true spiritual beauty, than an aged saint, ready to fall into the grave, but leaning upon the Lord; the outward man perishing, but the inward man firm and strong; the darkness of night gathering, but only setting forth the radiance of his holiness. The bloom of eternal youth is seen beneath the snowy locks of age. How delightfully is the eye relieved to see scattered amongst the naked, moaning trees of yonder mountain the stately pines and cedars, even in midwinter, dressed in the verdure of spring. Yet "not Lebanon with all its trees," yields so beautiful and sublime a sight as the hoary head, which is found in the way of righteousness.

But there is more beauty and sublimity here. "They shall still bring forth fruit." The believer, under the infirmities of age especially, if his life has been of active christian labor, is no doubt often tempted to think that his work is done; that he can be of no more use to the world, and may as well be removed. But this is not the prompting of true religion. The true servant of God is not only willing to "wait all the days of his appointed time, till his change come," but feels that God is lengthening out his feeble life for a purpose. It is not hard for such an one to see what that purpose may be. On the other hand, some on whom the burden of years is heavy, are troubled because they cannot do more in the active service of God. While they feel that God is prolonging their life that they may still bear fruit, they feel as if they were bearing no fruit. They should reflect that they may serve God and benefit others by suffering as well as by acting.

Patience is perhaps the brightest of the christian graces, because it shines amidst

darkness. Let not the aged soldier of the cross think that he can do nothing for his Master, so long as he can suffer for him. Suffering is, with the true christian, doing. The christian spirit of submission is not far from that of active obedience. It is an element of that spirit of heavenly strength, by which the believer overcomes all evil, controls it all, and makes it serve his own religious improvement. It turns the sword into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning hook; the instruments of destruction into implements of divine husbandry for his good. Whence does this spirit of submission come? Not from the natural heart, as the cold resignation of the Stoic, to his fate, but from Christ. It is the Spirit of Christ, working in the believer, to will and to do.

In Christ it is said, "Not my will, but thine be done." It makes the christian say the same. In Christ it said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down, and I have power to take it again." In Paul it said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." In every believer it ought to say the same. "I take this burden upon myself. Neither God, nor man, nor Satan, forces it upon me against my will. I know, that I, like the Captain of my salvation, am to be made perfect through suffering. I willingly, gladly suffer, as of my own accord. I lay down my life, that I may take it again. I live by Christ living in me; and I know that in him I have power to lay down my life, and have power to take it again." This is the real character of the christian spirit of submission. With it, suffering and acting are one. How it changes the character of all affliction! How it lightens the burden, cheers the gloom, strengthens the weakness, and

fills with activity the otherwise unprofitable hours of old age!

Thus the aged disciple brings forth fruit, if in no other way, still by his example of patient waiting in christian hope; by showing to those who would say, Where now is your God? that the Lord does not cast off his people in the time of old age; that religion outlives the decay of nature, and cheers the saint to the end with a hope which no delay of the promise can impair.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1855.

A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.

AT this season of the year the work in our office falls off nearly one-half, and in order to keep our hands employed, we will, for the next three months, do small jobs of work, from the printing of a few copies of favorite pieces of poetry, to a publishing of small pamphlets, at actual cost. If you have any little jobs of printing, now is your time to send it on. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SON.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder W. W. Meredith, April 27th, 1898, at the home of the bride's father, Mr. Robert L. Wallis and Miss Mary Roe, both of Kent Co., Md.

By the same, May 18th, 1898, at the home of the bride's father, Mr. Robert B. Williams and Miss Mamie E. Trader, both of Wicomico Co., Md.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—May 14th, 1898, **Miner C. Brome**; born August 17th, 1859; was married Nov. 25th, 1898; leaves a wife and four children, parents, one brother and sister, to mourn for him, besides a host of friends. His disease was peritonitis, from which he suffered very much for several days. He told his friends the second day he was taken sick, that before he lost his mind, or got so he could not talk, that he wanted to tell them that if he died, and he felt sure he would not recover, he did not want them to get any of the preachers about Fallsburg to officiate at his funeral, as he did not believe their doctrine, and if they could not get an Old School Baptist, to bury him without any service whatever. He was not a professor of religion, but gave evidence in his upright life and testimony, that he knew the truth as it is in Jesus, and we believe he is at rest with Jesus. May the dear, mourning, heart-broken wife, children, aged father and mother, and all, realize the everlasting arm of Almighty God is underneath them in this sore affliction, to support and comfort them, is my prayer.

Brother John McConnell and myself officiated at the funeral. The remains were buried near Fallsburg, N. Y.

D. M. VAIL.

Mrs. Mary Coulbourn, the wife of Mr. George Coulbourn, one of the prominent farmers of Worcester Co., Md., and daughter of Deacon Uriah Fooks, departed this life April 22d, 1898. She was born March 28th, 1847. Eight children were the fruits of this union, six boys and two girls; two of the boys deceased. The subject of this notice had never made a public profession, but as a tree of righteousness, she bore the fruits of the Spirit, for she gave evidence of a work of grace for a number of years, but seemed to wait for something more brightly to be shown her. None of her immediate family were members until recently, so she had no one to tell her feelings to, nor to encourage her. She was all that could be asked for as a companion, and a helper to bear the burdens of life, a loving and dutiful mother. I was told that the doctor said that she was the most patient person in sickness that he had ever seen, although she suffered so long, being on the decline for about one year, and confined to her bed eight months. She was never heard to murmur or complain, but said sometimes, "If I could only die." She retained an appearance of cheerfulness all through. She continued to read the SIGNS as long as she could hold them up. I visited her several times, and always found her patiently waiting. All was done for her that medical skill and loving and willing hands could do, but they could only minister momentary relief, until that voice was heard saying, "Child, your Father calls, come home," and then a great light left the family circle, to shine where there

will be no dimness. May the sorrowing family be able to take this comforting view of her departure. I wish to express my heart-felt sympathy for the mourning ones.

Elder W. W. Meredith preached a very appropriate discourse on the occasion, as I was told. Her remains were then laid away in the old family cemetery, to await the Archangel's voice, and the trump of God, then shall she come forth changed in the likeness of her blessed Redeemer.

T. M. POULSON.

By request of the sorrowing family, I send you for publication a brief obituary of an esteemed and venerable member of Honey Creek church, brother **William Betzer**. The subject of this notice was born in Ross Co., Ohio, Feb. 14th, 1806; died April 13th, 1898, aged 92 years, 1 month and 29 days. Was married to Susanna Wells, August 7th, 1827. Of this union were born five children, two only surviving him. For sixty years he was an unassuming but devoted member of the Primitive Baptist church, until this infirmity of age made it impossible. He was a most prompt and regular attendant at church meetings on Saturday, usually returning home, thirteen miles away, and back again for services on Sunday. While practical and diligent in private affairs, there was no figure more familiar than brother Betzer's as he sat quietly and meekly among the brethren. While a man of few words, he was unmovable in the doctrine and glory of salvation by grace, and in his abiding trust in the goodness and power of God. He also showed his appreciation of church privileges by contributing quietly, but liberally and regularly, to meet necessary expenses. Never a jar of discord, or wounds that needed healing, came to the brethren through a word spoken, or deed done, by this brother. A lover of peace and harmony, his long life of christian walk and conversation, attested the truth, "How good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity." As a shock of corn, fully ripe, our brother has been gathered by the great Reaper of all that is mortal, but we believe confidently that the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, had long dwelt in him, and that it will also quicken his mortal body, to dwell evermore in the home of the redeemed, where there is no war, no sickness, no sorrow and no death.

Your unworthy brother, as I sometimes hope,

JOHN SEITZ.

"BUT I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

DIED—At her late residence, in Saline Co., Missouri, April 4th, 1898, **Miss Charity Lemmon**, aged 71 years and 12 days. The subject of this notice was born in

the State of Indiana, March 23d, 1827. Thirty years afterward she, with her parents and their family, moved to the State of Illinois, where they lived about sixteen years. Then they all came to Saline Co., Mo., and located where she died. Her father and mother, and one sister, had gone before her to the glorious abode of the great God, who inhabits eternity, in whose presence is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. And now she is taken to that same heavenly home where there is no sickness nor suffering. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." She leaves behind to mourn her departure, and their bereavement, three brothers and their wives, one sister and her husband, several nephews and nieces, and many warm friends, among whom is the writer of this notice, who has been intimately acquainted with her for more than twenty years, and therefore feels that he may testify to the many shining qualities for which she was so warmly loved, and greatly admired, by those who knew her best. She suffered much during her last sickness, but bore it patiently, being fully aware that the end was near, and often expressing the desire that it might come quickly. She had never united with any church, but was a strong Predestinarian, or Particular Baptist, in sentiment, and gave good and ample evidence that such was the inwrought work of the Spirit of the living God. She loved the brotherhood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." She believed that Jesus is the Christ, and thus showed that she was a child of God; for, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Being risen with Jesus, she lived and believed in him as "the way, the truth and the life," and only had fellowship for those who believed in, and preached "Jesus and the resurrection." Hence eternal life was hers, for Jesus said, "He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die." She could not go with those who claim some goodness in the flesh, or worthiness in the creature, for she felt to be cut off from all of that, and hence she was of that number of whom it is written, "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Then, dear bereaved ones, let us rejoice for the consolation, our loss is her gain. She has departed, and is with Christ, which is far better."

"Methinks I see her now at rest,
In the bright mansions love ordained;
Her head reclines on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin and sorrow pained."

R. M. THOMAS.

St. JOSEPH, Missouri.

DIED—At her home at Langdon, near Binghamton, N. Y., May 5th, 1898, sister **Sarah Walters Bishop**, aged 67 years. Her illness was short, and her death sudden and unexpected. Not feeling usually well Monday, the 2d, she went to her room to lie down. Her son heard her fall, and they found her unconscious, and laid her on the bed. She was unconscious a short time, and did not know she had fallen. The doctor was summoned, and he did not say there was any cause for alarm. She was able to sit up some on Tuesday and Wednesday, but had a hard pain in her left side, which her daughter was able to relieve somewhat. About midnight she called her daughter, and said she was faint, and wished the doctor to come, or send medicine to relieve the pain, and soon after taking the remedies she appeared to be resting, but passed away at 9 a. m. Sister Bishop was born Sept. 30th, 1830, at Peas Marsh, Sussex, England; came to America in 1853, with her husband and seven children, and settled at Otego, N. Y., where she united with the Old School Baptist church, being baptized by the pastor, Elder B. Bundy, August 1st, 1875. She was a sound, faithful, humble member, always feeling very unworthy of a name and place with the other members, as she often said, but she prized her church home above all things else on earth. She had a good, clear understanding of the Scriptures. She was stripped of her Arminian rags, or Babylonish garments, she said, and held in traditions of men as better teachings than the word of God. She was clear in the law, doctrine and order, of God's house, and to meet with the church on earth, was her greatest enjoyment. Her health had not been very good of late years. She received a great shock last October, in the sudden death of her dear husband, from heart disease. He was a good, honorable man. She wrote one week before her death that she had been very feeble, but was much better now, and hoped to visit some Baptist friends soon. She attended the funeral of sister Churchill, of Sanitaria Springs, in March, and wrote that she much enjoyed hearing Elder Bogardus preach that day.

Her funeral was attended by Elder D. M. Vail, May 7th, at her residence. A few of her brethren and sisters were present, together with many friends and neighbors. She leaves six sons, two daughters and one sister in the United States, and one brother and sister in England, to mourn her departure, together with the church at Otego, where she has been a loved and respected member for many years. She is now enjoying in its fullness, what she has had a foretaste of here on earth. For her to die was gain.

ALSO,

DIED—At Otego, N. Y., May 15th, 1898, brother **Samuel Squire**, of paralysis of the heart. The attack came while at the supper table, and at first he was unconscious, but he rallied after being laid on his bed, and talked some. He said he was dying, and

prayed to the Lord to have mercy upon him, and said other words that were not clear. He died before the doctor reached the house. Brother Squire was born Dec. 24th, 1816, at Meredith, N. Y. He was the second son of William and Anna Squire. In early manhood he married Margaret Jenkins, and they lived together more than fifty years. She died in April, 1892, since which time brother Squire made his home with his youngest brother, A. R. Squire, of Otego, N. Y. Though aged and lame, he was able to go about, driving far and near, to visit his friends, which he much enjoyed doing. He went to his old home neighborhood at Unadilla, the day before his death, and that day seemed to feel unusually well.

Brother Squire and his excellent wife became identified with the Old School Baptist churches early in life. They moved to Otsego County many years ago, and united with the church at Otego, in January, 1871, where they regularly and faithfully attended all the meetings, unless detained by sickness. Though their home at Unadilla was ten miles distant, it was always expected that "Uncle Samuel and Aunt Margaret" would be at the meetings, and they came, regardless of winds, rough roads, or cold weather, though frail in health and feeble in body. Brother Squire was not enabled to tell very much of his feelings or thoughts, yet he often said this, "That he was in love and fellowship with the brethren and sisters, and felt very unworthy to be one of their number," and the tears usually testified that the utterance of his lips was heart-felt. He was present at every meeting, but would say recently, "I shall not be here many more times." He was more feeble each month. He was firm and unwavering in the doctrine and belief of the church, and trusted wholly in the finished work of Jesus; had no good works of his own to rely upon.

His funeral was largely attended at 1 p. m., May 18th, the services being held at the house, at his request. Elder D. M. Vail spoke words of truth and comfort from text in John xiv. 2, last cause, and the third verse. Hymns No. 15 and 1251 were read. One brother, five nephews and two grandnephews only, of a once large circle of relatives, survive him, and they with many friends, and the little church at Otego, sincerely mourn their loss.

SINCE March 9th, when sister Addie Cator Churchhill, of Sanitaria Springs, N. Y., departed this life, to be forever with the Lord, the Otego church has been bereft of five of its members; first sister Addie, and March 31st, sister Mary Brownson; April 20th, brother James Bundy; May 5th, sister Bishop; May 15th, brother Squire. We feel that

"Though cast down, we're not forsaken,
Though afflicted, not alone;
Thou didst give, and thou hast taken,
Blessed Lord, 'Thy will be done."

The whole of hymn 668 is very expressive of the feelings of the few of us who remain. May the Lord sustain us and guide us by the word of his power.

SUSIE C. F. GUERNSEY.

RECEIPTS.

TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS"
TO INDIGENT SUBSCRIBERS.

Nancy Staters, W. Va., \$.20; Clara Beauchamp, Iowa, \$1.00; S. S. Ward, Ohio, \$1.00.—Total, \$2.20.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet, the Lord willing, with the New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Wednesday, August 31st, 1898, and the two following days.

Those coming from the south will stop at Avon, while those coming from the north will stop at St. Augustine, on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. Railroad. Those coming from the west will stop at Roseville, of the R. Island Branch of the same road, where teams will be in waiting on Wednesday morning of the Association, and Tuesday evening before.

All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Clovesville Old School Baptist church, of the Lexington Association, on the first Saturday and Sunday in July, (2d and 3d) 1898. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth, especially brethren in the ministry. Trains will be met at Fleischmanns station, on the Ulster and Delaware Railroad.

O. F. BALLARD, Clerk.

THE yearly meeting of the Beulah Church, of Canada, will be held, the Lord willing, at the usual place, in the township of Brooke, seven miles from Alvinston station, beginning on Saturday before the third Sunday in June. A cordial invitation is extended to those desiring to meet with us.

ARCHIBALD MCALPINE, Clerk.

BOOK NOTICES.

I HAVE some of the Mary Parker books yet on hand, which I will send by mail for 55 cents each. I have about two hundred, and wish to save myself from much loss if I can. I also have some of my Meditations, which I will send for \$1.00.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1898. NO. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GRASS VALLEY, Oregon, May 10, 1898.

VERY DEAR BROTHER BENTON BEEBE:
—I send you herewith the experience and call to the ministry of our dearly beloved brother and able defender of the truth as it is in Jesus, W. J. Hess, which I would like to see in print in our family paper, the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I believe it will be profitable, and will be read with interest by many, if not all, the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Your brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

EXPERIENCE.

MY recollections, of a religious nature, date back to a period when I was but five or six years old. Being taught that the Bible was a book of instruction from God, and that he was a Being that lived in heaven, and that he could see everybody, and knew everything that was done or said, whether in the day or night, I thought that he would love me when I did good, and dislike me when I did wrong, so I would frequently ask my mother to read to me from the Bible, thinking that to be something good, and

for which I deserved some credit, and thus placing myself, in my estimation, a little above my brothers and sisters, in goodness. Thus I went on until I was about twenty years old, when my heart grew so hard that nothing seemed to move it. I remember of helping to dig a grave in which to bury a relative of one of my young friends, and of talking, jesting and laughing, as merry as if at a picnic, and of remarking in a jesting way that we were digging clams. So far as sympathy was concerned, I could have laughed at the heart-felt grief of the mourners. O my soul, what depths of iniquity hast thou not sounded! I did not know then that my Lord had said, he would take away the hard and stony heart, and give a heart of flesh. Bless his holy name, that is his work; many times have I proved since, to my joy. Little did I think when at that funeral that the very next one to be laid to rest there would be my own sweet sister, but two years younger than myself. She was rather my favorite, going with me everywhere in company. But she was taken away, and when on her death-bed she said for us not to weep for her, we would all come soon. I resolved to meet her,

but felt I would have to mend my ways, for I knew I was not fit to go to that bright world, where I believed she had gone, without a reformation, for I believed no sin or uncleanness could enter there. So I set myself the task of watching my actions. I did not know then the very thought of foolishness is sin, and resolutely rebuked my overmastering sins, and could soon notice quite a change in me, and began to look about on my friends and neighbors with a self-congratulatory feeling of being as good and a little better than some of them that even professed to be christians, and I thought the way I was getting along that God would see how good I was getting, and would soon take me in hand, and make a christian of me, for I had gotten the idea that a person had to have a change of heart to be a christian, and that God had to work that change, but by being good we could bring him under obligation to do that work for us. But somehow or other whenever I would begin to look at myself with some satisfaction with my progress, something would throw me off my guard, and down I would fall in sin and in my own estimation. Then I would promise myself to do better next time; then up and on very well for a while, until thinking myself an example of morality, when down I would go again, thus up and down, breaking every promise I had ever made to myself or to God, to do better, until I lost all confidence in my ability to keep in subjection my evil, fleshly nature, and was ready to say, "O Lord I cannot: undertake thou for me. If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Before this time I had taken to reading the Scriptures, both old and new, and having a retentive memory, I could quote many passages in proof of election and predestination, and having been raised

among Old School Baptists, and hearing the doctrine all my life, and seeing so much of it in the Bible, I think I believed it as firmly as I believed anything at that time, and it was a source of surprise and delight to me to see how easily one skillful in handling the doctrine could silence Arminians, and I think that one reason why I read and studied so incessantly, for there was months together in which I carried a Testament in my pocket about my work, and while resting would read, being in this, very much as they of old when they adjured the evil spirit by Jesus whom Paul preacheth, only I would adjure by the doctrine the Old Baptists preach. So I would argue with the Arminians, and the more noted they were the better I liked to argue with them, being not afraid of the best, and all the while being one myself. Having driven them in confusion, I would afterwards tell about it, and laugh, thinking it rare sport.

About this time, in the year 1875, I went to a meeting of the Siloam Association, held with Cedar Creek Church. I went full of life and fun, not caring for the preaching, and cannot to this day remember whether the preaching was good or not, nor one word of Scripture used, but when the meeting was breaking up, and the members were giving the parting hand, I thought I never saw such a lovely company, and wanted to be among them, and started to go near, hoping some would come and shake hands with me. I especially wanted to shake hands with Elder J. P. Allison, for he seemed so lovely to me. I think none of them saw me, and I turned away to hide my tears.

In the fall of this year Elder James A. Bullack, a faithful old soldier of the cross, now in glory, came down to Clatsop Plains, where my parents lived, and

preached the first gospel sermon I had ever heard man preach; I mean the first I had heard with an understanding heart. His text was, "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God." As I said, I had heard from my childhood of God having a chosen people, but had never been tracked down and the healing balm applied to me, even me, by the power of the Spirit of God, so forcibly before. After this, in the winter, the light shined in my soul more clearly, not that it made me feel more like a christian, on the contrary it showed me more of the plague of my own heart, and the deceitfulness of sin. It showed me that of all sinners on the face of the earth, I was chief. I would then have changed places with the vilest of the brute creation, for when they died, I thought, that would be the last of them, while I, if I got justice, would live, or rather die, in hell to all eternity; and yet I was not afraid, and it has caused me much trouble of mind because I was not, for others have spoken and written of being, as it were, shook over hell until almost scared to death; but I was not, for I felt a quiet resignation, though feeling to be without hope and without God in the world. I can think of nothing to express my feelings at that time so well as some lines I had learned some time before, from the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for their very oddness, and may have laughed at their, then, foolish expression. Will give here as I remember them.

"Was e'er one pressed by such a load,
Or pierced by such an unseen dart,
To find at once an absent God,
And yet, alas, a careless heart?
Such grief as mine, a griefless grief,
Did ever any mortal share?
A hopeless hope, a lifeless life,
And such unwonted, careless care."

Thus I went on for nearly two years, sometimes trying to hide my light from

my friends, and sometimes trying to drown my convictions in sin and frivolity, but riot was not, nor could it be loud or deep or drunk enough, to drown it, for it was as a nail fastened in a sure place by the master of assemblies. O, the horror of great darkness and anguish of soul I suffered for three or four days before my Jesus in his love, and in his pity, showed me that in all my rebellion his loving-kindness and tender mercy had followed me, and justice said of me, Deliver him from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom. O, the glorious view I had at that time of the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of the love of God, else he could not have forgiven such a load of sin as I had committed. I then thought a lifetime in the service of my Jesus would be but slight in comparison with the great things he had done for me, and that it would be my joy to render it, but O, how fickle and deceitful I find my heart to be. Lord, thou knowest

"I need thy presence every passing hour,
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be?
Thro' cloud and sunshine, O abide with me!"

A while before this, I think in the year 1876, is the first time I remember of wanting to be baptized. It was when my own brother, two years older than me, and W. H. Gilmore, now a soldier of the cross, and I believe a dear and faithful servant of my Master, were baptized in the creek on Clatsop Plains, by Elder James A. Bullack. It was to me a beautiful sight, and O how I wished I was worthy to do as they had done, and openly profess that I sought a city that hath foundations whose Builder and Maker is God, though afraid if I did, of bringing reproach on the sacred cause, which I felt I then loved better than life,

and would rather die than dishonor it. In May of the following year, Elder Bullack again came to preach for us, and I thought I would join the church on Saturday, and had sort of studied out what I would say, and tell a glowing experience, but all through the preaching my heart was as hard and unfeeling as a stone, and when the opportunity was given, I could not make a move towards going. I then thought my day of grace was gone, and my conscience was seared as with a hot iron, and I was given over to a reprobate mind, and was very miserable; but the next day the text was, "The hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." Then there was the taking away of that hard and stony feeling of my heart, and I wept for joy. O my soul, can I ever forget the oil and wine at that banquet of love? and when the opportunity was given, I was afraid to stay away longer for fear of another visitation of that awful hard, stony feeling, so I went forward and could hardly say a word, for weeping, and was surprised that the brethren could receive me at all; but they did, and on Tuesday of that same week, along with sister Sarah Gilmore, I was baptized by Elder Bullack, in the Lewis & Clark River, and have been stumbling along ever since, sometimes on the hilltop, sometimes in the valley, and whether up or down, only a poor, weak sinner, saved by grace if saved at all.

CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

MY thoughts about preaching began when I was about twenty years old, before I joined the church. I thought I would like to preach, because people seemed to think well of preachers, especially of Old Baptist preachers, and that was the kind I meant to be; and I

intended to be a big one, like Elder Burch, of Iowa, or J. P. Allison, or J. A. Bullack, of Oregon. I would go away in the woods and practice speaking, and while I could get the tone and inflection all right, I was conscious that the subject matter seemed like noise from an empty barrel, very empty and light, for it did not come from my heart, but merely from my mouth. I kept practicing speaking, and even joined a "Young Men's Debating Club." All the time with a view of one day making use of my acquired ability to speak, in preaching the gospel; so I would study the Scriptures, carrying a Testament in my pocket, for I must be able to defend the doctrine I intended to preach. I believed that God could and would make an able preacher of me when he got ready for me to engage in the work. In the meantime I would get all the knowledge I could, so I went to the Oregon State Agricultural College, which, I think, was under the control or management of the Methodists, and while there I would hear the principal lecture on learning, and among other things he would speak of religion as a science. This was too much for me, for it is not a science as arithmetic, that may be learned by one and all according to set rules. This was neither in accord with what little experience I had up to that time, nor with my understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures, and I thought, Is it possible that a college education will make men believe and teach that salvation is of good works, by set rules, when the Scriptures plainly say it is by grace? If so, I do not want any, for I expect to preach, and if not what the Bible teaches, then nothing. I stayed there two weeks and left, and though I gave other reasons for leaving, this was the bottom one, but I have never before spoken of it to any one.

When about twenty-two years of age I joined the Primitive Baptist Church. There having been one constituted near where my parents lived, and there being no resident minister, father wanted me to speak for them, but I must tell why he did, as I learned afterwards. Elder Bullack had told him privately that I would some time make a preacher. This so pleased him that he asked me about it, whether I had had any thoughts of preaching, and I had to either lie or acknowledge I had, so I said I had, and ever afterwards, as long as he lived, he was a great encourager to me. The time of our meeting soon came around, and I still felt able to preach, and after one of the older brethren had went forward in prayer, they called on me. My text was, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." I do not remember a word I said, but the text, but I do remember they seemed empty and meaningless, without soul or spirit to them. O, the load of great darkness that seemed to descend upon me, covering me completely, and I felt I had assumed a responsibility I was unable to bear. I thought I could not preach, and if God would forgive me for profaning that sacred office by my effort I would never try it again while I lived, and though the brethren tried to encourage me, I would not try again. The next year, 1878, in March, I was married to Miss Sonora Flanary. Then did the Lord give me a helpmeet indeed. One evening, when dear old Elder Bullack was visiting us, I became confidential, and told him some of the exercises of my mind, and he advised me to try again. O, how often did I wish I had not been such a fool as to let him know how I felt, but it was out now, and at our meetings he would ask

me to go forward in prayer, and speak if I felt like it, which I would do sometimes, and then I could enjoy his sermon afterward; but if I refused, my mind would often be so dark, and my heart so hard, that I could get no comfort from the preaching, and so I concluded I would go forward in prayer, and maybe talk a little so I could enjoy his preaching. This plan worked well for a while, and seemed to relieve my mind some. Between meetings sometimes my mind would be led out in contemplation of some passage of Scripture, and the Lord would open it up so sweetly as to cause my poor heart to rejoice and overflow with gratitude to him for his love and goodness to me, and I could adopt the language of the psalmist, "O that men would praise him for his great and marvelous works." At such times I could hardly wait for the time of meeting to come around. I wanted to tell the brethren and sisters of the goodness of God to me, but when the time would come, I could not call up the joy and animation I had felt, and would have to sit down disappointed and discouraged. At other times I would get up to speak with my mind entirely empty, and the Lord would open up a subject and enable me to speak with the spirit and understanding, making the words in my mouth like honey, and to flow as oil. O, then did my poor desert heart rejoice and blossom as the rose. I was full of sap, and there was no lack of moisture. I felt I could preach from any text in the Bible; that there were no little ones, and I would like to begin at Genesis and preach from every verse to the end of Revelations. At such a time it would be suggested to my mind, that if you keep on improving like this, the first thing you know the church will want to ordain you, (they had licensed me in 1885,) and you

know they want every one they ordain to relate their christian experience, and call to the ministry, and you know you have not any call but that ambitious call you received before you joined the church, and you cannot depend on that, neither should you try to palm it off on the brethren as a call of God. This would make me waver and draw back, and keep me still for awhile. Then I would see so many shortcomings in my christian walk, not walking as I thought a christian ought, to say nothing of a preacher setting an example to his flock, that I thought I would quit speaking altogether, and did quit for quite awhile. In the winter I took a severe cold on my lungs, and they pained me so I thought I was not going to live but a little while, and might as well spend what little time I had left in preaching, and that the Lord would help me to walk right, so I went forward with renewed vigor, thinking I would be careful for nothing but to glorify the dear name of my Lord and Master, seeing the race was to be but short, and I think I knew, in spiritual things, both of abundance and suffering need, of being bound in spirit, and of grand and glorious liberty. The fear of being ordained had left me, and the brethren began to hint and question, and one finally came out plain about my ordination, and I answered as plain, "No," I said, "I will not submit; I have all the liberty to preach I want; besides I have a very serious doubt whether I ever had a call or not." But after awhile I got to thinking on the subject. Elder Bullack had been summoned to come up higher, and had, I believed, entered into the joy of his Lord, and our pastor, Elder G. E. Mayfield, who succeeded him, had now moved away, so there was no one to go in and out before us in the administration of the ordinances,

besides the church was, I believed, the best and rightful judge of her gifts, and that I ought not to oppose my judgment against her, so I said to myself, if the brethren insist, I will not again oppose them, but will tell the truth about my call, and let them judge. So in the spring or summer of 1892, the church took up my case and asked if I had anything to say? I said I would object, but I felt like Moses when he said to the Lord, "If thy presence go not with me carry us not up hence." The church then decided to call for helps to meet her in October, and Elder Silas Williams and Deacon Wm. Clymer came, and at the proper time called for a relation of my christian experience and call to the ministry, so I told them some of the exercises of my mind. The next meeting after I was ordained I thought, Now I must preach a big sermon, for I am now Elder Hess, and people will expect it. But O, how soon did I learn that my brethren had added to my duties, without increasing my power or knowledge. At another time, when the weather was very bad, and a great number out to hear me, I thought I must preach extra well, so as to pay the people for coming out, but I learned it was not for me to pay them, that it was God that must apply the balm to the wounded, comfort to the mourners, and bind up the broken-hearted, and that I might plant and water, but without him there would be no increase. Awhile after this my wife and I went to place a marble stone over the grave of our first-born, and when we had finished were looking about the cemetery, reading the inscriptions on the stones, when we noticed the grave of Elder P. P. Chamberlain had sunk some, so I got a shovel and was filling it up, and thinking of him, and wondering of the position and surroundings of his soul, or

spirit, in glory, (I could not believe his soul was there in the tomb,) when this language came into my mind with such force as almost to stagger me, "Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous." It would ring over and over again in my soul, taking this form, "Woe unto you, ye pharisee, hypocrite!" O the horror of that sinking down, down, down in darkness, to the bottom of the mountains, while all the waves and billows of the Almighty seemed to go over me, and I felt, I may say knew, I would never again feel the sweet, warm rays of the Sun of righteousness in my sinful heart, and all the while my brethren expected me to preach for them twice a month, and I tried to bear up against the darkness of soul for awhile, until I felt I was adding presumption to hypocrisy. I told them I could not preach for them any more, and did not think I ever would try again. I remained in this state of mind for several months, sometimes doubting the very existence of God, of religion, of my experience, and in fact, doubting everything on which there could be a doubt, except that I was a hypocrite. I did not doubt that, for I thought I had evidence from on high, and my own heart bore witness to the truth of that. But the night did not last forever, else I had not been writing this. Blessed be the name of my God, who restored to me the joy of his salvation, he sent a word into my soul that was like wine and marrow to my soul. Arise, my love, my dove, my fair one, and come away, for the winter is passed and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle (or love) is heard in our land. O my soul bear witness to the love, and

light, and joy, that descended upon me, and made my tongue as the pen of a ready writer, running on in the words of David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name." "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; * * * who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercy; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles."

Thus it has been with me all through my journey here, sometimes rejoicing and full of gladness and joy, sometimes cold and lifeless, devoid of moisture, and feeling twice dead, plucked up by the roots; but whether light or dark, warm or cold, high or low, I have an abiding faith that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and he will do all his pleasure, both in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that if I am ever permitted to enter the gates of the celestial city, a conqueror over the world and death and hell, it will be through him who I hope has loved me, and gave himself for me, that I might be clothed in white, to the praise of his grace.

W. J. HESS.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April 2, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the following letter from our aged and esteemed brother, Elder J. M. True, because I think it will be of interest and value to the lovers of the pure gospel. If you think so also, you may publish it at your convenience.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

KANSAS, Ill., March 31, 1898.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER:—It is in my mind to write a few words to you. Malachi said, "Then they

that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Do I fear the Lord with a filial fear? or is it a trained, selfish fear? This is the first and all important question with me. A poet has said,

"Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

Sometimes when looking into the deep recesses of my heart, to try to find evidences of love, I am made to tremble at what I there see. One has recorded the case thus: "Perfect love casteth out all fear." This being true, the question comes up to me, Can you love? you have many fears. How can I harmonize these things? I am at last made to say, in one sense I have no fear, I rejoice in the glorious sovereignty of God, and do love with all my heart to trust him for life and salvation. When I say this, I do not simply mean eternal life, but salvation in all its bearings. I know of but one salvation, and of but one Savior. If there is any sort of salvation depending upon anything whatever left in, or for me to do, to obtain it, I have long since learned that it is a failure, and that I shall never attain unto it. With Paul I have to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I feel the force of the words, "The heart of man is desperately wicked, who can know it?"

I did not commence writing this to pour into your ears my sorrowing complaints, but it seems true, "From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Also, we read, "The heart knoweth his own bitterness." Can you not give me some of your joys? Yes, the thought comes up in answer, I have this day been

partaking of some of them, in reading over your continued articles on the "city that John saw coming down from heaven." If I know what I do love, it is to contemplate these glorious things, and hear the name of my blessed Lord glorified and honored. When I read some of the philosophizing about man's accountability, and capability of keeping God's holy law, it makes me restless, and a desire to hear the plain, simple gospel of Christ preached, or written about in its purity, without trying to harmonize it with man's will, comes up, and I must say, "Who art thou O man that repliest against God?" Truly is man accountable for all his sins, and a just and holy God will, and does, so judge him, and that without making God the author of sin, as some are trying to create the impression, though so false, that you and others are teaching.

I am much pleased with the course pursued of late, as well as at all former times, by the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Surely perilous times are upon us, and it behooves all the faithful in Christ Jesus to "hold fast the form of sound words." The theories of "man's free moral agency," and "conditional time salvation," is with other new, yet old, Arminian notions, being now thrust upon the Baptists in many places, with the claim of its being Old Baptist doctrine. May the Lord in mercy remember his Zion, and cause his people to beware of such teachings. Is it the time that false teachers shall rise up among ourselves, having itching ears? If so, let us beware of them, and heed Paul's command, "Bid them not God speed." Again he says, "Now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, * * * with such an one no not to eat."

Remember us in your petitions at the throne of grace, and write a word when you feel so inclined.

Yours tremblingly,

JAMES M. TRUE.

PLYMOUTH, Ill., Feb., 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Again I feel that I want to write a few words to your readers, although it is with a trembling hand I attempt it. I can say with brother Lively, and all of like faith, that I love the doctrine it contains, and it cannot be too solid for me. “The foundation is sure and will stand forevermore.” It is a solid rock, a sure foundation that will not wash away by the storms of wind and rain. The Arminians call us all sorts of names, such as Hardshells, Ironsides, &c., but it does not matter to me what they call us or the doctrine, for it is the doctrine that I love, and it is my meat and my drink. I love a God who is a sovereign, and who rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, who says that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. “He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” I know that I do not understand all the Scriptures. If I understand any of them, it is but a small portion. When I read the blessed Bible, and find what a being our God is, and by experience learn that he is all-wise, that he has set bounds to all things, that he will not suffer man, or the waters, to overreach their set bounds, I do rejoice. But some do not believe this.

There was a protracted meeting going on in this neighborhood, and as some were about going wild over it, I thought I would go, and hear the preacher once, as my husband used to belong to that order. So we went, and it was the same

old song of self-righteousness, that I had always heard from them. It was, come up to the altar and give the preacher your hand, and then the Lord will do his part. The text was Rev. iii. 20. After he had read and talked awhile, he said, “I know there are a few scattered around who believe in a favored few, or an elect people,” but said he, this is not taught in the Bible, and I can prove it. Then he said, “The text says, ‘If any man will, let him come,’ and that means you, any man.” The whole argument was rotten to the core. I thought of the Scripture which says, “And they shall no more 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 even unto the greatest.” “Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?” “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.” “He is of one mind, and who can turn him?” “He speaks, and it is done, he commands, and it stands fast.”

Dear brother Chick, I was well pleased, fed and comforted, in reading your reply to brother Morris’ inquiry. In reading it my mind was brought back to the meeting to which I have referred, or to the preacher, rather, who hates the doctrine of election, and in every sermon mentions it. He told the people to choose this day whom they would serve, and gave the creature more power than the Creator. But the Lord said, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” I could but think how many teachers are ignorant and blind. I will not write any more about the weakness and inability of man, as all who have read the editorials of the SIGNS for January 15, have found it fully described in all its bearings, as to what

man will do, and has always done. It seems that man wants to help the Lord accomplish his own will, and yet it is written in the holy Scriptures, that he will do all his pleasure, and that none can hinder. "Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Paul has told us not to be desirous of vain glory. God forbid that we should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. I love to read the good, comforting and consoling letters, from the correspondents in the good old SIGNS, for they give God all the glory. My heart rejoices to overflowing when I read such sweet and comforting letters as those from sister Lizzie Himes and brother True. In fact all are good, but my heart goes out to the aged and afflicted ones, who as they near the end of time, have not fixed their faith upon the puny arm of man, but worship the true and living God, upon whom they can rely, and on him who trod the wine-press of the Father's wrath, alone, when of the people there was none to help. If he did not need man to help him then, do we think that he needs such help now? God made man good, but he transgressed and fell. He had sinned, and after this, all who have brought forth of man, possess the same nature. Brethren editors, I have written more than I intended, but my mind is full, and I can hardly quit.

Hoping that the Lord will enable you to edit the SIGNS in the future, as in the past, to the edifying of the Lord's people, I remain yours in much weakness,

BELLE FRAZEE.

DECATUR, Texas, April 16, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—
DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—You may think it strange that I should try to write to the Lord's humble poor, when I am so barren of spiritual things to write. At least I sometimes think, dear brethren, that there is not another in the world, claiming a hope in the blood of Christ, like me. It seems to me that I can give no evidence of being a child of God at all. Sometimes I think if I was to try to explain my case to those who never claimed a hope in Christ, they would claim me as one of them, and understand me better than the dear saints of the Most High. To these I have been trying to tell my little experience, lo, these many years, and have never succeeded in explaining it to them so that they can understand my doubtful case. But all the comfort that I have is in hearing the dear brethren and sisters relate the dealings of the Lord with them. It is a great comfort to me to know that the Lord has reserved to himself a few old soldiers of the cross, who are standing upon the walls of Zion proclaiming the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, telling of his power and wisdom, and that the great "I Am," in his infinite wisdom, before time began, with his all-seeing eye sought out and established all things for his own glory. All that has ever been, or will be, was embraced in his foreknowledge, and with his mighty power he holds all things in their places. At the appointed time he made man, and at the appointed time man violated his law. Before this took place there was a ransom prepared to redeem his elect from under the curse of the law, and that ransom was prepared when the great "I Am" declared the end from the beginning; from ancient times the things which are not yet done, saying,

my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. He calls the 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, and I will also do it. Then we see that all things were complete in him, and in his infinite wisdom from the beginning, and there can nothing take place that was not embraced in his foreknowledge. O, what a comfort this is to a poor, trembling child while down in the dark valley of despair. Such an one feels too sinful to obtain mercy from the Lord of Hosts, and he has come to the end of his own strength, and feels that he must give up in despair. While in this agony of soul the Lord comes to his relief, and then he is permitted to view the mighty God as having all power and wisdom, and that all his security is in him who never fails, who speaks, and it is done, who commands, and it stands fast. His blessings are free, for he does not sell his blessings. They are unmerited on our part, and cannot be bought. The receiver of them has nothing to give in exchange.

Dear brethren, I hope that you will bear with my weakness in sending you this poor scribble.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,
M. B. F. JONES.

TOPAZ, Texas, March 5, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have for some time wanted to write something for the dear readers of the SIGNS, and this morning will make the attempt, hoping that the Lord will guide and direct my pen. I was born in Laclede Co., Mo., in 1845, and was raised by Missionary Baptist parents, and like all others in nature's night, believed that heaven depended upon my living or doing right in this life.

I professed a hope in Christ in 1864, and in 1873, united with the Missionary Baptist church, and continued with them in peace until it pleased the Lord to open my blind eyes, and show me where I stood, first, by their receiving alien baptism in the church. And when I became dissatisfied about it, I was told by my mother that Hopewell church received nothing but baptized believers, and to get a letter and come there. I thought though that we all fellowshiped each other, and that would not better it. These two churches were broken up, and I moved away. For a while I seemed to be without care, but soon my troubles came upon me again more trying than before, for then it had seemed that I had found the people of God, but now I felt that either they or I was altogether mistaken, and in every opportunity that I had for reading or talking, I was trying to find a people who believed as I did. At last I was taken sick, and my mind was more confused than ever, insomuch that I gave up all hope of life, and desired to lay my body down, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. I little knew that there was within eight miles of me a little band who believed as I did. After this I was instructed and pointed to this church, by a beloved brother and sister, Dr. Ware and wife. She has since passed away. At the next monthly meeting of this church I offered myself, and was received, and at the next church meeting was baptized by L. C. Mills, into the fellowship of New Hopewell church, Nov. 25th, 1883. And, dear brethren and sisters, I have never regretted this last step, but I have never felt worthy of their love, and wonder many times how they can fellowship me at all. Although parted many miles from them, on their church meeting days I know that

prayers have been offered for me, which is worth more than all worldly pleasures. I often try to free my mind from all things else, as best I can, and join with them in trying to praise that God who has so richly blessed us. Now, dear brethren editors, I will leave this poor scribble to your riper judgment, whether it is fit for publication or not, and ask you to correct all mistakes. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your dear paper. I was a subscriber once before. I have read other Primitive Baptist papers, but like the SIGNS the best, for I truly believe in God's purpose in all things, which is the doctrine that they advocate. May you long be spared in your labors, and at the last be enabled to say, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.

I will now close, with love for all the dear readers of the SIGNS, and ask them to look over all my imperfections, and pray for me, a poor, unworthy sinner, saved by grace alone, if saved at all,

E. C. FERGUSON.

CHelsea, Ind. Ter., April 4, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I could hardly tell you if I should try, how sorry I am to be always behind with my remittance for the paper, it is such a comfort to me, in my seclusion. Sometimes I think that I do not deprive myself as much as I should of other things, or I should not be always behind in my subscription. The old story of hard times, is sung all over the land. This section of the country is no exception. But O, who knoweth what true poverty is, only those who have not the privilege of hearing the joyful sound of the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and of the

Lamb slain? My health has been very poor for over a year, but when I look back upon the past, I can but say, surely of all people I have been blessed. My greatest trouble is, Am I what I have professed to be? Sometimes I almost lose sight of my little hope, yet, when by the eye of faith I am allowed to look back over the way in which I have been led, as I hope, by my most loving Lord, I feel to give him all praise for its being as well with me as it is. Without him I am nothing, and less than nothing. Why I love the SIGNS is, that they tell me of a God who was before the world was, and of whom are the powers that be, and beside him there is no other God. They tell me that he foreordained and predestinated all things, and that all things fulfill his will, and are for the good of his people. How I do sympathize with those who do not know the Lord to be God, and that he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind.

Dear brethren editors of the SIGNS, you are surely upheld by the everlasting arms. In my first attempt to harmonize my belief with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the Bible as I understood it, I would get my mother-in-law's SIGNS, which were from the first publication, to see whether they had deviated from the old doctrine which they first advocated. As I understand the SIGNS to-day, they advocate the same vital points as then. You may do as you please with this letter. If you think that there is anything in it that will edify any one, give God the praise, for the very things which I would, I do not, and the things that I would not, I do. Now praying that you may live long to wield the sword of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I remain as ever your sister, the least of all saints, if one at all,

REBECCA W. ICE.

GRASS VALLEY, Oregon, May 2, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—ESTEEMED BROTHER IN THE COVENANT OF PROMISE AND THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID:—Excuse me, a very weak, simple and unworthy old sinner, for encroaching upon your precious time, even to read a few lines from the pen of so miserable a sinner as I feel myself to be. Your precious and comforting editorials seem to me deep and full of meekness and plainness of speech, and full of marrow and fatness. O, that I were worthy to thank and praise our dear Savior for such precious gifts to his dear people, as he has given us in our editors, and the other contributors to our precious family periodical, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. What a comfort it is to this poor old sinner to read such evidences and experiences as you bring out and set before the people, in the editorial which I have just been reading on exhortation. I do feel, dear brother, so weak and unworthy, yet I cannot refrain from telling you how precious that editorial is to my poor soul. I realized in reading it something, I hope, of the sweetness of the gospel of the grace of God, for I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me; I was hungry, and you gave me meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me the much needed water of life, the pure milk of the word; I was naked, and you clothed me with the garment of salvation; I was a stranger, or thought I was, and very far off at that, but you took me in, and I was enabled to sit down with you, Elder Durand, brother Coulter, Elder Keene, and with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the brethren, I hope, and felt to say, I am no more a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow citizen with the saints, and of the household of faith, and am built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the

chief corner-stone. So completely am I assured of my own unworthiness, and that salvation is by grace alone, that I do not like anything that seems to treat this truth with indifference, or that makes light of the doctrine of grace in any way, for this is to make light of the dear Savior. Dear brother, those who love Jesus in truth are but few. They are indeed a remnant according to the election of grace, but the time is coming when the precepts will be lost in the promise. We will be unrebukable and unblamable in his sight, for we shall be like the dear Savior. Blessed hope. With a heart full of love to you, and to all the household of faith, I remain your brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

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MONTROSE, W. Va., Feb. 14, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—I once more desire a little space in your paper, that I may let my many friends, brethren and sisters, who have written to me, hear from this poor, old sinner, who I hope is saved by grace. As the most of those who have written are readers of the SIGNS, I will say to you, my many friends, that I feel thankful for the many comforting letters, and the kindness which you have shown me. I cannot walk a step as yet, and I doubt now whether I ever shall, in this world. I suffer a great deal of my time. But this is all right. I do hope that it is the grace of God which enables me to bear all my afflictions with patience. O, my dear brethren, that blessed hope which I do trust that I have in my breast, is an anchor to the soul. The winds may blow and the mountains shake, and the floods of trouble come, but still we are safe, for our hope is in the blessed Lord Jesus, and we need not fear the rage of earth and hell. If God be for us who can be

against us? None can ever destroy us. Our lives are hid with Christ in God, and we are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Dear children, we know that the Lord Jesus only can save poor sinners, and lead them and direct them in the right way, the narrow path, that leads to joys on high. He needs no help in saving his chosen generation, for he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. My dear brethren, sisters and friends, who have a hope in the righteousness of the blessed Lord Jesus, be of good courage. As the apostle said, I am "confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Though you mourn now on account of the fact that you cannot live free from sin, this is because sin has become exceeding sinful to you. This is an evidence of life within. The reading of the SIGNS is a great comfort to me. God bless the editors. Dear brethren in the ministry, stand fast on the walls of Zion. Preach the word. Be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke with all long-suffering, and doctrine, that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Feed the lambs, feed the sheep. David said "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," and so say I. Brother Vail's article in the SIGNS for February 1st, was fine.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

JAMES MURPHY.

TY TY, Ga., May 11, 1898.

DEAR BROTHERS:—For the benefit of home seeking brethren and friends, who may read the SIGNS, and for our sake here in South Georgia, please state that we have a good, fresh, and as yet thinly

populated, country, which is being settled fast by people from the north and elsewhere. Those who think of emigrating please write me at Ty Ty, Ga., and I will gladly furnish any information wanted, with regard to this country.

Yours in love,

MORGAN BROWN.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1898, to the several churches of which she is composed, sends love in the Lord.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHERS:—Having been blessed with the privilege of meeting once more in an assembly of the saints, according to our annual custom, it is our privilege to express gratitude to God for his continued goodness and mercy, whereby we have been kept in the love of the truth, and in the highly valued fellowship of those who continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. Nothing can be compared with the precious treasure of divine love by which the Spirit of truth has sealed the chosen vessels of mercy, and united them in that heavenly bond which attests their membership in the body of Christ Jesus. Where that sacred seal is set there can be no failure of the full manifestation of all the inheritance of the saints in light. The infinitely glorious immortality of Jesus is reserved in heaven for those who bear this seal; and they are by the power of God kept through all their trials and temptations unto the possession of that imperishable inheritance. All this is included in that calling of God whereby they are separated from the world, and set apart as the peculiar treasure of our God.

Therefore it is indispensably needful that those who hope for the grace that is to be brought to the saints at the revelation of Jesus Christ, should be sober, and pass the time of their sojourning here in that fear of the Lord which is to hate evil. This is not a mere observance of the letter of a law written on tables of stone; it is the possession of the spirit of holiness, the living truth in the inward parts, by which the requirement of infinite justice is satisfied. By this seal the subjects of electing grace are identified.

As an important subject for the consideration of those who bear this seal, we would present the inspired admonition recorded 1 Peter iv. 7, 8, "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."

It must be observed that this language is not addressed to the world of mankind at large, but to those for whom Christ hath suffered in the flesh, who are exhorted to arm themselves likewise with the same mind. The need of this direction for them is apparent from the declaration in the context, that they "shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick [that is, the living,] and the dead." In furnishing the man of God unto all good works, the Spirit of truth has left every instruction the saints can need for their guidance in all their sojourn in the wilderness of this world. Not one of these divine admonitions can they at any time afford to forget. So deceitful are the devices of their adversary, that they can only escape his wiles as they are found abiding within these impregnable walls of the spiritual Jerusalem. The commandments of the King in Zion are the bulwarks which securely

protect every saint amidst all the assaults of their enemies. While walking in these divinely authorized ordinances they are always within that sacred and holy street which is consecrated by the footsteps of the Captain of our salvation. Departing from this narrow way, they go into the snares of death, where they invariably find trouble and sorrow. To their natural reason many ways seem pleasant and parallel with this holy pathway; but every departure from the straight way leads down to the chambers of death. The only safety for the pilgrims and strangers who are called to follow Jesus, is found in implicit obedience to his directions. They cannot follow their own most plausible and apparently innocent devices, without forsaking the way of holiness. There is no other way in which they can have the light of his countenance, but that path of the just in which their Redeemer himself walked. While to the natural mind this way seems dark and beset with thorns, it is the only path which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Following the precepts and example of their Lord, obedient saints find their very darkness is made light, and crooked places are straight in that divine radiance which shines in his holy commandments.

"But the end of all things is at hand." When oppressed with consciousness of indwelling sin, and ready to faint in the terrible struggle against the cruel hosts of unbelief, reason suggests to the tried one that his hope is all a delusion, and he feels his strength unequal to the conflict; then he is ready to conclude that he can no longer hold out in the dreadful warfare. The exulting adversaries of his peace are boasting that they will soon be triumphant over his trembling hope; but the word of Jesus is heard in this critical

moment, and the enemy is at once vanquished. Instead of surrendering in despair, the fearful one is made to rejoice greatly as he shouts victoriously, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength!" It is a sweet comfort to the poor and needy child to know that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." This is the end of that conflict, and it is always at hand, for it is recorded of the deliverance of the spiritual Jerusalem, that "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early." Unbelief suggests that the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and that he will be favorable no more. But at his word the end of all this warfare is at hand, and joy comes with the morning, which shines in the light of his countenance. This is the experience of the afflicted and poor people who trust in the name of the Lord. In another sense, "The end of all things is at hand," in the passing away of the fashion of this world. No sorrow or suffering can endure more than the present moment. The pain which has been borne is gone forever, and its end has come. The future may be threatening, but it is not yet endured, and may never come to the fearful one. Each instant bears away the pain or the comfort which it brings. The end is at hand in the one case as in the other. So Paul says, Our light affliction is but for a moment. Time sweeps away alike the griefs and the joys of earth.

"Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." This is the effect of the realization of the fleeting character of "all things." Not merely the abstinence from gluttony and improper use of intoxicating drink, but the admonition covers all excesses in word or deed. Even in their secret thoughts the saints are liable to

disregard this direction. When they yield to doubts, and deny their hope in the power of divine grace for final deliverance out of all their distresses, they are not sober. On the other hand, when they conclude they are able to keep themselves from sin, they are intoxicated with self-confidence. In either case they have lost that soberness which leads them to "watch unto prayer." The consideration of the presence of the end of all things may well rebuke carnality, and move them to prayer for grace to help in every time of temptation and trial. This admonition does not need to be spoken in its letter to the followers of our Redeemer.—It is continually impressed upon them in their daily experience. This is that unction from the Holy One by which they know all things. In the view of carnal reason the fact that the end of all things is at hand, is an occasion for the saint to yield obedience to sin; but to the faith of the Son of God, which dwells in every one who is born of the Spirit, this truth is an assuring encouragement to walk in the Spirit, and deny every emotion of the natural mind.

"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves." This exhortation can apply to none but those who are led by the Spirit of God. They are already in possession of this divine principle, and it is the conclusive evidence that they have passed from death unto life. There is no possibility of any dead sinner counterfeiting this fruit of the Spirit. The hypocrite may deceive the judgment of others, but he himself must know that his charity (love) is not really felt. Love of the brethren is the infallible witness which he that believeth hath in himself. (1 John v. 10.) The importance of this abiding testimony in confirmation of the soul of the believer cannot be overesti-

mated, as is manifest from the charge which places it "above all things." In the absence of this conclusive witness, no careful deportment, which seems to the natural judgment commendable, can attest the reality of professed devotion; nor is it any just reason for questioning the truth of this testimony when the trembling believer mourns that he can find in himself nothing wherein to glory. The very light which shows the corruption of his heart, is itself that eternal life by which he is sealed as an heir of God, and a joint-heir with our Lord Jesus Christ. Being the fruit of the Spirit, this divine love can exist only in those who are born of the Spirit. Hence none can bear this seal but such as are manifestly called by divine grace; and this mark identifies them as the elect vessels of mercy, in whose hearts the love of God is now shed abroad by his Spirit, which he has given unto them. So the exhortation is written by inspiration, "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." There can be nothing more desirable to the tried disciple of Jesus, than this perfect assurance. Therefore it is the blessed privilege of every saint to heed the admonition which exhorts them to love one another with a pure heart fervently.

"*For charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*" This assertion can have no application to those who flatter themselves that they have no sins which need to be covered. It can be understood only as being left for the comfort of those conscientious sinners who groan as did Paul, that they find the law of sin still working in their members. It is the continual grief of every saint that this principle of evil easily besets him in all his thoughts,

as well as in his words and actions. He needs daily to cry for deliverance from its hated power, and must constantly pray for the forgiveness which Jesus is exalted to give to his Israel. It is mockery for the disciples of our Redeemer to ask for this forgiveness to be extended to them in their experience, while they are cherishing resentment against those who have trespassed against them. Our Judge has forbidden all such prayers. He says, "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." Carnal pride may be gratified by the imagination that this word of the Lord does not apply to the case where our personal feelings are involved, but this living truth abides forever, *There can be no experience of divine forgiveness while the disciple of Jesus is yielding obedience to the dictates of sinful resentment.* The love of God never prompts the saint to resentment. It is not the holy spirit of our Lord which seeks revenge. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus always leads the subject of his grace to follow him in loving the erring one, who has been led by his carnal mind to sin against the Lord by trespassing against his brother. It is only the selfishness of sin which prompts the desire for satisfaction, which is but a flimsy disguise for carnal revenge. That sweet charity by which Jesus gave himself for our sins, is long-suffering and kind. It never fails to render love and blessing for hatred and persecution. This is not according to nature. It is the law of that kingdom which is not of this world. The saints are subject to the vanity of this present world while they remain in time, and if they yield them-

selves servants to the principle of selfish resentment, they sow to the flesh, and of the flesh they reap corruption. But if they walk in the Spirit, they are raised above earthly things, and of the Spirit they reap life everlasting. Evidently this is in their present experience. It is not left to depend upon the conduct of the saints whether they shall be saved in eternal glory. That is unalterably settled by the electing love of God in Christ Jesus. In that salvation the expiring thief has the same inheritance with the most exemplary saint. It is in their present state of pilgrimage in an enemy's land that they are in need of the exhortation and admonition which are left on record in the Scriptures for their learning and guidance.

The Spirit of truth has not left this essential principle to be found only by those who can read the letter of the law of Christ, as written by men inspired for that sacred work. It is given to every subject of divine grace to have in himself that holy principle by which he longs for conformity to the character of Jesus; and it is by this power of divine grace alone that any sinner is moved to hunger and thirst after righteousness. This indwelling love of holiness can spring from no other fountain but that Spirit of God which abides in every one who is born of God. It is manifested in the willingness of those who have the seal of the Spirit to bear the cross of denying self, and yielding obedience to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The natural mind can never be conformed to this will, hence it must be that every one who is led by the charity which seeks no selfish gratification, but beareth and endureth all things, has the Spirit of Christ, from which alone that heavenly fruit can originate. Upon this infallible evidence Paul

declares that, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Then there can be no more effectual motive for obedience to this admonition than that which is presented in the consideration that this fervent charity shall cover the multitude of sins. It not only results in letting brotherly love continue among the followers of Jesus, but it is the abiding witness that the one in whom it is found has the Spirit of Christ, and is thereby assured of final deliverance from sin; and in this assurance he now has the victory over all the powers of iniquity by which the pilgrimage of the saints is beset. Thus it is far more needful to the one who is called to suffer wrong, that this charity should rule in his heart, to the covering of the sins of his brother, than it is to the offending one whose sins, he is called to cover with the mantle of love.

May grace be granted to us all, by which we may be soberly watching unto prayer, and seeking to cover the multitude of sins by the fervent charity which attests that the Spirit of Christ reigns in our hearts, and in the patience of hope, may we be enabled to endure all things, until the coming of our Lord to deliver us from this bondage of corruption, that we may joyfully hail that glorious day as the consummation of all our desires. Then shall we be satisfied awaking with his likeness, and in the general assembly of all the ransomed ones we shall forever give all glory to him who hath saved us, and called us from sin unto holiness, and hath kept us in all our conflicts, and delivered us from all the deceitful attacks of the adversary. And "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father," we shall be perfectly enabled to ascribe glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

WM. L. BEEBE, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1898.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as
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MATTHEW II. 2.

"WHERE is he that is born King of the Jews?"

Our mind has been led of late to think considerably of these words of the wise men who came from the east, to Jerusalem, to inquire concerning the infant Savior, and to lay their offerings at his feet. It may be of some profit to speak in this way concerning the things which have occurred to us. The narrative of these events need not be repeated here, for all who read the Scriptures are familiar with them. Here is recorded the most notable scene in the history of the world. All the history of the world hinges upon this one event, the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. All events before, pointed towards it, and led up to it, and all events since have been influenced by it. Around the infant Jesus in the lowly manger clustered all things in heaven and in earth. Angels heralded his birth to the shepherds, and his star heralded his rising to the wise men of the east. Shepherds and wise men unite to do him reverence. Here the poor and the rich meet together, and find that the Lord is the Maker and Savior of them both.

We are not told anything more concerning these wise men, than that they desired to lay their treasures at his feet.

No more prominence is given to them than is given to the humble shepherds upon the plains of Bethlehem. Neither wisdom nor the lack of it has aught to do with an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Let not wisdom boast against the want of human learning, neither let ignorance exalt herself against wisdom. At the feet of the sovereign Lord, both alike must bow. Among other things, Jesus is made unto us wisdom. How humbling and leveling is the doctrine of the cross! But the wise men of Magi, as the original word is, came to worship him whose star they had seen in the east. It had led them to Judea and to Jerusalem. And now they begin the inquiry, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" We will suggest some reflections which occur to us.

First, see the distinguishing grace of God in these wise men. The class of men to whom they belonged in the east, as we learn from profane history, were very numerous, yet not all of them came to Jerusalem to find the King. We are not told that any beside these even saw the star, or that any understood what it meant, if they did see it. The point which we wish to present is, that they did not see the star, nor understand its meaning, because of their wisdom. Had human wisdom had any part in the matter, then all who were learned in the east would have come also, as did these few men. Human wisdom then does not show men the kingdom of God. On the other hand, human ignorance does not qualify one to see the things which are divine. Were it so, then all shepherds, and all unlearned men, would have seen the angels, and heard their song of praise to God, as did those of Bethlehem. Human wisdom does not help in this matter, neither does human lack of wisdom. The wise men

saw the star and understood its meaning then, not because of their wisdom. In this they had no advantage over the unlearned. This is important to be remembered, especially in this day of boasted enlightenment. Human wisdom exalts itself on every hand, and even sits in the temple of God, as though it were God. It is no more true to-day, than it ever has been, that men of learning are reverent toward God. On the contrary, with the advance of human wisdom, skepticism has increased still faster. We say this, not to discredit human wisdom in its proper sphere, but to emphasize the fact that by it men do not attain to a knowledge of God. Human wisdom did not bring these wise men to Jerusalem. The same thing operated in them, that brings all poor sinners to know and serve the Lord to-day, viz: revelation. So all grounds of human boasting are destroyed. In this we find an argument also for distinguishing grace. Effectual calling according to the election of grace, is clearly seen here. Let it be accepted that what men may know of God and salvation is by revelation, and at once the doctrine of personal election is established. God revealed to these wise men, choosing them out from all their compeers, this knowledge of Jesus, and gave them to see the star that led them to him. If the wisdom of these wise men did not avail in this matter, then it must have been the revelation of the knowledge of him, to them and in them, that did avail. And if the rest of the wise men of the east did not see and understand what this star meant, then it was because it was not revealed to them. This is election, in its actual working among the sons of men. Our God chose to reveal this to these men, and to keep it hidden from the rest. The elec-

tion obtains the blessing, and from the rest it is hidden.

A similar lesson is taught us at the crucifixion of the Savior upon Calvary. There were two thieves crucified with him. And first of all it is stated by Matthew, that both of "the thieves, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." Mark says, "They also who were crucified with him, reviled him." We wish to emphasize this to the praise of omnipotent grace. Both of the thieves first reviled him, and mocked him, as did the soldiers and the Jews. There was no difference between the two thieves when they were nailed to the cross. Both were highway robbers and murderers; both were hardened in crime; both had been arrested and tried and convicted for their crimes; both had seen the mighty works attending the crucifixion of the Son of man; both were suffering the same death of the cross; both hung beside the suffering Savior, and both beheld his meekness and patience. Up to a certain point we can see no difference between them. Up to a certain point there was no difference, but now we do see a difference. One of them ceases his railing, and begins to confess his sins, and to rebuke his fellow, and to pray for mercy. What has wrought this vast change? Not the nature of the men themselves, nor their occupation, for both were hardened criminals, and both were engaged in the same occupation of robbery and murder; not the scenes attending the crucifixion, nor the appearance of the humble sufferer between them, for they both beheld these things. What could it be that has wrought such a difference, but the sovereign grace of God in election, revealing to one what was withholden from the other? Sovereign grace and election reigns here, as well as in the case of the wise men, and

the shepherds, at the beginning of the Savior's ministry. How true it is, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."

"Triumphant grace, and man's free will,
Shall not divide the throne,
For man's a fallen sinner still,
And Christ shall reign alone."

We see the same thing fulfilled every day. Two men go up to the house of God together. Both are careless and unconcerned. They go because they want to be in company, or for some other worldly reason. Both sit together in the house of God; both listen to the same things; both hear the preaching, and the singing, and the prayers. There is no difference in them naturally, so far as any interest in the things of God are concerned. They are surrounded by the same circumstances. They are both listening to the same things, but one goes to his home to weep, while the other goes away as he came. What has made the difference? Ask the convicted one, and he will at once answer, Nothing but the sovereign grace of God. And it is his grace, and nothing else. Here is also taught the doctrine of electing love. The election hath obtained it. Every true christian experience teaches election. It is not a theory, but an experimental truth. This is the first suggestion that occurs to us from this narrative.

Second, the truth that he is born King, is presented in this language of the wise men. Their words were not only a question, but they were also a confession. They acknowledged that the revelation which had been given them was that he was their King. He was the King of the Jews, but they also knew him to be their King, and they brought to him the offerings which would testify their allegiance

to him. It has seemed to us that the spiritual truth which is taught us here is that whenever Jesus is formed in any soul the hope of glory, he comes as a King to rule in and over that one. Every such soul acknowledges him as its King. He was born in lowly guise; he was a babe in Bethlehem, but he was still a King. That little babe, "All meanly wrapped in swaddling bands," was he who supported the universe, and before whom all angelic hosts bow. But in such lowly guise who could recognize him but those to whom it was revealed? Here again the truth of revelation is clearly seen.

They ask, Where is he? Where shall we find this King? Different men would answer in different ways. The wise men themselves would have their own opinions as to what would be fitting to the state of one born a king. No doubt they would expect to find him in some palace, waited upon and cared for by the noblest of the land. No doubt they expected that the whole city would be alive with the news of the birth of such an one. It might be expected to be the talk of Herod in the palace, and of the beggar on the dung-hill. No doubt every Jew would be hailing with glad acclamations their future King and deliverer. They might well think this. But it was not so. Among all the thousands of the great city, amid all the priestly worshipers before the altar, and in all the land of Judea, the knowledge that such a King had been born, was held but by a few shepherds, and the reputed parents of the Master. The King of the Jews is found in a manger, among the beasts of the stall. His parents, though of the line of David, were among the ordinary laboring people of their land and time. Gilded thrones and royal purple, and retinues of ser-

vants, were not for him. He came among the lowly; he lived among the poor and suffering. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life for the ransom of many. No man in all the palace of the king, or of the priest, could give any information as to where the King was to be found. When it was intimated to them that he was born, they but hated him, and sought his life. Kingcraft, and priestcraft, have ever had no place for Jesus nor his teachings. Kings and priests have ever been the deadliest foes of true religion. They have ever been the deadliest foes of liberty in any form. To support kings, and to render homage to priests, the world has been deluged in blood again and again. No wonder then that neither king nor priest could answer the inquiry of the wise men, Where is he? The same classes of men do not know to-day. They found him by the guidance of the star. Divine leading must be that which shows where the young child lays. We do not think it needful to enter into any discussion as to what the star was. It seems sufficient to know that it was given from heaven, and was recognized as the star of Jesus, and that it led to him. It represents that by which the blessed Lord is always leading his own to the Son of his love, for redemption. The truth taught is, that always, in all our coming to the Lord, we must be heaven guided. Nothing earthly can lead to him. The things of earth may and must pall upon our taste, so that we can find no life nor pleasure in them. We must and do learn that creatures can afford no salvation, nor any aid in our salvation. We must learn that it is not in the province of any man to lead another to Christ. It is always after we come to the watchman, that we find him whom our souls love. Least of

all can the priests and votaries of a worldly and carnal religion guide a man to Christ, seeing that they know him not for themselves. These wise men found him not by the guidance of another man, but by his own star. It is his own word and Spirit that must guide to him. In distress and anxiety we learn this, and so we must praise him for coming to us, and we also must praise him for bringing us to him. Both his coming, and ours, are acts of free grace and divine power.

But, where now shall we find him who is born King of the Jews? Does not the lesson of the subject teach us that he is to be found alone in lowly hearts and lives? Can we look carefully at the teachings of the Scriptures, and expect to find him in costly temples, or among ornate services, where all is sacrificed to the love of pleasure, and the senses are appealed to on all hands? The vast mass of the religion of the age is sensuous, and its service is sensuous. Spirituality is sacrificed for that which appeals to the senses. This is called that true religion, and that true worship, which is pleasing to God; but Jesus was not in such places in the days of his flesh, and he has not changed. Far oftener we shall find him in some lowly hut, where poverty needs the ministrations which he alone can give. We may expect to find him among the humble, who meet before him in their lowliness, and who can worship him but in a humble guise. His followers are among the poor, and unlearned, and humble. If any poor, seeking sinner comes to the palaces of the wise will worshipers of this world, they will in sorrow but repeat the words of the woman at the sepulchre, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

If these thoughts be found according

to the record of the Scriptures they may prove of encouragement to some one of the children, as they have to ourself in times past.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REVELATION XXI. 1, 2.

WE are aware that there is a difference of opinion among even our most enlightened brethren in regard to the application of this, as well as many other portions of the book of Revelation, particularly in regard to the period to which these portions refer. Some have understood this passage to refer to the gospel state of the church in the primitive age; others have thought it applicable to a state of primitive purity to which the church shall be restored before the dissolution of the world, while others again have regarded the language as descriptive of the final triumphant state of the church, after the resurrection of the dead. But while these differences have been held and expressed without giving the least offense, or disturbing the fellowship of brethren, all experimental christians have agreed in applying this Scripture to the church of the living God; and in understanding the striking and beautiful imagery as expressive and illustrative of the distinguishing doctrine of the gospel.

“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. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband.”

Without any design to controvert the view of any brother, we will simply present such views, imperfect though they

may be, as the subject suggests to our mind, and leave our readers to examine and receive or reject them, as their judgment may dictate. To us, the new heaven and the new earth which John saw, is the same which he also calls the holy city, the New Jerusalem, and both figures mean the church of Christ under the gospel dispensation. This church has existed in such form and manner as to answer the description in the text and its connection, from the time of her organization on the day of Pentecost, to the present time, and will so continue until the end of time; but her peculiar beauty is not always apparent. Since her gospel organization, she has, to all human appearance, seemed to wax and wane like the moon. Sometimes she has been involved in clouds and thick darkness, and sometimes she has looked forth as the morning—shining in the heavenly radiance of the Son of righteousness. Sometimes driven into the wilderness, and anon, she is seen standing on a sea of glass, or appearing before the throne of God and the Lamb, and sounding her loud Alleluiahs to the Lord. John seems to have had a view of her, in his visions, in every variety of attitude and circumstance which she had then, or ever should present. As the new heaven and the new earth, and as the holy city, the New Jerusalem, her gospel comeliness, as the perfection of beauty, in distinction from the old receding heaven and earth and sea, of the legal dispensation, appears. The same figurative idea is also presented by the old and new Jerusalems. As the old Jerusalem, according to Paul's allegory, was in the connection of Hagar, or Mount Sinai in Arabia, signifying her identity with the old covenant, and her bondage with her children. (Gal. iv. 25.) The new Jerusalem is free, and the mother of us

all, who, as Isaac was, are the children of promise; so the old heavens and earth which had passed away, must, if we are correct in understanding their figurative import as being the same, refer to the abolition of the ceremonial covenant, and the new heaven and earth, must refer to the new covenant and its dispensation.

Israel, under the legal covenant, embraced or embodied those elements which were destined to melt with fervent heat, when the old heavens should be rolled together as a scroll, and as a vesture be laid aside. As an old heaven, that order of things had its elements, as the sun, or inspired revelation; its moon, or the embodied types, which borrowed light from the sun, and reflected it upon the people of God under that dispensation, and its stars, the prophets of the Lord; but all these were shadows of good things to come, the substance or body of which is Christ.

The glory of the new heaven is beautifully set forth in the sublime language of the inspired psalmist, Psalm xix. 1-6, "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the Son; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the ends of the heaven, and his circuit unto the end of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." Philosophers, astronomers and wise men of the earth, have ever found much to admire in the contemplation of the natural heavens, where worlds of living light and beauty proclaim to all the

families of the earth, the surpassing workmanship of God. But how much more sublime and elevated must be the contemplation of the new heaven and new earth, when the mind, illuminated by divine revelation, is permitted to "mount up and view the glories of the eternal skies." The church of God, under this figure, presents her sun, her moon, her stars, and all in perfect harmony pour forth their floods of living light in honor of him who has garnished the heavens, and marshaled all the heavenly hosts. In the new heaven which John saw, and which all enlightened christians may see, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings, comes out of his chamber, as a bridegroom. Riding upon the heavens in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky. Like a strong man, and as the man whom God has made strong for himself, the man Christ Jesus, rejoiceth to run his race. One and identical with the eternal Father in absolute Deity and eternal Godhead, yet filling, as Mediator, the place of Days-man, "who can lay his hand on both," he is worshiped and adored by all the angels and spirits of the just, before the throne of heaven. He bows his heavens and comes down to find and fill that tabernacle which he has set in the new heaven for the Sun. His brightness, says the prophet Habakkuk, was like the light, he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power. He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. As the natural sun rises in the east, and pours his radiance unto the extreme west, so the Sun of righteousness is from everlasting to everlasting. His going forth is from the end of heaven, even from everlasting, and his circuit is unto the ends of it. He is the Alpha

and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Almighty. How gloomy would be the natural heavens without the natural sun; but how much more gloomy would be the spiritual heaven without Christ. He is the fountain and source of all spiritual light. He is the light of the world; for there is no spiritual light in the world but what is in him. He shines in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. He has bespangled the new heavens with stars, which he holds in his right hand; but all their brilliancy is by the light reflected from him through them. He has given gifts for the edification of the body, the church, and these he has marshaled in their appropriate orbits, and they cannot, nor do they desire to turn either to the right hand or to the left. The apostles had their spheres appointed, and so with all the gifts of prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for he holds them in his right hand; nor will he allow the voluntary associations of men, or mission boards, or ecclesiastical dignitaries to pluck them from his hand. His clouds of witnesses are in the new heavens, charged with the thunder of his word, and the lightning of his truth. "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds."—Zech. x. 1. Through his bright clouds his doctrine shall drop as the rain, and his speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass. (Deut. xxxii. 2.) In the clouds of this new heaven he makes the rainbow of the covenant appear. John saw a rainbow encircling the throne on which the Prince of glory presides. (Rev. iv. 3; x. 1.)

Time and space and ability fail in our attempt to describe the superior glory of the new heaven and the new earth. All

the elements of the holy Jerusalem are new; nothing of the old remains, they are like a vesture laid aside, and their elements are melted with fervent heat. Behold, says Christ, I make all things new. Paul was caught up to the third heaven, and saw what he was unable to describe of the new heaven, and it is not surprising that our limited powers should utterly fail to express things which are so indescribably glorious.

John says, "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." It is impossible for the wisdom of this world to comprehend the origin of the church of God. Many imagine that it is composed of flesh and blood; that it comes by observation; that men are employed, and money invested, for the purpose of procuring from the earth a kingdom for our Lord; that men are to win a bride for the Lamb. But they do not know that his bride is already betrothed, and already prepared as a bride for her husband. They do not know that this kingdom was with God, as a prepared kingdom from the foundation of the world. (Matt. xxv. 34.) The holy city was not seen coming up, but coming down from God; her origin is above, her life is hid with Christ in God. Nor does she descend to earth to procure a bridal dress, or to make preparation for the consummation of the marriage; for, like everything that comes from God, she comes already prepared. A boundless theme for contemplation is presented in the ancient preparation of the bride for her husband. As set forth in the figure of the first Adam, whose bride was provided in his original creation and formation, so as far back into the ancients of eternity as we can trace the goings forth of Christ in his Mediatorial capacity, we may contemplate the church of God set up in him

who was set up from everlasting, chosen in him, blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, by which she is not only prepared, but also adorned as a bride for her husband. She is and was clothed with salvation before the world began; for Paul says, "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." Clothed in his salvation, and covered with his righteousness, and adorned with all the rich gifts of the Spirit, shod with the preparation of the gospel, wearing the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, she is well described as the perfection of beauty. (Psalm l. 2.) And her language is, "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 jewels."—Isaiah lxi. 10. He whose works were all finished from the foundation of the world, (Heb. iv. 3), hath thus clothed, beautified and adorned her; and, thus prepared, she is made manifest by revelation. So we see that this holy city, this New Jerusalem, is not only adorned for her Husband; but she is adorned by her Husband. She has not clothed herself with salvation, nor covered herself with righteousness. He hath done it all, and in thus clothing and adorning her, he hath done it all in a manner calculated to express the union and relationship of the Bridegroom and the bride. He has clothed and covered her with salvation and righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself, not as he decketh another; for she is recognized by him as the bone of his bones, and the

flesh of his flesh; and in adorning her with ornaments, and decking her with jewels, it is all done by him as unto himself, and not as for another. Thus the church, though viewed in any other light than that of her relationship to Christ, is black as the tents of Kedar, yet in the comeliness which Christ has put upon her, she is as white and spotless as the curtains of Solomon. (Cant. i. 5.)

"And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men," &c. The great voice which John heard, is the voice of the Bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; or in other words, the voice of Christ, by his Spirit through the gifts which he has bestowed upon his members; and this is truly a great voice in many respects. It is great, as being his voice by which the worlds were made, by which dead sinners are made alive in a spiritual sense, and by which all that are in their graves shall be raised at the last day. Great, as emanating from him who has all power in heaven and in earth. Great, because of the importance of the proclamation uttered, and great as being proclaimed in every nation, language and tongue, throughout the world, through the gifts bestowed upon his church. The heaven from which John heard this voice, is the new heaven of which he had a revelation as declared in this text, and evidently means the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth. The gospel of the Son of God proclaims what John heard, namely, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them," &c. The tabernacle which Moses made in the wilderness, according to the pattern which the God of Israel shewed him in the holy mount, was a type or figure of the tabernacle intended in our text, and was to be set up in man-

ner and form precisely as it stood in the mount of God when Moses first saw it, and to be made of the materials which God had before designated, and it was to be consecrated to the purpose by him ordained, and to contain the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, the cherubims of glory, and to be the place where the God of heaven would meet his chosen tribes, in the person of their High Priest, and commune with them from between the cherubims, and from over the mercy-seat.

The body in which Christ appeared in his incarnation, may be viewed as a tabernacle of God, for God was manifest in the flesh, and in that body all the church of the first-born was represented. The fullness of the Godhead bodily and the church was and is complete in him. But in the immediate sense of the text under consideration, the mystical body, the church, is in our view, intended as the antitypical tabernacle of God. The psalmist says of the church, "God is in the midst of her."—Psalm xlvi. 5. And again, "For the Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread."—Psalm cxxxii. 13-15. The application of the figure of the tabernacle in the wilderness, as designed to prefigure the true tabernacle into which Christ has, by his own blood, and through the eternal Spirit, entered, is very clearly stated in Heb. viii. 2-5; ix. 2-14. It is a tabernacle made without hands. For God dwelleth in the church, as we have proven, but we are told that God dwelleth not in tabernacles made with hands, therefore the church is a building of God, a house or tabernacle not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2 Cor. v. 1.) A kingdom prepared for the saints

from the foundation of the world. (Matt. xxv. 34.) A stone cut out of the mountain without hands. (Dan. ii. 45.) But in the revelation made to John, Behold it is with men. This holy city, New Jerusalem comes down from God, out of heaven, and is set up in gospel order, according to the pattern in the mount of God, and God, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, comes down to dwell in it, because he has desired it, and he will dwell in this tabernacle forever. The church is frequently spoken of as the temple as well as the tabernacle of the Lord, which signifies his special dwelling-place. In the mystical body of Christ what wonders are revealed. The eternal God and redeemed sinners meet together there. The saints are redeemed unto God, and God is in Christ. Here the fullness of eternal Godhead is embodied, and here the church is complete; the fullness of him that filleth all in all. And he, the eternal God, will dwell with them, (Eph. i. 23; Col. ii. 9, 10,) with men redeemed from the earth. What a wonderful household is this! God dwells with his people: "And they shall be his people." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Mal. iii. 17. And this is the special provision of the new covenant, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Heb. viii. 10; Jer. xxxi. 33.) And God himself shall be with them, and be their God. He will never leave nor forsake them; and he will put his fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. He will be their God, to protect and defend them, to feed and comfort them, to wipe away all their tears. He will be their God, as the object of their worship, their adoration and praise; they shall trust alone in him, and have no

other God before him. They are safe while he condescends to be with them as their God. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath them are his everlasting arms; their place of defense is the munition of rocks; God is a wall of fire around about, and a glory in their midst. He is their Shepherd, they shall not want. He leads them in green pastures by the living waters. And "The Lamb, that is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—Rev. vii. 17.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Dec. 1, 1855.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., June 8th, 9th and 10th, 1898, to the associations and meetings with which we are in correspondence.

DEARLY BELOVED FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—It has been our privilege once more to meet in associate capacity, and we have realized in an especial manner how profitable, good and pleasant it is to continue in this practice of associational gathering. The churches composing the Association have been well represented by messengers and letters, each testifying to peace, and to steadfastness in the truth. There is but one ordained minister now within the borders of our Association, and as the field is too large for him to serve all the churches as regularly as their appointed times of meeting demand, we have been largely dependent upon your kindness in sending ministers to visit us, and most of our churches have thus been enabled to maintain regular appointments for preaching. We have

received your messengers with gladness, and believe that with us they have found the meeting to be a season of refreshing from the Lord. The ministering brethren have borne faithful testimony to the truth; the preaching being in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. We earnestly desire the continuance of your correspondence, both by letter and messengers. For particulars as to the proceedings of this meeting, we refer you to our Minutes, copies of which we send you.

Our next annual meeting is appointed with the church at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1899, when we hope to again receive your messages of love and fellowship.

WM. L. BEEBE, Moderator.

JOHN MCCONNELL, Clerk.

ORDINATION.

ON the twenty-first day of May, 1898, Mt. Olive church, four miles north of Opelika, assembled for the purpose of ordaining brother N. C. HANSON.

In the providence of God, Elders W. C. Mitchell, J. T. Satterwhite, H. J. Redd and myself, met with said church by request.

Elder Reed opened the service by singing and prayer, at 10 o'clock.

Elder Mitchell read from Acts, and spoke upon the subject of separating Paul and Barnabas unto the work whereunto God had called them, and was followed by the writer, upon the words of the apostle, "Who is sufficient for these things?" After which a recess was taken of ten minutes.

The presbytery was then formed, and reassembled, when Elder Redd examined the church with reference to their judgment concerning brother Hanson's fitness for the work, which was satisfactory. The writer then examined brother Hanson, as to his experience of grace, and call to the ministry, and his faith and belief of the truth as contained in the Abstract of Principles adopted by the church of which he was a member.

The presbytery being satisfied, Elder J. T. Satterwhite offered the ordination prayer, after which the right hand of fellowship was extended, and Elder Mitchell in a pointed way delivered the charge.

At this meeting I offered my letter to the church,

and was received. The credentials were prepared, and signed by the presbytery.

There was a large assembly, and the service was solemn and impressive.

I will say to the brethren who may wish to hear from Elder Mitchell, that his health is such that he is able to serve, and visit, and preach near his home. He attends appointments with me around Opelika, and they are pleasant seasons to us. He is yet the pastor of Mt. Olive, which church he has served for more than fifty years. I regret, brethren of the eastern Associations, that I could not be with you all this spring, but hope God may bless you in your assemblies. I will say, the Lord has blessed me with liberty in preaching his blessed word of truth. I am regularly engaged filling about twenty appointments each month. May the Lord bless and guide us in the way of truth, is my sincere desire.

WILLIAM LIVELY.

OPELIKA, Ala., May 22, 1898.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her residence in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., June 14th, 1898, **Miss Helen M. Everett**, aged 71 years.

OUR dear brother, **Arnold Varnes**, died at his home in Salem, Juniata Co., Pa., on Tuesday, April 19th, 1898. Funeral sermon was preached by Elder Wm. Grafton, from Psalm xvii. 15. Brother Varnes was born February 8th, 1825; was baptized by the late Elder Thorn, the fifth Sunday in July, 1853, into the fellowship of the Tuscarora Old School Baptist Church, where he remained an orderly member until his death. For a time he spoke in public, to the full satisfaction of the church. I visited him twice during the past winter, and tried to speak in his house. He seemed to enjoy it very much. He leaves a wife and family of children, three brothers and three sisters. His brothers are all members of the Old School Baptist Church, and one sister is a member, and I think the other two has an experience. Brother Varnes was a constant reader of the SIGNS since 1852, and was steadfast in the doctrine as set forth in that highly esteemed paper. May the Lord keep us into his heavenly kingdom.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

NEEDMORE, Pa., June 15, 1898.

OUR SISTER **Elizabeth Faulk** was born to Mr. James S. and Mrs. Annie Baker, on the 18th day of July, 1870; was married to M. T. Faulk, Dec. 19th, 1886. She, together with her husband, joined the Primitive Baptist church, at Paron, and was baptized by Elder H. B. Jones, on the first Sunday in September. Died at the home of her parents, in Indian Territory, on the 25th day of February, 1898, after suffering for some

weeks from what her physicians thought to be consumption. Sister Faulk was a pleasant and dutiful wife, a kind and affectionate mother, a good neighbor, and a sound and consistent church member. She leaves her father, mother, brothers, sisters, husband and five little children, her friends, including the church, to mourn their loss. We deeply sympathize with all the bereaved, especially our beloved brother. May he be enabled by grace divine to put his whole trust in that God who doeth all things well, and never does wrong, and bow in humble submission to his will. May his great tribulation work for and in him that patience and experience that worketh hope, that he may be able at all times, and under all circumstances, to look to God for all comfort and consolation in this world, and in the world to come, is the prayer of his unworthy pastor.

F. LODEN.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—By request of the heart-broken parents, I send you for publication in the SIGNS, a notice of the death of **Smith R. Ellis**, at the home of his parents, in Delmar, Del., on the 24th day of February, 1898, aged 15 years, 9 months and 14 days. He was taken sick on the 19th, and was alarmingly ill from the very first. His disease baffled the skill of both of the physicians of the town, and he sank rapidly from Sunday (20th) till Thursday (24th) about 1 o'clock p. m., when death came to his relief. Smith was a fine lad, doing all in his power to assist his parents, working with cheerfulness and good will, when other boys of his age were at play. The father and mother, brother J. J. and sister Rachel Ellis, members of the Little Creek Church, have the sympathy of their brethren and friends in this sad dispensation of Providence. And, too, they have reason to hope it is well with the child, as during his extreme suffering he cried out, "I want to go home." His father replied, "You are at home; this is papa's home." But he answered, "This is not my home, my home is in heaven." We trust it is so, and that he is now basking in the smiles of the dear Savior of sinners. May God in mercy comfort the hearts of the sorrowing ones, and enable them to say, "Thy will, O Lord, be done." They have my warmest sympathies in their great sorrow. I know by sad experience how they feel.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DELMAR, Del., June 15, 1898.

OUR dear mother, **Pernelia Howell**, was born in Preble Co., Ohio, July 4th, 1831. Her maiden name was Richards. She was a daughter of old grandfather and grandmother Willis, and Judieth Richards. She departed this life Sunday morning, May 29th, 1898, aged 66 years, 10 months and 25 days. She was buried Tuesday, May 31st, 1898. Funeral discourse was delivered by Elder D. W. Candell, from 1 Cor.

xv. 19, which was a very comforting sermon. After which the body was laid away to rest. She was married to Arthur Howell, October 18th, 1849. To them eleven children were born, four sons and seven daughters. Four daughters, two of them in infancy, preceded her to that better land. Her remaining children, with the father, were all present with her during her last hours in this life. She leaves a husband, four sons, three daughters, twenty-three grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, three brothers and one sister, with many other relatives and friends, to mourn her departure. She joined the Regular Primitive Baptist church, and was baptized by Elder G. M. Peters, June 19th, 1871, to which church she remained a true and faithful member until death removed her. She was always present at her meetings when able to be there, and was always pleased, and welcomed the brethren and the friends who called to see her during her affliction, which was dropsy, and heart trouble. She was afflicted for nearly three years, but was never heard to murmur or complain, but bore her affliction with all patience until her change came. She passed peacefully away into the arms of her blessed Lord and Master.

JOHN A. HOWELL.

WEST MANCHESTER, Ohio.

OUR aged brother, **James Blizzard**, passed away from this life at his residence in Baltimore city, Md., on Sunday morning, May 22d, 1898, in the 94th year of his age. Our brother had been a member of the church at Black Rock for more than fifty years. He was baptized by the late Elder James Bowen. In all these years he had maintained the faithful life becoming to all those who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Savior. His brethren held him in high esteem and deep affection. His interest in the cause remained unabated to the last. Most of his life he lived some miles distant from the church, yet for many years he attended regularly the meetings of the church. He was a good business man, and was regarded in the church as a wise counselor. He possessed a great desire at all times for the peace and prosperity of the church, and loved the company of his brethren, and delighted to talk of the things of God. Some years ago he moved to Baltimore city, and after that, as long as health and strength served, he was a faithful attendant upon the meetings there. He sometimes took part in the prayer meetings of the church, and always with acceptance to the brethren. For several years age and increasing infirmities had confined him to his home. He passed away after a lingering illness terminating in dropsy. His end was peaceful. We doubt not that he has entered the presence of that Savior who praises he delighted to sing while he lived.

Elder J. T. Rowe, of North Carolina, and Elder F. W. Keene, of Maine, were present at the funeral, and

both took part, after which his remains were taken to Westminster, Md., for interment. We cannot close this obituary without speaking of the unvarying kindness which we personally received at his hands for many years. We in former years spent many pleasant hours in his company. We feel that we have lost a dear friend. He leaves one son and one granddaughter to mourn the loss of one who was dear to them. May the blessings of God rest upon them, and upon the church of which he was a member so many years.

C.

DIED—At his home near this city, Wednesday morning, May 4th, 1898, at 2 o'clock a. m., **Mark Wagner, Sr.**, in the 82d year of his age. Thus has another good and grand man been called to his Father. A man whose religion was honesty and fair dealing, who believed in the golden rule, as a practical motto; who contended for the right in all things; who was charitable, liberal and true; who could harbor no such thing as petty malice or spite. The deceased was nearly ninety years of age. He was a Tennessean by birth. "Uncle Mark" lived in this section for sixty years; had lived to see generation come and go; to see his children and grandchildren make useful and valuable citizens; had lived to witness the evolution of his beloved, adopted State emerge from a wilderness, to that of one of the grandest States in the Union. He was an old time southern gentleman, who had lived in an age of patriotism. But he has gone, after a long and well spent life. Deceased leaves an aged wife, with whom he had lived sixty years, and four children, to mourn their loss: W. W., Mark Jr., Mrs. Thos. Remy and Mrs. Adams.

His remains were laid to rest Wednesday, in the Snodgrass burying-ground, a large number of relatives and friends, despite the inclemency of the weather, following to pay the last respects. He was born in Franklin Co., Tenn., March 1st, 1816. He went to Crawford Co., Ark., in 1839. In May, 1840, he was married to Mary A. Russell. Ten children were the result of this marriage. He generally had the respect of those about him. He never made a public profession of christianity, but in conversation on divine things, an experience of grace was manifest. He talked much of that pure, holy God, as he always viewed him, whom we feel confident has taken him to himself, where he can behold his glory, and sing anthems of praise to his endless holiness. May the same wise Sovereign, in his mercy, bless his sorrowing widow and children, and reconcile them to this dispensation. For, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

S. JONES.

BLANCO, Texas, May 24, 1898.

"I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it."

Our dear brother, **Samuel H. Campbell**, passed from earth to his eternal home, in Washington, D. C., April 2d, 1898, aged 58 years. He had been declining for a year, yet able to attend to business till within a few weeks of his departure. In 1867 he married Miss Henrietta Freed. They lived happily together in the pleasant town of Elkhart, Ind. Three children were given them. One lived to bud into womanhood, one passed away in infancy, in 1887. His wife was taken from him soon after. He, with his only child, now Mrs. Florence Churchill, came to Washington, D. C., in 1889. He married Miss Emma Wolley, of Elkton, Md., who was a kind, affectionate wife, soothing his last hours with words of hope, and christian love, and deeds of kindness. The stroke falls heavily on his wife and only daughter. He was a kind husband, an indulgent, affectionate father. The Lord has promised to be a husband to the widow, and a father to the fatherless. May they be led into green pastures, and beside still waters, and his banner over them be love. The last five weeks of our dear brother's stay on earth I was with him. I found it good to be with him; his mind was with God. He told me two mornings when I had been from him part of the night, what sweet thoughts he had; one was of the redemption, of Jesus' birth, of his mission into the world to redeem his people, to save them eternally; a people who was as old as the everlasting hills; not to make one more nor one less, the number was complete in Christ Jesus, and now being made manifest. After talking awhile, I asked him if he felt he was one of that number? He said he could not say, but that he had a hope he was. One thing he said he was glad of, there was nothing left for him to do. It is all complete, when on the cross Jesus said, "It is finished." It was finished; his people was with him, arose with him, and will ever be. Another morning he called me to him and said, "I heard the whisperings of the angels all night, and it was so sweet." Elder Durand called to see him; he enjoyed hearing him talk, and was quite free to talk himself. He wanted to see him again. When he did not come he said, "I fear he did not like my talk." He never was baptized, but had for years been a defender of the truth. He was rarely absent from preaching in Washington. In speaking of the evidences of a christian, Elder Durand said, "It was the love for the brethren." He said, with tears in his eyes, "I do love the people, and to hear them talk." He told me, in speaking of his death, he wanted an Old School minister to speak, he had no choice, he loved them all. I do feel our dear brother is singing with the redeemed host; that innumerable company that John saw around the throne of God. Elder Grafton not being able to be with us, brother Sherwood spoke words of comfort, read the fortieth Psalm and the 1289th hymn, (Beebe's Collection) and spoke in prayer, after which we laid all that was mortal to

rest by the side of his parents, in the quiet resting-place at Welch Tract. Death has entered our midst twice in one year. Last August our oldest sister, Mrs. J. M. Frazier, was taken from us, which leaves three brothers and five sisters to mourn. "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast." —Psalm lvii. 1.

MAGGIE S. CAMPBELL.

IRON HILL, Md., June 11, 1898.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet, the Lord willing, with the New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Wednesday, August 31st, 1898, and the two following days.

Those coming from the south will stop at Avon, while those coming from the north will stop at St. Augustine, on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. Railroad. Those coming from the west will stop at Roseville, of the R. Island Branch of the same road, where teams will be in waiting on Wednesday morning of the Association, and Tuesday evening before.

All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

THE

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

A pamphlet containing the following articles, viz:

First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28th, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School, and the New School Baptists.

Second. "The Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England.

Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fourth. "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion, of the same title.

Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE,
PUBLISHED THE FIRST AND FIFTEENTH OF EACH MONTH.

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BY GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1898. NO. 15.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE MORAL RELATION OF MAN TO GOD.

“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.

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”—Matt. xxii. 37-40.

The Lord God created man, and gave him his heart, and soul, and mind, with his body, and all his faculties and powers. This fact shows his absolute dependence upon God, and his supreme obligation to worship and serve his Sovereign and Maker. All this is clearly presented in the two texts above, as declared by the Lord God and his Son. All revealed truth agrees with these divine texts. The natural and moral relation of man to God, as thus shown, is one of entire and perpetual and obedient service. So, then, man is not his own. He owes himself, and all his powers, to his Creator. God has commanded man what he may do, what he shall not do, and what he

shall do. He may eat and partake of that which God has not forbidden, for this is for his sustenance and good, and his nature constrains him so to do, but he has no liberty or moral freedom to do more, go beyond, and transgress. To do so is sin, and sin is death. “Thou shalt surely die.” Man sinned. Jesus says, “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” Paul said, “I am carnal, sold under sin.” “Sin hath reigned unto death.” A servant is not free. Sin reigns in the servant of sin. Wherein is the freedom of a slave? All men in nature are sinners, and it is their nature to sin. They love sinful things. They are taken captive by the devil at his will. Their mind and conscience are defiled. The will is a faculty or power of the mind; therefore the will is enslaved to sin, with all the mental powers. “Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life,” said Jesus. “No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”

Let us consider the human will. All Arminians assert the freedom of the will, therefore they hold that all men are free moral agents. They claim that this freedom is in the will; that the will sits as a

monarch upon the mental throne, and rules this empire or kingdom. It is held that this freedom of the will constitutes every one a free moral agent. But why it should be held that this one faculty of the mind is free, rather than that the mind itself is free, is strange, for the mind has other properties more than the will, as the preception, the conscience, the understanding and the judgment. It must be then that if the will is free, it decides and controls all these other powers of the mind, and the mind itself. Now, is this true? Does the will govern in the mind? or is it governed? Any one may easily decide this by a little thought. When any object is presented to the mind, perception sees that it is either desirable, or it is unsuitable; the conscience says that such object is either good, or bad, worthy, or unworthy; the understanding either approves it, or disapproves it; the judgment then instructs the will to either accept it, or reject it, and the will accordingly acts; nor can the will act otherwise than as thus instructed and moved. This is true in all rational acts. In irrational and blindly impulsive acts, either the appetites or the passions impel and govern the will. The will always yields to the strongest and prevailing motive. Therefore, in all cases, the will is subservient, and so it is not free. It is impossible for the will to act contrary to the dictates of the other mental faculties, or against the strongest motive. The will then is not the master, but it is the servant.

Now, consider man in relation to the commands of God, as under a supreme and unceasing moral obligation to keep and do every divine command, and he is not a free agent or actor, but is limited and bound by the authority of his Sovereign. For the command and restriction upon him is, "Thou shalt love the Lord

thy God with all heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. * * * Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." So spoke the Son of God. When the Most High says, "Thou shalt," man is not free or at liberty to say, I will not. And this sacred moral obligation is ever binding upon the heart and soul and mind of the creature man. The supreme commands of God are upon man. This authority binds him to not only love his God thus supremely with all his heart and soul and mind, but also to love his neighbor as himself. All this he must do as a servant, a moral agent, or else he must suffer for his failure. Man is not, therefore, a free moral agent. Nay, he is bound by bonds the most binding and solemn and unending, from which he cannot escape or free himself one moment. Not only the will, a single faculty of the mind, but the mind itself, and not the mind alone, but the soul, and not merely the will and mind and soul, but the heart as well; these are all morally bound to love the Lord God supremely, and to love the neighbor as the self. From this service there is no freedom. Man is under the law of God, therefore he must either do all things contained in the law, or endure its penalty. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Where then is there any place or any moment of time for the freedom of the will? Every divine command to man says, "Thou shalt," or "Thou shalt not." Man is a rational being, and therefore he is a moral agent; but he is not free, because he is accountable. A servant is not a free agent, because he serves another, and is subject to his orders. This fact applies to all accountable beings, who act under lawful authority, and are under restriction, and

subject to this authority, and are responsible for every violation thereof. Therefore no man is a free moral agent. Even the holy Son of man himself claimed no such freedom of the will, but he said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." He taught his disciples to pray, and say, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." The truth is, then, God alone is a free moral agent, for his will only is free, and he says, "I will do all my pleasure." In the fifty-second number of his hymn book, Elder Wilson Thompson strongly affirms these truths, and all would do well to read it. There is a sect called Freewill Baptists, who hold to the freedom of the human will, but the Old School Baptists have ever discarded and opposed, as a serious error, the popular Arminian doctrine of man's free moral agency, and that this free agency consists in the freedom of the will. I have simply presented some of the reasons for the opposition of our people to this worldly doctrine or teaching; reasons which make it impossible for our people to ever become Freewill Baptists. For while free moral agency may seem to be consistent with the worldly and popular doctrine of Arminianism or conditionalism, it is utterly inconsistent with the unworldly and unpopular doctrine of the Bible—salvation by reigning grace alone, through God's election and predestination. There is one way only that any one can be free: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Yet when thus made free from sin, and the law, and its curse, we are then the servants of God in Christ, but not the servants of sin under the law, as before. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

We still serve, therefore, and so are not free moral agents, because we are under law to Christ, our new Master. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This new law of life makes the service blessed, and the new motive that sweetly constrains the will in this self-denying and obedient service is love, the love of God and Christ. "God worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This is God's good work of grace and salvation, and it is the work of perfect love. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." So then God and his love inspire us both to will and do in working out or showing forth our own salvation. "The love of Christ constraineth us," is the sentiment of Paul. This love constrains the heart, and the soul, and the mind, and therefore the will of the loving and obedient christian in his or her loyal service to the loving Master. This then is not an automatic or self-acting service, neither is it the unintelligent, unloving, coerced and mechanical service of a machine, but is the willing, active, heart-given service of a living, loving child of God, and servant of the Lord Jesus.

This is submitted in meekness and love to all who love our only Lord Jesus Christ, with the earnest prayer that we may all know the truth, and that the truth shall make us free from error.

Your servant for Jesus' sake,

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., April 8, 1898.

[THE above is in full harmony with the editorial in the SIGNS of June 15th, 1898, upon the text, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." It was largely upon this very ground of the freedom of the human will, that our fathers

felt compelled to withdraw from their former brethren who contended for the freedom of the human will. It seems almost incredible that this leprosy should be once more in the walls of the house of God on earth. Free will dethrones Jehovah, and sets man upon the throne. It destroys grace and exalts human merit. For this reason it must when understood be utterly abhorrent to every right thinking mind. A truly humble man never can boast of a free will.—ED.]

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 20, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I take advantage of the liberty given at the close of the second letter, to send two letters from Elder P. H. James for publication in the SIGNS. He probably did not think of having these published, but he has left it to my judgment, and I judge that they will be beneficial and comforting to many of the spiritual readers of the SIGNS who are scattered abroad, and I hope some of the touching things he has said about the attention needed by the Lord's servants, and the labors and trials they undergo, may have the effect to stir up the pure minds of those who have not given such attention as they might have done, by way of remembrance of their duties and privileges in this respect. Brother James tells the experience of many of the Lord's servants in telling his own trials of mind concerning the work of the ministry, and his occasional experiences of great joy and triumph in the work.

Your brother in hope,
SILAS H. DURAND.

PRESCOTT, Ark., August 23, 1896.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received your very welcome letter yesterday, and will now try to reply. I was thinking of you

only a few days ago, and thought I would write you and tell you how I appreciate, and what comfort I received from reading your article in *Zion's Landmark* of August 1st. I do so admire the spirit in which you write, so tender, yet firm and unyielding. Surely the opposers of "predestination of all things," could not become offended at you. May you live long to contend for such a glorious and God-honoring truth. You ask, how I am getting on in the warfare, and in the glorious work of proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ? I have to answer, very poorly. I often nearly despair, and think I will give up the fight, and retreat from the field, but hope and trust I am again constrained by the love of Christ to press on in such a glorious cause; yea, I have even gone so far, when filled with his fullness, as to tell the brethren I desired to die "speaking of the glory of his kingdom, and talking of his power." But ah! how soon shaken.

From the beginning of this year till a short time back, I was wonderfully blessed with glorious seasons of rejoicing (in the inner man), and precious exercises of mind, and was assured that my preaching was received with joy and gladness of heart; but of late I feel stupid and cold, and what I say is harsh and dry, consequently is no food to me, and I fear none to my hearers. I realized long ago that preaching was not of man, but how often I forget it. How often self gets in the way. How often old self becomes exalted, and wants the honor and glory of this work. How hard I sometimes strive against this spirit.

I sometimes fear my experience respecting the call to the ministry, is different from that of others. I have serious doubts in regard to my call, and when I have such doubts I resolve to cease speak-

ing in the name of Jesus in a public way. I fear I have assumed such position, and have been prompted only by fleshly aspirations. When I am able to see myself as a vile creature, and can see the high and exalted position a true servant occupies, then I am filled with doubts and fears. I often inquire, Can it be possible that God has required such work of so vile a wretch as I am? Surely other preachers are not as mean as I am. Then again I think if I am a servant at all, I was given only one talent, and I have put it in a napkin and have buried it, consequently I am cast into outer darkness as an unprofitable servant, and there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. I have a desire to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Master, but it seems I know less now than when I commenced. I have asked for wisdom, but fear I have asked amiss. When there is a felt sense of my unworthiness, and I am humbled under the mighty hand of God, and can see the high and exalted position a gospel minister is called to occupy, and the great responsibility resting upon him, then I am made to ask, as did Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Yes, the earthen vessel is of no value in this life, as regards the worship and service of God, but the treasure it contains is all-sufficient, and is it not "Jesus in you the hope of glory?" So it is up and down with me all the time, and sometimes I feel tired of this life, tired of life's surging billows, and made to say within, It would be far better to depart and be with Christ.

I have never met Elder H. B. Jones. I think he lives in Texas. I have never visited the brethren out there. In fact, dear brother, my circumstances are such I do not travel or visit the brethren as much as I desire. I visit the churches

that are from ten to thirty miles of me. Of course I go farther to associations.

Please write me as often as you can. Excuse this disconnected letter.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality,
P. H. JAMES.

PRESCOTT, Ark., May 12, 1897.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your very welcome letter came to hand yesterday. I cannot find words to express my gratitude to you, and the dear lady, for so needed a gift. O, I feel so unworthy, I do not feel that I deserve such favors. I do not feel that I am one of the number you describe, "faithful and devoted," but feel sometimes that I am very stubborn and rebellious; but I must learn obedience as did our blessed Master, for, "He learned obedience by the things he suffered." I never willingly obey my Lord, but have to be whipped into duty, therefore have to suffer the strokes put upon me. When I am deeply impressed to go and "speak the words of this life," I go, but very often suffer as I go. I go lowing, as it were, as did the kine that pulled the new cart whereon was the ark of the covenant. My insufficiency comes up before me, and I am made to inquire, as did Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?" My sufficiency is only in the Lord. Then again, dear brother, I often feel it my duty to go to the churches that have called me, and others that have specially requested me to visit them, and O, what a strait I am in. My farm work is to be done, and maybe wet weather and other unavoidable hindrances have caused me to get behind, and I feel that my family needs my work, and it is with a heavy heart I often start to my appointments. When my mind is so disturbed it renders me unfit to take a part in the worship of God;

yet I know when I reflect, that the Lord feeds the sparrows and ravens, and "giveth us life and breath and all things." But I am so weak and frail, and have so little faith, that the cares of this life does have the effect to cause me to waver and stumble.

In some localities the ministry, or servants of God, are badly neglected by the brotherhood. The brethren have thoughtlessly or unthoughtlessly laid two burdens (at least) on them. They call them to serve them, and minister to their spiritual needs, and expect them to attend them if possible without fail, which is a burden to a poor servant, because he feels it his duty to attend them; and another burden is, he must work hard for himself and family all the time that he is not attending their meetings, and many poor servants are never given enough to hire help to make up the time lost out of his crop. Maybe he loses eight days in a month, very often pays his own expenses in traveling, and when his horse needs shoeing he pays for that. O that our brethren everywhere would awake to their duty on this line. "Give to them that hath need." Our Old School Primitive Baptist brethren say they believe in giving, and not hiring, now let them prove their faith by their works. But our brethren are in a great measure excusable, especially those of the south. Most all of them are poor in this world's goods, and we feel a delicacy in exhorting them to duty in this particular, knowing their circumstances. I feel sometimes, dear brother, that my days are nearly numbered. I have nasal catarrh, (not yet in bad form) and when not under the influence of medicine, it so weakens me I am hardly able to work. The first Saturday and Sunday of this month, I went to a church I try to serve, in Clark County,

and from some cause I took cold. Since then I have suffered a great deal. Our doctors here say catarrh cannot be cured by medicines or drugs, but can be by a change of climate. Some specialists claim they can cure it. If I was able, and could find a climate that would cure, I would go to it. But as I wrote a dear brother a few days since, "The thoughts of death does not terrify me." The more I suffer, the more I feel resigned to his will. If it is his will to call me hence prematurely, (not yet forty-seven years) I cannot change it, for my destiny is with him. Sometimes I feel very tired of this life anyhow, and to depart would only be a happy release from my sufferings. O, that "my remnant of days could be spent in his praise," and that I could do at all times as did Paul, "Count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," and that I, even I, could "count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

Again I sincerely thank you for such an expression of your kindness, as expressed both by sending me the present from the friend, and the good old SIGNS. I say old SIGNS, because it is, I believe, the oldest of our papers, and I also believe it is pointing out the old paths. May God in his infinite mercy abundantly bless you and yours, and the lady who has so graciously remembered the poor, old, afflicted servants. May the good Lord bless you in your labor of love. Nothing would afford me more pleasure than to be at your association, and others in the east, but see no chance of getting to them. I pray that the Lord may be in your midst, and that you all may be "filled with the fullness of God." You request me to write for the SIGNS, if I have a mind to. I am not impressed as I once was to write for our papers. I

concluded such impressions were fleshly, and quit writing. The subjects I tried to write on, and points encouched in them, were good, but I thought were not properly defined, for I sadly feel need of the gift of language to express and portray the beauty I see in them, therefore my efforts in writing have seemed very poor and somewhat meaningless to me. However, if hereafter I feel so inclined, I will again make the attempt. If you see proper you can send anything I write you for publication to our papers; that is, anything you think would be profitable to the "household of faith." Hope you will allow me the same privilege. Write me again as soon as you have opportunity. Please remember me in my afflictions in your prayers. Our love to you and family. Excuse this rambling, disconnected letter.

Yours in much love,

P. H. JAMES.

BRUNSWICK, Maine, May 29, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Inclosed is a letter from brother T. R. Pitman, of Havana, Kansas. I have his consent to send it on for publication, if you think best. It seems too good to be laid aside, and I wish to share it with those who love the truth which it contains.

Your sister in hope,

ATTIE CURTIS.

DEAR SISTER:—You have requested me, in your very interesting letter to my wife, to write to you on the subject which is dear to the heart of every child of grace, "the christian pilgrimage," and to speak of what is on the way from this world of sin, to that better country, the heavenly home, prepared for the children of God. I deeply feel my

weakness, and my inability to write a message which will be profitable or edifying to the children of God. I have been much interested in, and consoled by your letters published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for many years, and I have always enjoyed their pure christian spirit, clear understanding of gospel truth, and the rich experience of divine grace, which they have exhibited. When reading your letters in former years, I had no thought of ever hearing from you, except as a writer in our dear family paper. After my dear wife was made to rejoice in a Savior's pardoning love, she became deeply interested in your letters, and finally ventured to open correspondence with you, the result of which appears to be highly appreciated by both. I know that your letters are carefully read and reread by her, with thankfulness and consolation. I have often meditated about the love and attachment which christians bear to each other. It is a secret which is incomprehensible to the natural mind. This love has its source in the fountain of God's eternal love. "God is love." Christ, the blessed Master, taught to his disciples the purest love, and enjoined upon them that they should be governed by its influence. The child of God may talk of his trials and victories, his sorrows and hopes, to other ears, but will find, if they have not been taught in the same school, there will be no glad response, no consolation, no receptive joy, no heart burning, but only idle curiosity, or doubtful feeling. On the other hand, if the language is directed to one of like precious faith, how different the reception. Love, joy, union and sweet fellowship, all mingle together. How true the psalmist expresses it, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." The true solution of the mystery

of salvation, and of all that develops from it, is in the life manifested in the child by the gift of God's free grace. "I give unto them eternal life." Once dead, now alive; once only carnal, now spiritual. The words of the blind man who was miraculously made to see, apply forcibly to every child of God: "Whereas I was once blind, now I see." The sinner who was once blind and dead, now is alive and can see. Jesus freely gives this life. No work, no merit, no justification upon the good deeds of the creature. "He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son hath not life." "I give eternal life." Here is the very essence of love manifested. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us." So great was his love, that he sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Then the beloved apostle lays down this rule, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." O how deeply the word should sink into the hearts of the saints. If we love one another, there will be no room for hate, no place for jealousy, no ground for strife, no lurking place for evil.

The SIGNS of the fifteenth inst., were duly received. It seems to be exceptionally good, and so richly laden with gospel truth. One sentence in Elder Chick's reply to brother Stipp seems so precious. He says, "Sweet as the love of brethren is to us, to love them is much sweeter." Elder Chick is certainly endowed with a peculiar gift to clothe his writings with beautiful and instructive thoughts. Of late, in musing upon christian duty, this Scripture has strongly impressed itself upon me, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." We are so prone to desire the approbation of the world. The serious question is to draw the line between needful duty to the world, and

service to Christ, or rather how we are to blend the two in harmony, so as to fulfill the divine law. I find in my experience that I am so much conformed to the world, and its allurements and attractions, that I feel sure that is one great reason why I am so often groping in spiritual darkness, doubt and fear. Then again, on account of my peculiar views of religion, my kindred, friends and neighbors, charge me with selfishness. They think it strange that I do not give my time, labor and influence, to further their many and varied means used to push on the work of the gospel, in converting and bringing sinners to the ark of safety. They seem to be amazed when I talk about the doctrine of reigning grace, about a wrought in righteousness, or life, before it can be wrought out, or made manifest. They are so securely wedded to their idol of free will, that they cannot bear to have it doubted or denied. We have in our little village, two popular churches, where our kindred, friends and neighbors, all near and dear to us by the ties of nature, meet for worship, agreeable to their beliefs. I cannot realize, when entering their place of worship, the sweet assurance of the psalmist when he exclaimed, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Our friends think it strange of us that we prefer to go away from these conveniences, and journey miles away over rough roads, to meet in a little schoolhouse, among a people poor in this world's goods, and but few in number, to worship (as they believe) the same Being that they do. To carnal minds such actions appear foolish. How true the sacred writer explains it to understanding ears: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God

hath prepared for them that love him." We go to our little church, we mingle our voices in praise and prayer, we listen to the preaching of the word, which is not with enticing words of man's wisdom, or with great worldly knowledge. The minister simply talks upon the old, old theme, which is ever new, of Jesus and his love. He tells of no new and strange philosophy, but brings to our remembrance things which we have both seen and heard. He proclaims an exalted and triumphant Savior, and a poor sinner saved by grace. How sublime and mysterious is the gospel of Christ! "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offense." The world seeks after a righteousness based upon natural reason, and inherent goodness, and the performing of that which is good and right, and not that which is based upon simple faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ. They seem not to comprehend the marked and clear distinction between that which is born of the flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit. None but the redeemed children, or those who are born of the Spirit, are able to understand the sublimity of that difference. The poor, little, trembling child of God, though ignorant of worldly knowledge, yet clothed in the robe of Christ's righteousness, and having received his learning in the spiritual school of Christ, is possessed of a knowledge, before which all earthly knowledge and love appears as the small dust of the balance.

Dear sister, lest I weary you, I must bring this to a close, although the theme of the christian hope is inexhaustible. Remember me in love to your dear, aged parents.

I remain, as I humbly trust, your brother in Christ,

T. R. PITMAN.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., June 14, 1898.

ELDER H. C. KER—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—If indeed I can be allowed to claim that relationship with one of God's dear people. I feel much of my time that I am too sinful to be with them, or numbered among them, if indeed I really am one of that number for which Jesus died. O! dear brother, it has been a long time in my mind since I wrote to you, or have received a letter from you. I have been so much of the time in a state of mind that I could not write, and whether I can do so now I do not know. I feel I must trust alone in my dear Redeemer for anything which I may write. I know that without him I can write nothing that will be of any comfort to you. Yea, of myself it would be utterly impossible, for in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. I am often made to wonder if really the Spirit of the Most High has ever dwelt within this tabernacle in which I am held a prisoner. Many are the times that I do not feel it to be the case, or cannot realize that such has ever been the case. I am often made to exclaim,

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

I am often made to wonder why I am thus dealt with? Why the Almighty ever looked upon me, a poor worm of the dust? Why or how could he have had compassion upon me? Yes, how could he have had mercy upon me, a poor sinner? Yes me, who at one time rolled sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel. O! my dear brother, I am now made to feel many times the sting of that at one time sweet morsel, sin, which is death; death to all spiritual enjoyments, until the Comforter cometh and sweetly whispers to me some words of comfort, raising me

from the depths in which I had fallen, giving me the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, causing me to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, for a short time. How short such times seem to this mourning one, who seems to be made to dwell so much of his time in the valley of Achor. Yet why am I complaining, am I worthy of more than this? Surely I am not, in no wise, but rather his condemnation, for did I not at one time love sin, and have no use for Jesus, the Savior of sinners, and viewed him as a root out of dry ground, and saw nothing in him that I should love him? Surely I esteemed him not, and I tried to cast him away from me, and to shun the society of the saints. But now Christ is all to me: let him hide his face from me, and it is midnight with my soul: darkness and gloom is all around me, and my harp is on the willows. But let Jesus appear, and my dawning is begun. His presence and smiles drive darkness from my mind, binds up my broken heart, heals all its wounds, calms all its fears, gives me back my harp, strung and tuned to sound his praise. O! can it be that I once shunned him who is now my all in all things? Thus I am made to mourn from time to time, and again from time to time I am turned from my mourning, and made to rejoice with great joy, that he is my all in all things.

I did not have it on my mind to write thus when I began, but I hope the Lord has directed my mind to write what I have.

JUNE 21st. Well, I nearly gave out sending you this letter. It has been a week since I began it, and it seems I am not to write what I first had on my mind. The thoughts first on my mind were upon that prayer of the Savior to the Father,

a short time before he was crucified, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." He was burdened, pressed down and in trouble, praying that this cross might pass from him if it be possible, but saying, Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. He saw what was before him, that he was to be crucified, and his desire was that his people might be with him there, even in the crucifixion, that they might behold his glory. Surely we are crucified with him daily. If we were not we would be unable to see his glory, which he prayed the Father that they might see. If we were not brought into trouble, into darkness of mind, and had no afflictions and temptations, and no sufferings, as he had, how would we be enabled to behold his glory?

I feel that I must leave this at this time. May the Lord enable us all to behold his glory, even though we are crucified daily with him. Please bear with me in my weakness and short-comings, and look over all mistakes. I am, I hope, your brother in Christ,

CASPER G. FETTER.

P. S.—Elder Durand said last Sunday that he hoped it would be so that you could be with us on the first Sunday in July, while he was to be at Otego, N. Y. I do hope, dear brother, that you can be with us then, and if so, I would dearly love to have you call at our house awhile. I do not want to be greedy, but would like to have you come to my place and stay all night, I want to have a talk with you, or I want to hear you talk. I am not worthy of any such blessings, but if I know my heart's desire in just one thing, it is to be with the saints of God. "Where two or three are gathered to-

gether in my name, there am I in their midst."

Remember me to your family. I would dearly love to see you all. My wife joins me in love to you all. May the Lord bless you.

Yours unworthily,

C. G. F.

HOPEWELL, N. J., May, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—My nephew, Kendrick Hill, while studying shorthand, took a stenographic copy of a prayer offered by Elder Purington. He afterwards wrote it out and sent it to me. This accounts for my having the reproduction of it, which I esteem as a relic. Thinking it too good to be kept under a bushel, and having the consent of sister Purington, I send it to you for publication in the SIGNS.

HANNAH M. DRAKE.

A PRAYER OFFERED BY ELDER WM. J. PURINGTON, SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 8, 1885, AT HOPEWELL, NEW JERSEY.

Thou prayer-hearing, prayer-answering, and sin pardoning God—May we be enabled to now approach thee in the all prevailing name of the once humiliated and crucified, but now risen, exalted and glorified, Redeemer. Grant unto us this morning, if it be thy holy pleasure, the true spirit of supplication and thanksgiving. Lord, we would acknowledge, not with a mere form of words only, but from feeling hearts, that thy loving kindness, and thy tender mercies, have continued to us all our pilgrimage until the present moment; and while the shafts of death have been taking our fellow mortals upon the right hand and the left, these frail lives of ours are still spared. We are still the objects of thy compassion here in that state of existence where thou

canst give life and immortality to the vilest of the vile, if in harmony with thy will, and if such are embraced in the covenant of redemption. And while we would this morning breathe forth unto thee thanksgiving for past mercies and present favors, and openly implore a continuation of the same upon us, we would be filled with filial love, and reverential awe, to thee, that we have the hope of a blissful immortality beyond this time state; a hope that is to thy dear people at times, truly an anchor to the soul, while billow upon billow dashes upon them. While sin and confusion is abroad in the earth may they rest assured that the Lord God omnipotent reigns, and that every event is ordered by thy wisdom; that the wickedness of the present can only go as far as thy purpose is. We are informed in thy written word that the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath thou wilt restrain. O dear God, suffer us not to dwell upon what we have to say with indifference. And we feel to say in heart, 'all will be well, whether I am interested or not. O God! may our prayer be this morning like David of old! O Lord, revive us. O, revive thy work in the midst of these years. Grant unto us quickening grace, and may we feel to appreciate the great blessings of which we are the recipients, and may our church privileges be made brighter, more endearing, more strong; and enable us by thy grace to be more faithful in the discharge of duty bound upon us. Remember that thy goodness extends not to us alone, but unto the excellent in all the earth, wherein is thy delight. Nothing can be added to thy glory, and nothing taken from it. But thy purpose, thy glory, thy majesty, and thy power, are manifested in thy church here upon thy footstool. O, that

in our hearts this morning, the undying song of praise might ascend unto thee, that our hearts might be attuned to praise thee in deed, and in truth. We remember that all our springs are in thee, both temporal, and spiritual. And as thou art calling away thy true, tried and faithful servants, who have long been in thy militant church, may we who remain, be filled with holy ardor to fill our places in the same, as the same may be made to appear unto us, fearless of the frowns of man, and regardless of his applause. And when we are criminated for the truth, and for strict adherence to thy written word, O heavenly lover, keep us from re-crimination. May we remember that thou hast said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. We would therefore bow in sweet submission to thy holy will, bearing the trials and toils of this life as becometh soldiers of the cross. May we remember that but a few more years at the most, shall have passed away, when we shall be dismissed from the warfare, and enter the glorious state of existence where the shafts of the enemy shall no more reach, where our vile, depraved natures can no more annoy, but where joys perpetual, and praise everlasting, await the ransomed church. O dear God, according to thy will remember all the families of affliction, where the angel of sorrow has recently mantled them in gloom. Great God, be unto them a present help, enabling them to realize that thou hast done it, and to remember that thou art too wise to err, too good to be unkind. And we implore thee, according to thy will, to be with, uphold and sustain, thy true, tried, called and faithful servants in this day of idealism, in this hour of delusion. May their bow abide in strength, and the arms of their hands be made strong by the hand of thee, the

Mighty God of Jacob. And now enable us to commit our all into thy faithful care. Be our God and guide, not only through the literal day, but through life's appointed journey, and when done with the scenes of earth, and we are called to exchange worlds, in the moment of expiring nature enable us to say, Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Savior, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

[THOSE who were accustomed to hearing Elder Purington, will remember well with what solemn awe and earnestness he would address the God whom he held in reverence, and loved. All we believe will read the above with solemn reverence. Prayer, with him, was not a mere form of words put together to catch the attention of men, and please their ears, but a solemn presentation before the Lord of the true feeling and desires of the heart. He could not approach to God with flippancy of expression, but felt that he stood on holy ground. Only the most solemn and sublime words, seemed to him appropriate at such a time. This was also true of his preaching. No one ever heard from his lips that which could bring a blush of shame to the face of any one. He believed that the profound and awful mysteries of the faith should be handled in a solemn manner. Whether in prayer, or in preaching, he felt that he stood before the Lord, rather than man, and he spoke as one who realized the divine presence.—ED.]

RIVER VIEW, Ala., May, 1898.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—The editorial in the SIGNS for May 15th, upon the text, "And be sure your sin will find you out," was peculiarly interesting to me, as my own mind had been considerably exercised with regard to the solemn import of

the same Scripture for the past few years. I have used the text myself on an occasion, though I never heard any one else use it. Three or four years since I was visiting some of the churches in this State, and at one church this text was presented to my mind, when the pastor in charge suggested for me to go forward. I told him I knew not what to do with it. But he told me to go on and use it, so I arose and announced the text, and it seemed that the very announcement of the text created a profound impression upon the audience, such as I have seldom seen. One brother who was present talked with me about it afterward several times. He also spoke with me about wrong things which he had done, and said that his sin had always found him out. It is also strange to me, at times, to note that the minds of the Lord's servants will run in the same channel, and that they are exercised experimentally about the same things, at the same time. I reckon that this is the fulfillment of prophecy, where it is said, "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Some of the things said in your editorial I have been preaching about recently. Only last Saturday I referred in my preaching to the passage in Revelation in the message to the church at Laodicea, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many

as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." I think that a case like this comes under the head of the text, "Be sure thy sin shall find thee out." Churches, as well as individuals, sin, and their sin finds them out. The whole world has sinned, as the responsible creatures of God, and their sin has found them out. Nations, kingdoms, rulers, families, churches, communities, cities, parents, children, husbands, wives and individuals, have all sinned, and sooner or later, in some way, their sin has found them out. Cain sinned, and his sin found him out. Likewise, Lamech sinned, and Saul sinned in pursuing David. David sinned in the case of Uriah and Bathsheba, and in other things. The children of Israel sinned; Joseph's brethren sinned; Eli the priest sinned; the Jews sinned in their hatred, persecution and crucifixion of Christ; Judas Iscariot sinned; Annanias and Sapphira sinned; and hundreds of others sinned, who are mentioned in the Bible. And of all it can be truly said, that their sin found them out. - In my own time I have seen the the truth of this solemn declaration verified often. I have seen men of the world sin, and then have seen their sin find them out. I have seen churches sin, and have seen them reap their reward, or their sin found them out. I have seen the same truth in the case of individual members, and in my own case I have learned this truth by bitter experience. I could mention numerous instances of Baptists who have come under my own observation, and could state the nature of the sin, and the results which have flowed out of it, but will forbear. But the most solemn thing of all is the irreversible truth, that a sin against our fellow man, or against our brother, is also a sin against God. It is a fact that

we cannot sin against our brother, without sinning against God. Just in that proportion that we love God, we will love his children, and *vice versa*. Just as we treat the children of God, do we treat the Lord, and we cannot serve the Lord separate and apart from his people. "By love serve one another." In serving the brethren, we serve the Lord; in loving the brethren, we love the Lord. What a close relationship! How important it is that we not only do right, but also in the right way, and at the right time.

I was just thinking to-day that perhaps I would write soon for publication in the SIGNS, but had no thought of writing this for that purpose. I will submit it for your judgment. I will now desist.

As ever, your brother in hope,

H. J. REDD.

[It is a great encouragement to find that the mind of our brother has run along in the same line as we have thought concerning this truth. We are glad of his suggestions, and accept them and indorse them. How good that when our sin finds us out there is a remedy. The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses from all sin.—ED.]

JANUARY 1, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN:—These Christmas times, we often sing,

"Hail the blest morn! when the great Mediator
Down from the mansions of glory descends;
Shepherds go worship the babe in the manger,
Lo, for his guard the bright angels attend!

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning," &c. This has led me to contemplate, and read about the morning spoken of in the Scripture. In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, he called the light day, and the darkness night, and the evening and the morning were the first day. So the darkness helps to make the twenty-four hours. For

many years I groped in thick darkness, but I remember one morning, in the year 1851, when Jesus was presented to me as the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. That was a morning without clouds, clear and shining after rain, but it was not many hours before clouds began to obscure my sky, and I feared that I was deceived. As I grow older I do not walk in the light as I then hoped to do, but am much in gloom, and often find myself repeating Newton's words,

"Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song."

Watts says,

"In darkest shades, if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun."

"Until the day break and the shadows flee away."—Sol. Song ii. 17. "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." The morning and evening seem filled with peculiar sweetness to me. "Lord thou givest us our changes for our good and delight." "In wisdom thou hast made all things." And David says, "His anger endureth but for a moment, in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "Lord, by thy favor thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled."

Being asked by a neighbor to go and hear her preacher, who was doing such a good work in leading sinners to Christ, I went. His text was, "Assurance." First they sang the dear old hymn, Come thou fount of every blessing, and then the preacher prayed, using the ninetieth Psalm for his prayer, and it sounded so good it made me glad to be there; but when the sermon came, it made me sad, for Jesus was not in that. He said Chris-

tians must not doubt, but say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and with David, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." And he quoted many other assurances. He said, I have not had a doubt since I first gave my heart to the Lord. I live upon the mountain top, and there is no use staying in the valley. He said, I asked the other night for all who felt sure of heaven to rise, and only very few of the members of this large church arose. I then asked all who have a desire to love Jesus, and dwell with him, to rise, and the whole church arose. My neighbor, as we walked home seemed very sad, and said, "I cannot have so much assurance as brother B. Sometimes I am very low in feeling, and doubt if I am one of the followers of Jesus. It was so with me, when he asked all who knew that they were christians to stand. I was afraid that I might be mistaken, yet hoped that Jesus might have mercy upon me." Then I told her that we were saved by hope, and hope that is seen is not hope. It is when we feel ourselves to be the chief of sinners, with Paul, that we look to Jesus as the friend of sinners. The Spirit calls upon all the children, and none can hear only those whose ears are opened for the glad tidings. The dear Master says, "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." So, you see that in the days of Jesus' flesh there were those who feared, and mourned on account of sin; who trembled at his word, and who cried for mercy, and who doubted also. And I said, you see our experience does not correspond with the minister's, but with Paul's.

Without me ye can do nothing. When he sends the Comforter the clouds are driven away.

"Tis midnight with my soul till he,
Bright morning star, bids darkness flee.
He is our everlasting hope;
By faith, as through a telescope,
We gaze and wonder and declare,
He is our soul's sweet morning star."

How sweet to know him as the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. How many nights have I watched beside my sick children, or other friends, when my heart would be almost breaking with anxiety and grief; then it would be such a comfort to think of Jesus knowing and sympathizing with my every sigh and groan. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." I held my dear mother in my arms during her last moments, and saw her great suffering, and was powerless to relieve her. It was hard to give her up, but when she was released from pain I was glad, and I could see the light of the eternal day settle down upon her precious countenance. Then I could say, with Isaiah, "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." Since all of our fathers and mothers are gathered home our church seems very small and weak, but we must lean upon our Beloved.

Solomon asks of the church, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" Luke says, "There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon 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." The Savior was born in the morning, and arose from the dead in the morning. The flowers are sweetest in the morning; they are beautiful with the morning dew. The birds sing sweetest then, and man, rested from his labors, goes cheerfully forth to his labor again. Every peaceful morning here, is but a promise of that morning of eternal day. Clouds and darkness will pass away from every heaven-born soul. Am I one of the innumerable company? Lord, thou knowest. Jesus is the bright and morning star. Then give him all the glory. Peace be with all that are in Christ Jesus.

MARTHA.

[How blessed it is to know that the darkness and the light are the same to him, in whom is no darkness at all, and who dwells in the light which no man can approach unto.—ED.]

PRINCETON, N. J., Feb. 15, 1898.

MRS. CARRIE E. MANNING—MY DEAR SISTER:—Several months since I received your very instructing and comforting letter. You call it a scribble, and cast it aside, and ask the mantle of charity thrown over its imperfections. If I know anything of the experience of the Lord's people, and of the gospel of the Son of God, as revealed in the Scriptures for their comfort and instruction in the truth, your communication clearly shows that you have been with Jesus, and learned of him. The Scripture quotations, references, and the application you make of them, shows divine teaching by the unerring Spirit of him who taught as never man taught. "And, as face answereth to face in water, so the Spirit witnesseth with our spirit," if we are born of God, and are heirs of God, to that inheritance

which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith, unto salvation.

Our journey through this wilderness world is oftentimes through clouds and darkness of mind, (which is often my lot), then how refreshing and comforting to read the communications of our brethren, whether they contain expressions of joy and gladness, or sorrow and affliction, as their daily experience; for the time is short, that the Lord's people do not pass through seasons of joy and sorrow. "Sorrow endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

You write of sweet meditation upon the different figures used in the Scriptures to represent the church of Christ, especially where the servant of the Lord has spoken of it as the city of the living God, and the abundant provision of all that is needful for the blest inhabitants of the holy city, and wondered if all those beautiful figures apply to the church in our time state or in the future.

In my early life, days of boyhood and Sunday School, I remember their teaching, that the revelation of Jesus Christ to his servant John in the Isle of Patmos, and the glorious figures contained therein of the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, pertaining to the heaven of immortal glory, and I heard ministers say that Revelations was too deep for them, and the grandeur and sublimity of the psalmists David and Isaiah, was too highly figurative for them to explain, all giving the same idea that they pertained to the heaven of everlasting rest.

The Scriptures clearly teach our complex being, natural and spiritual, and that this natural, sinful body, shall return to dust, but in the resurrection we shall come forth spiritual bodies, without sin

or corruption, "And, as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." But while we remain in the vale of this flesh we only see in part, and cannot cross the river dividing time from eternity, to contemplate the glories of the eternal world.

The Scriptures were written for the Lord's people, while in this vale of the flesh, for their comfort and instruction in righteousness, that they may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

And John, the servant of Jesus Christ, says, I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city hath 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. My dear sister, have we not in our measure experienced some little of the glory of the holy city, the church of the living God, and the blest inhabitants of that city, when by the grace of God we hope we were called from nature to grace, and from darkness to the marvelous light of the truth, and directed by the Spirit to the church, and the ordinances of the house of God, and saw those who had followed in the footsteps of Jesus, and become citizens of Zion? Did we not look upon them as the excellent of the earth, and did not their faces shine, and were to us, as the great company that John saw, who had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb? When we were permitted to enter the liquid tomb, and were buried in baptism, and arose to newness of life, did not the old heavens pass away, and all things become new? And when we realized that we were counted worthy by

our brethren to partake with them of the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of the dear Redeemer, did not our hearts exclaim, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints?"

The temple of Solomon was made with hands, but by the command of God. The tribes of Israel were directed to worship the Lord therein, and those that were far away were commanded to worship with their faces toward Jerusalem, reminding them of the temple, its grandeur and beauty, wherein was the ark, the mercy seat, the Cherubim and the presence of the Lord, which was designed to prefigure the temple not made with hands, which John saw coming down from God out of heaven; the spiritual temple of the living God, the new Jerusalem, of which God by his Spirit is the light, and his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who is the express image of his person, the bright and shining light; the glory and salvation of all the redeemed family of God, who are born not of blood, or the will of the flesh, but of God, who have seen the old heavens, the temple, with all its rights and ceremonies, and all legal worship, pass away, and through the Spirit and power of God saw the new heavens, the temple of the living God, in which dwelleth righteousness.

In moments when we have been carried by the Spirit above the transitory things of time and sense, and realized that it was the hand of the Lord that raised us up, and that we were in the Spirit, and it was the Lord's day with us, then we could say, Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

The exhortations of the Apostle Peter come forcibly to us. "Wherefore [in view of all that has been revealed to us] gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

"Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings." "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to former lusts in your ignorance. But as he which has called you is Holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." And "Sanctify the Lord God in our hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." Thereby keeping ourselves unspotted from the world, and washing our robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb.

My dear sister, I hope that you will not think I am so foolish as to attempt to write upon the deep and sublime subject that you speak of in your letter, for I feel in the darkness of my mind it would be presumption, but have written some of the thoughts that have been comforting to me in the solemn meditations of my heart, and if they are in accordance with the teachings of the Spirit, and your own experience, I trust they will be a comfort to you.

Your friends and brethren here are as usual. Sister Purington is better than she was some weeks since. She buried her brother in Camden a few weeks ago.

ELIJAH LEIGH.

P. S.—These thoughts were penciled some weeks ago, and I see by the last SIGNS that Elder Durand has an article pertaining to the same subject, but I will venture to mail this. If you find it is not in accordance with the truth and the light

which the Lord shows us upon it, you will please forget it, that it may do no harm. I will be glad to hear from you when you feel to write.

Your unworthy brother,

E. L.

ACTON, Texas, May 20, 1898.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—There are some thoughts upon my mind this morning, founded in holy writ, which are sweet to me, and to every regenerated child of God, when the Comforter comes and bears witness with our spirit. The words are these, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." O, what a blessed privilege to feel the testimony of our blessed Jesus, who gave himself for us, that we might become the sons of God! How glad I am this morning, as I humbly hope, to know that this knowledge can only come to us by revelation. There is no other power that can give to the poor, helpless sinner this knowledge but the power of God. Yet we hear it declared on every hand that sinners can believe, can accept Christ, can exercise faith, and can repent. Now if all this be so, then I am mistaken in my construction of the Scriptures. They teach as follows, For by the disobedience of one man, sin entered into the world, and by this one man's sin, which was Adam, our earthly head and representative, the whole human family was contaminated with sin. Now in order to know that we are the sons of God, Jesus must come with his mighty power to us, when we are dead in sins, and quicken us by the same mighty power, and reveal unto us our lost and ruined condition, which causes anxiety and trouble in our souls. We then see that we are sinners, and we go to work to extricate ourselves from this loathsome condition. We try to

pray. We try to believe. We try to have faith. But still there is no relief, and all looks dark and gloomy to us. But thanks to him who is our life, when all our efforts have failed, he comes as quick as lightning to our relief, and helps our unbelief, and makes peace in our souls. Then we can feel that Jesus has made us heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ. What a blessed thought, to know that the heirship can never be broken by all the powers of darkness combined. Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," and the voice of a stranger will they not follow, and they shall never perish. Furthermore, he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Then all those sons and daughters of Adam who were given to the Son, by the Father, in the covenant of redemption, before man was brought into existence as an earthly being, were his by covenant. Then we are the sons of God by covenant and redemption. Jesus paid the full redemption price. This redemption is made known only by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. Then it is certain that man has nothing to do with bringing himself into the family of the redeemed. Man has not any agency in bringing about his heirship in the earthly family to which he belongs.

But now, "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 time here will soon be ended, for here we have no continuing city, no abiding place, but we seek one to come. Many of the old soldiers of the cross, and defenders of the truth, have recently passed away beyond the river of death, and there are many more whose

time here draws near its end. I, for one, feel that my time here is but short. I am almost constantly in pain and affliction, but I want to be reconciled to all the dealings of my Master, for I believe that all things work together for good to them who love God, who are the called according to his purpose.

Now brethren, these remarks are imperfect, like myself, do with them as you deem best. If you publish them, correct all errors.

I am as ever, yours in affliction, and in the hope of immortality through Jesus Christ our Lord,

W. L. MCPHERSON,

DETROIT, Mich., July 2, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Would you kindly grant space in the SIGNS for the announcement of the safe arrival to our respective homes, of sister Errett and myself? So very many of the dear brethren and sisters requested me to write them, that I feel it impossible to comply individually, but by your permission, through the dear old SIGNS I desire to thank all the dear brethren and friends who so kindly and unselfishly entertained us during our sojourn among them. We were given a degree of health and strength, together with favorable weather, that enabled us to visit such associations as we had hoped to do before leaving home. We first attended the Frying Pan meeting, in Virginia, then went to the associations held at Harford, Md., Philadelphia, Pa., Hopewell, N. J., and New Vernon, N. Y. We were also favored to attend other precious meetings held between times, at Washington, Baltimore, Southampton and Middletown. This was my first visit to an association in the United States, and truly I was glad to be with you, and to hear the dear

ministers proclaim the same old truths, yet ever new, that I had occasionally heard in Canada, the land of my birth, from my youth until the present. I cannot say that all those sermons I heard were food for me, on the contrary I had many times to mourn my leanness, but occasionally in my extremity, when I was at the ends of the earth, as it were, I was favored, I hope, to feed upon things most precious. The kindness shown us by the dear ones was to me most touching, and I want to again thank them one and all for their goodness to one so sinful and unworthy. I should be glad to hear from any who might feel disposed to write me.

Your sister in hope,

FLO BLACK MACFARLANE.

ELIZABETH CITY, N. C., June 8, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I was requested by several brethren and sisters, while on my late tour among the eastern associations, to drop a few lines to the SIGNS, that they might hear from me.

I left home the 21st of April, and spent Saturday and fourth Sunday, and a part of the next week, with Elder Badger, among his churches in Virginia. Then I was with Elder White at several of his meetings in Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland. I visited the Baltimore, Washington and Black Rock churches, also the Baltimore and Delaware Associations. After the Delaware association, I visited the churches at Delmar, Del., and Salisbury, Md. I reached home Monday, May 30th, and found all well as usual, for which I hope I am thankful to the giver of all good. And I wish to say to the many dear ones whom I met on my trip, that I never enjoyed a visit anywhere better. I feel that they are my people, and their God,

my God. I could receive what I heard preached, as the blessed truth of our God, and most of the time it came to me with comfort, and so far as I know, they received what I was enabled to say in my feeble efforts to speak to them. I often feel that I am not worthy of such consideration as they showed me, yet I hope I am thankful to the great Head of the church, for all his kindness shown, for every good and perfect gift is from him. The third Sunday in May, I saw Elder White baptize three willing subjects, and much interest was manifested at all the places I visited, and I see no signs of the dear Old Baptists dying out. Several very young persons are members, and others show great concern. We are not to be alarmed because we are few, for though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.

Dear brethren and sisters, time and space will not allow me to mention all of you. Suffice it to say, I enjoyed you all, and if the Lord will, I shall be pleased to meet you all again, and I wish to be remembered by you all, that the blessed Jesus will ever keep me unto himself, and lead me in paths of righteousness, for his name's sake, for I know that without him I am nothing. At this writing my family are all up, some of them not very well. I hope you are all well and enjoying the presence of the Spirit of our God, who alone can comfort our hearts, and give us strength to love and serve him. Therefore, to his name be all the glory for our preservation in time, and for our eternal salvation, both now and forever. Amen.

J. T. ROWE.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

HENDLEY, Neb., June 12, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR FRIEND:—Will you please to give, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, your views upon the spiritual meaning of the words found in Genesis xix. 26, and oblige?

A FRIEND.

R E P L Y .

The words to which our friend calls attention are as follows: "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." Before beginning our remarks upon this sentence, we will call attention to the fact that the blessed Redeemer is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Luke, as referring to this narrative, and as enforcing his warnings to his disciples then, by the reference to it. In what we shall have to say concerning the text, we desire to also call attention to the use of it made by the Savior. We need not narrate the whole story recorded in this nineteenth chapter of Genesis, as it is familiar to all Bible readers, and as any one can turn to the narrative and read for themselves. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were devoted to destruction, for their great wickedness. Lot and his family dwelt in Sodom. Out of his divine compassion for them God had commanded Lot to depart from the devoted city, that he should not partake of her plagues, and her destruction. The right-

eous soul of Lot had been vexed at the wickedness of the city, as we are told elsewhere. Abraham, when told of the impending destruction of the city, had interceded for them before the Lord, and had received the promise that if ten righteous men could be found therein, the city should be spared. But when the angels of God had come to the city and tried it, there were not found even ten righteous men. The condition of the city with regard to its wickedness is plainly discovered by what they tried to do to the two angels. Even the sons-in-law of Lot were involved in the general iniquity which abounded; and even Lot was of such a worldly mind that he and his wife and daughters lingered, loath to leave such a pleasant home in the plain. But the Lord had such compassion upon them, that the angels laid hold upon their hands, and drew them out in haste. How sad it is that not only the world loves wickedness, but that the people of God themselves, so much love the ease and pleasures of the world, that they are slow to leave the evil land, and would still linger there, and though vexed with the evil conduct of the wicked, yet would continue to live in intimate association with them, were it not that the Lord has more compassion upon them, than they have upon themselves, and lays hold upon them and draws them out. Every believer has to confess with shame, his love of pleasure, and folly, and ease, and that nothing but sovereign grace has constrained him to go out from these things. Even though he can but vex his soul at all the wickedness of the world, yet he lingers near, finding that all the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, go after that which delights the wicked. Therefore he takes great shame to himself, and only praises grace which has saved him.

Even when his face is Zionward, and he steadfastly is minded to go forward, with sorrow and shame he finds a deceitful heart inclined to all the evil which he would leave behind. If he does not look back indeed, he finds a law in his members which constantly would induce him to look back. And so he cries out against himself, "I cannot do the good that I would." He feels that his best obedience is marred by the evil heart within him, which makes his service but partial, and nothing to be boasted of. While this is true of all the people of God, as they all will confess to their shame, and while each one feels to praise unfailling love and care, that they are still pressing on to the better land, and are still going out from the cities of the plain, to the mountains of God, yet it is sorrowfully true of some, that they are found, like Lot's wife, looking back.

First, we are told in the narrative that they lingered, even though that night they had had proof of how great the wickedness of the city was. That night Lot had interceded in vain for the safety of the guests whom the Lord had sent him. He had full proof that he had nothing in common with those among whom he dwelt. Yet his foolish heart was so enamored of the place, that he lingered. But let us not be found judging Lot, lest we judge also our own selves. We know that this world is not our home, that as believers we have nothing in common with it. It does not believe what we do; it does not love what we do; we have visitors which it does not, and for which it does not care, and it despises the heavenly guests, which have come to abide with us. O what a wretched heart that will still linger amid such scenes. How little, after all, we are weaned from the world. How much we

love it still. But by all this, how is the compassion and mercy of God toward us magnified. Surely there is nothing in us that can merit esteem, or give the Creator delight. Yet he loves us; he loves us without any reason that exists within ourselves. He loves us freely, and because he will. There is, there can be, no other reason. His is the only free love in the universe. How great was the mercy that could pardon the lingering of Lot, and lay hold upon the hands of him, and his, and draw them out, and hasten their going.

Second, we are told in the narrative that Lot still so much loved the cities of the plain that he could not bear to think of going to the mountains, to which he had been bidden to flee. We recall that when the land was before Abraham and Lot, to choose between them, there was so much of a worldly spirit in Lot, and so little of that which possessed Abraham, that he chose the plain where there appeared to be a prospect of an easy life, rather than submit the choice to God, and that Abraham took that country which Lot had rejected. And now, in the time of the destruction of the city, we find his heart lingering around these same pleasures. So he asked of the angels of God that they would not send him out to the mountains, lest he should meet some evil and die. There was a little city called Zoar, near by, and he asked that instead of departing to the mountain, he might turn aside there and abide. His heart was much in the world of wickedness yet. He could not give up all, and dwell in the mountains which God had chosen for him. How slow we are to learn that God's way is best. How much, even the best of those who love and serve God, live in the world. We excuse many things upon the ground that "it is such a

little one." We know and say that this world with all its glory, honor, fame, position and wealth, is doomed to destruction. At the best it can abide but for a little time. Still more, we confess that its cares, and pleasures, and ambitions, keep us from the enjoyment of the best, the everlasting things. Yet we are so wedded to it, that when we are bidden to flee to the mountains, where we shall be carried above the plain of this world, and which is our proper abode, we still cling to the world. We do not obey the injunction of the apostle in full measure when he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." On the contrary, we do set our affection on things below, and grovel in the earth. O how great the mercy of God, that we are not left to perish in Sodom, but are hastened out. Nothing describes the experience of us all, and the confession which we must make, better than the testimony of one who when asked, What part he had done in his salvation? said, "The Lord determined to save me, and I did all I could against it." There is not a foot of the road which has not witnessed a warfare. The flesh striving against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. How many little cities of the plain we dwell in. How many worldly things claim our affection, and our attention. How loath we are to leave the world. We do not mean how loath we are to die, as we must when the end of life's journey is reached, but how loath we are to be separated from the world in our love, and in our life, day by day. How often the deceitful heart says, "Is it not a little one?" And yet Lot disobeyed God in this thing. The little city was of the plain, as much as was Sodom. Ah, wretched, vile, deceitful

heart, that can still cling to what belongs to the world. In this city of the world, Lot found a snare, and through drunkenness was led into grievous sin with his daughters. And Moab and Ammon, deadly foes of Israel in all their history afterwards, were the fruits of this sin. Are not these things written for our learning, upon whom the ends of the world have come? O, that we might be shown the right way, and earnestly abide and walk in it.

In the third place, we are called to contemplate a still more open violation of the word of the Lord. They have been forbidden to look behind them. Permission had been granted to the weakness of Lot to turn aside into the little city, but no permission had been granted to look behind. If still there is a lingering in the world for a little, there is not to be a looking back. To look back would show that the heart was not in the matter of escape from the sin of the world, with its destruction. Lingering and turning aside into the little city, is from the weakness of the flesh, which the Lord pities, as a father pities his children, because he knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust; but to look back, while the angels of God are hastening us away, is the result of willful perverseness. There is, according to the testimony of the apostle, such a thing as sinning willfully, after we know the truth, and this is an altogether different thing from being overtaken in a fault. For this willful sinning there remains no more sacrifice, but on the contrary, "A certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." When Lot's wife looked back, it seems to us that her sin came under this head. There was no sacrifice for it. The chastisement must be inflicted, both to

vindicate the commandments of God, and as a warning to his people during all ages. So the Lord himself said to his disciples, "Remember Lot's wife." We believe that Lot's wife must represent one who truly belongs to the family of God, and it seems to us to be an undoubted truth that some of the Lord's own people do look back to the world of sin and folly from which they had escaped, and are engulfed in it, and become so much like the world, that the eye of man cannot tell the difference between them. But how glorious the consideration that, "The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." The Lord knows, if we do not. Lot's wife, looking back, was turned into a pillar of salt. In other words, she became like the world around her. In all the plain of Sodom, there rained down fire and brimstone, and the plain was incrustated with elements, which would not suffer any green thing to grow, and where nothing could live, of bird, or beast, or fish. Salt is the sure destruction of all where it falls. We use it to preserve meat, and other things, but we must remember that it does so through the destruction of all life, which would feed upon that which we wish to preserve. It preserves one thing by destroying other things. It is therefore primarily the agent of death and destruction. The region of the Dead Sea is to-day desolate, by reason of the exceeding saltiness of the sea, and of salt mingled in the land around. There is a solemn meaning then in the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. It signified that she had become filled with the elements of the world around her. She had so lived after the flesh that she had died. While she was so much of the world, no spiritual emotion or exercise could live in her.

In the Bible sense of the word she was dead. She was identified with the world around her. She stood as a monument of the evil of looking back to the world, and living after the flesh. In all ages of the history of the church, some who have once loved God, and his cause, have become enamored of the world so much that they have lost all spiritual interest in the things of the kingdom of God. They have wandered off so far as to never attend the ministry of the word, or upon the services of the sanctuary. They have lived in the company of carnal men, and have enjoyed the pleasures of the world, and have loved pleasure more than God. Some are in our mind as we write, of whom we believe this to be true. They are pillars, but not pillars of the truth. They are monuments, but not monuments of grace, so far as their daily life is concerned. When they shall be awakened to the knowledge of their sins, and their backslidings shall be healed, as they shall be some day, they will mourn, and will feel that none are such monuments of grace as are they. We may all, if the words of the Master are true, and of this we must not doubt, become pillars of salt. We may become monuments of God's anger against sin. We may sow to the world and reap corruption. We may so look back to the world that we shall become as the world, and none can see aught that differs from the world. The light within has not died; but it has become concealed. It has been put under a bushel. How terrible are the effects of sin. How much must Abraham have felt to praise that God who had given him such faith that he had not chosen the country of the plain. How great must have been his estimation of that grace which had kept him from looking back, when he was bidden to go out from his

own country, and from his own kin, to a land which he did not know of then, but which should afterwards be shown him. While Lot must have afterwards be-moaned his unbelief and half-heartedness, in the obedience which he had rendered to God. On the other hand, Abraham could not praise himself for his obedience, but must ever praise that grace which had wrought in him to the end that he might believe and render the obedience of faith. Sin has its wages, but obedience has no wages of eternal life, for this is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. If any of those who love and serve God, are now dwelling in the heavenly land that was promised to them through Jesus Christ, and dwelling there in peace, they cannot say it is because of their obedience. They must and do praise the sovereign grace of God, in it. This we know by experience. We have never felt that we could attribute any spiritual blessing which we had received to any merit of ours; but we have ever felt that when darkness and sorrow have been ours, we have deserved it all. We have had the wages of sin, but we have never found any wages of righteousness. Here all, all, is of grace. If we have in anything obeyed, while others have not, this we know is not to our credit, but to the praise of grace. From us then must all boasting be excluded. The peace and the obedience which leads to peace are alike to the praise of the glory of his grace. We repeat the words of the Savior, "Remember Lot's wife." We trust that in the hearts of many of our readers, he has spoken these words, and if not the very words themselves, yet the substance and meaning of them. It is noteworthy that when the Savior used these words, he was speaking also of destruction which should come upon the

people, as it had come upon Sodom. The hearts of men are not changed with the advancing centuries. Men are no better now than when Sodom was consumed. It is still true that the hearts of disciples are deceitful, and cling to the world, and so the blessed Master implies, when he bids the disciples learn from Lot's wife. For ourselves, and our readers, we could desire nothing better than that the lessons of this narrative might abide with us. O, that our separation from the world might be more complete. O, that the disposition of heart which would lead us to look back, might be so bound, and kept in subjection, that we might be daily, monuments of the grace which teaches us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present evil world.

When we began this article, we expected to write but briefly upon this matter, but the subject has enlarged, and we have written as it has been opened to us. We shall be compelled to leave some other things, of which we expected to write at this time, until a later date. The subject has been to us a very solemn one. We trust that it may not be wholly without profit to others.

C.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

CLOSE OF VOLUME XXIII.

WITH this number we close the labors of twenty-three years, and could we, in a retrospection of that period, find nothing to regret in our life and conversation, and especially in conducting the publication of our humble sheet, we might have just cause to rejoice, but not to glory, save in the cross of Christ, by which we are slain to this world, and the world is dead to us. Many and greatly diversified are the reflections which crowd upon our mind in writing this closing article for the year. The grave has closed upon nearly all those dear brethren who aided us in the commencement of our publication. Here and there we can recognize one who in 1831, encouraged us to embark in what was then considered a doubtful enterprise. Could another brother been found to undertake the work at that time, we certainly should have declined the responsibility; but, as some who are still living know, no such brother could then be found. All the forces of the New Schoolism were then drawn up in battle array against us. We were denounced in periodicals and associational minutes, in no measured terms, as a troubler of Israel; and what was still more disheartening to us, not a few of our brethren in fellowship, considered our undertaking wild and enthusiastic. But our heart was fully enlisted in the cause. We had seen the uncircumcised Philistines from day to day sending forth their giants of Gath, with helmets and spears, to defy the armies of the living God. Aliens to the commonwealth of Israel had seized upon our name, and claimed to be the Regular Baptists, whilst almost every peculiar trait of the primitive church was repudi-

ated by them. Multitudes of the saints had been either beguiled and led into an acquiescence, or intimidated to silent submission. God had however, as we afterwards were rejoiced to learn, reserved a goodly number in various parts of the country, of whom we had no knowledge at that time, who were trying to stem the torrent of corruptions which threatened to completely deluge our churches, and these, unapprised of the existence of each other, were boldly contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, but under very discouraging circumstances. But, notwithstanding the troublesome times when we put our first sheets to press, and all the opposition by which our course was resisted, we are greatly deceived if we have not been specially sustained by the all-supporting providence of God. Having enjoyed his favor we continue to the present time, and have increased cause to say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." We cannot, however, claim, even in view of the goodness of God which has followed us all our days, that our course in all things has been directed by that wisdom which cometh down from above—would to God it had been so; but alas! imperfection is plainly marked on all our performances. We are still in the flesh, and although to will is present with us, how to perform that which is good, we find not. In our editorial course our aim has been to make our labors subserve the best interest of the church of God, and to make our paper a medium of correspondence, edification and comfort, to the children of the kingdom. How far this desirable end has been accomplished, those who have read the SIGNS for the last twenty-three years, are the most competent judges. We have received the most gratifying assurances from thou-

sands of our patrons in the United States and elsewhere, that God has been pleased to make it a messenger of good news from a far country to their hearts. The thousands of letters from the scattered family of God, which in a general correspondence of almost a quarter of a century, has made us familiar with the names, and many of the religious exercises of brethren and sisters in the most remote parts of our wide spread country. It is peculiarly gratifying to know that while some have been disposed to unreasonably blame, censure and oppose us, the great body of the Old-fashioned Baptists in all parts of the world, have approved of our course. That we should be made use of by our heavenly Father, for the comfort and edification of the saints in any degree, is a source of profound gratification and devout thanksgiving to God. It is enough to live for, it is an abundant equivalent for all our labor, and for all the reproaches and persecutions we have been called to endure for the elect's sake.

Our prospects for the next volume, for aught we know to the contrary, are fully as flattering as they have ever been. The temporary commotion in some sections of the country, has not affected our circulation seriously. Indeed our circulation has been, and still is, constantly increasing. Our edition now is greater than it has ever before been. Had the assaults of our enemies been less malignant, they would, in all human probability, have proved far more disastrous to our circulation; but when we were denounced as an heretic, as an arian, and as a pestilent fellow, those who had been our constant readers for many years, were fully prepared to duly appreciate the design of our calumniators, and instead of withdrawing from our support, were rather

stimulated to make extra exertion to sustain the paper. It is a remarkable fact, that from the day we issued our proposals for printing the SIGNS, in 1831, to the present time, the efforts of our enemies to crush us, have invariably been overruled to favor us, and advance our subscription. We do not say this boastingly, but with humility of spirit, and with unfeigned gratitude to God; for well we know that none but God has power or wisdom to bring about such results.

Were it not that we have seen Dagan fall before the ark of the Lord, and the head of Goliath taken off by a stripling of Israel, we should feel dismayed at the unparalleled agitation of the world at the present time. The portentous clouds are gathering thickly, and the signs of the times literally seem ominous of evil. Nearly all the old world is involved in the most deadly wars that ages have witnessed. The Catholics and Protestants of Europe are fighting, shoulder to shoulder, to sustain the Mahometan interests of Turkey, against the Greek church; and multitudes on both sides, have been hurried from earth to meet their final destiny, by the hands of belligerent opponents. The nations of the earth tremble, and the thrones of many centuries seem tottering to their fall; but all are stimulated to drive on the warfare, under the infatuation that they are thereby supporting the cause of religion. But while we gaze with deep anxiety upon the turmoil of the nations of the earth, a deep anxiety heaves the breast of all who love the free institutions of our own beloved Republic. Not only are we liable to be drawn as a nation into the general strife of the nations which are now at war, but a want of harmony and good feeling among the people of our own country, and the states of this great con-

federacy, is painfully felt. The spirit of priestcraft and religious dominations, which was, with our pilgrim fathers, imported to this country in the Mayflower, has been striving for the accumulation of power ever since the landing of the pilgrims on Plymouth Rock in 1620; and at the present time, the extreme sections of our country are infected by it. Fanaticism has never stalked abroad more openly in our country than at the present moment. The clergy claim to be invested by heaven with all the rights to supervise the government of our states, that the Pope ever claimed, as the pretended Vicar of Almighty God, in the Catholic nations in the dark ages of papal persecution. They assume the right to dictate the peculiar policy of the state legislatures, and hurl their anathemas upon our Congress, if that body shall dare to construe the Constitution differently from their wild interpretations of it. They claim the right to judge the citizens of our commonwealth, in meats and drinks, in holy days, and holy times, in the instruction of our children, and in directing their future destiny. Factions and fusions are greatly multiplying among us, and some are sworn to proscribe their neighbors on account of their religious preferences and places of their nativity. The want of harmony in our national councils at this moment threatens to paralyze our government. But still, above the din of war, the strife of nations, the conflict of religious and political partisans, and above the confusion and abounding iniquities of our own land, the voice of Zion's glorious King is heard by all his loyal subjects, proclaiming, "My kingdom is not of this world;" and commanding them to "render unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's, and unto God the things that be God's."

While such is the distracted state of

the affairs of the world, it is truly lamentable that even of our own selves, some have arisen up with the manifest design to draw away disciples after them. Temporary and momentary agitation has been to some small extent produced in some of our churches. What may be effected by the part which our brethren may take in the strife which rages without the walls of Zion, is impossible for us, with any certainty, to predict; but we firmly believe that those aspiring spirits who have had a name among us, will soon find a more congenial element, in the ranks of our common enemies.

Under this state of things we are about to commence our twenty-fourth volume. How fearful would be the undertaking if we did not confide in God. He rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth. The winds, the tempests and the seas respect his power, and obey his sovereign voice. With his approval we are safe against all odds; and against his approval we desire not to take the first step. Better for us to yield up our paper, and our life, than be engaged in dissemination of error. But with an humble yet confident reliance on that almighty arm that has ever held us, we shall, if the Lord please, issue the first number of our forthcoming volume about the first of January, 1856. In these agitating times we shall need more prudence and wisdom to guide, and grace to sustain, than in any former volume of our labors. We therefore desire the prayers of the saints, and the cordial cooperation of our brethren. It shall be our care to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace; and to admit nothing into our columns that, in our judgment, is not calculated to edify and build up the saints. If we lift the warning voice, it shall not be to disturb the peace of

Zion, but to give warning of danger. And should we mistake any of the signs of the times, we shall gratefully acknowledge the kindness of brethren who may point out to us the more excellent way. The doctrine hitherto contended for by us will be strictly adhered to, so far as the Lord shall give ability.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Dec. 15, 1855.

A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.

AT this season of the year the work in our office falls off nearly one-half, and in order to keep our hands employed, we will, for the next three months, do small jobs of work, from the printing of a few copies of favorite pieces of poetry, to publishing small pamphlets, at actual cost. If you have any little jobs of printing, now is your time to send it on. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SON.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

VIEWS WANTED.

WILL some brother give his views upon Elijah xiii. 6, to the end of the chapter? Sister Rebecca Harris, of Hudsonville, Miss., has requested us to write upon this subject, but we do not feel that we have sufficient light to respond. We wish to say that we have not time nor space to reply to one-half the requests of this kind which we receive. We trust that those who have sent requests which have not been answered, will not think hard of us. Lack of understanding, and want of space in the SIGNS, often hinder us from trying to comply with such requests.—ED.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER Wm. R. Welborn having changed his address from State Road, N. C., to Mecca, N. C., desires his correspondents to address him at the latter place.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., on Saturday p. m., June 11th, 1898, Richard M. Rittenhouse and Mrs. Hannah Rider, both of Locktown, N. J.

By the same, at the bride's residence, on Wednesday p. m., June 22d, 1898, David H. Moore, of Stontsburg, N. J., and Miss Eva C. Blackwell, of Hopewell, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—June 6th, 1898, **T. J. Harvill**, of Totty's Bend, Tenn., aged nearly 77 years. He was born June 19th, 1821. He had been preaching thirty years.

J. P. HARVILL.

NASHVILLE, Tennessee.

MY dear husband, **Monroe Larkins**, departed this life April 11th, 1897, at his home near Meadowbrook, Oregon. He was born Jan. 4th, 1818, in Perry Co., Ohio, and moved to Illinois with his parents when young. He was twice married. His first wife's name was Elizabeth V. Glenn. They had ten children, four of them now living. She died March 1st, 1868. In 1874 he was married to Grace D. Williams, who with one invalid child, survives him. He had been a member of the Old School Baptist church, and a subscriber to the SIGNS, for many years.

Yours in much sorrow,

GRACE D. LARKINS.

MEADOWBROOK, Oregon.

DEPARTED this life, May 20th, 1898, our beloved and aged sister, **Mrs. Emeline Webber**, whose death occurred at the home of her only son, B. F. Webber, of Troy, Pa. Deceased was born in Columbia, Pa., Oct. 18th, 1815. Was the daughter of Deacon David R. and Lucinda Beaman Harwell. Her father, and Elder Joseph Beaman, who were relatives, emigrated from Vermont about the year 1808, and settled in Columbia township, the land at that time being covered with an almost unbroken forest. April 27th, 1837, she was married to Ira Webber, whose death occurred on April 25th, 1868, the fruit of this union being three children, nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. The son at whose home she died is the only surviving child. After the death of her daughter, and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Levi Preston, she for a time assumed the care of their family, thus manifesting the instinct of true motherly affection. In June, 1843, Mrs. Webber professed publicly her faith in Christ, and was baptized into membership of the Columbia Old School Baptist church, by her uncle, the late Elder Joseph Beaman. She was a woman of deep christian experience, and stainless life, ever performing her christian duty with an untiring

zeal. Her seat in our meetings was never vacant when her health would admit of her presence. It was my privilege to visit her during the winter. Though feeble in health, yet her faith in her Savior was strong, and I fully realized it might be our last visit, yet I hoped she might be spared to visit us many times more; but the Lord has seen fit to call her home, and we know our loss is her gain.

The funeral was held from the home where she died. As no minister of her faith and order was within convenient distance, Mr. T. Mitchel, an old time friend of the family, officiated, assisted by Mr. F. A. Martin. Text, Rev. xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." The interment took place at Aspinwall, Pa.

AUGUSTA J. VERMILYA.

Mary Emily Perdue departed this life June 28th, 1898; born May 2d, 1857; baptized by the writer, July 3d, 1881. Her sickness was of three weeks' duration, breaking down of the bowels, which took place at brother John Warner's, near Berlin, Md., where she had all the attention that willing hands and hearts could administer, but the word of the Lord must be obeyed. Sister Mary was one of the sweet singers of Israel, well versed in the Scriptures, conversed well on the experience of the saints. She was fatherless and motherless, only as she found them in the church. She was an invalid from a child, could just move around. She often said that all the enjoyment that she had in this life was in listening to the preaching, and mingling with the brethren. She missed very few of the meetings. The brethren were very kind to her. We feel to say, that in her hope and in her death, the Lord has wrought a good work, for we do sincerely believe that her change is a blessed one, where lowness and weakness are felt no more.

Her remains were taken to Forest Grove, where Elder Meredith preached to the people, and they then laid her away in the cemetery at that place, to await the summons from on high.

Three members have fallen from the ranks of the Indiantown church this year. Mary leaves two uncles and two aunts behind, with the church, to mourn for her.

T. M. POULSON.

Mrs. Julian Goyne died May 14th, 1898, aged 78 years. She was the wife of W. J. Goyne, for many years a member and deacon of Ebenezer church, of the Primitive Baptists, Ashley Co., Ark., but for the last few years of Ephesus church, Drew Co., Ark., who still survives her. She was the mother of six children, of which five are living. She was living with her daughter, sister John Goyne, when she died. She was born in Washington Co., Ga., in 1819. Her father and mother, John and Judieth Toupeo, moved to Houston Co., Ga., when she was quite young. She

was married in 1840. They were united to the Primitive Baptist church in October, 1843. The beloved sister walked a christian life, and was truly a mother in Israel. There has been but few that have excelled her in going to meetings, in so frail a body as her's was. I have known her since 1883 or 1884, and scarcely at any time has she failed to be at her monthly meetings, or to the Association. She was ever ready to administer to the wants of her brethren and sisters. On Saturday before the fourth Sunday in April, she was too feeble to be at meeting, as she had been very low during the winter, but seemed to be in good spirits then, being able to sit up in a chair and talk to us. For her sake, her son-in-law, Elder G. W. Coldwell, and the writer, tried in our feeble way to talk to those present at brother John Goyne's, which was the last preaching she was permitted to hear. She was still sound in the faith, and seemed cheerful and without a murmur. Our desire is that we may be found as faithful unto the end, and that the same God that kept her, will also keep us. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS for over forty years, and truly it was received by her as a welcome message.

J. H. BLYTHE.

MONTICELLO, Ark., July 3, 1898.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Des Moines River Association of Primitive Baptists will meet with Linn Creek (Oak Grove) church, six miles northwest of Mt. Pleasant, Henry Co., Iowa, at 10 o'clock a. m., on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1898, and two following days, August 20th, 21st and 22d, 1898.

Trains will be met at station in Mt. Pleasant, on Friday evening and Saturday morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, especially ministers, and all lovers of truth. This is the oldest association in the State, and the next session may possibly be the last, for reasons which cannot well be given in this connection.

I. T. FLINT, Moderator.

M. W. BYRAM, Clerk.

KAW RIVER Association will meet, if the Lord will, August 27th, 1898, on the Boulevard, South World Rest Park.

The time of the association has been changed from the second to the fourth Saturday in August, 1898.

D. SAYERS, Moderator.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet, the Lord willing, with the New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Wednesday, August 31st, 1898, and the two following days.

Those coming from the south will stop at Avon, while those coming from the north will stop at St.

Augustine, on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. Railroad. Those coming from the west will stop at Roseville, of the R. Island Branch of the same road, where teams will be in waiting on Wednesday morning of the Association, and Tuesday evening before.

All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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G. BEEBE'S SON,

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1898. NO. 16.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HERRICK, Pa., July 7, 1898.

MR. BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE:—The inclosed letter from a youthful sister in Christ has been read by me with tender interest, and I have asked that I may share it with our dear kindred who read the SIGNS. I will give a portion of our dear sister's reply.

“I was certainly glad to hear from you, but greatly surprised and humbled in regard to my letter. If you think it will be a comfort to any of the weak ones, I do not feel to withhold it, as I have often been comforted and strengthened by reading some of the experiences of the Lord's people. I have been dark and cast down for some time past, and barren of anything that is spiritual, until Monday afternoon, when Elder White preached such a wonderful sermon. While listening to him I felt to be raised above the things of time and sense, and was again made to realize the blessedness of heavenly things. His text was from the first part of the tenth chapter of John. I was sweetly led back to the time when I first heard that voice which gave me peace

that passeth all understanding. But few and short are such seasons with me.”

I am sure this sweet story of her young life will find a response in many hearts, and especially will it be of interest to those who know her, and who were so delighted with the experience of her mother, (sister Drake) which lately appeared in your columns. What can stir the soul to its very depths like reading or hearing of the Lord's work in the hearts of his people, how he brings the blind in a way they knew not, making darkness light before them, and crooked things straight? How he exalts the valleys, and makes low the mountains and hills? Such mysteries are beyond the reach of finite minds, and can only be fathomed by him whose way is in the deep, and whose footsteps are not known. What wonder must have filled the minds of that company on the banks of the great deep, when they saw the waters divide, making a path for them through the sea. Dismayed a little before at the approaching enemy, now they could sing, “The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, he is my strength and my song, and has become my salvation. Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises,

doing wonders?" Thus do poor sinners feel when they realize that an unseen hand has blotted out their transgressions, and covered all their sins. Well do I remember when the supreme excellence of these things first dawned upon me, and I hailed the messenger of truth with delight. As the time drew near when the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was due, I grew anxious, and as the mail appeared on a distant hill that would bring it to our door, I found my heart thrilling with glad emotion. The paper of my choice was soon unfolded, and eagerly scanned. Often seeing my own thoughts expressed in the language of another would cause a great nearness of soul to some I had never met. In reading how one has been brought from gloom to gladness, and from the power of sin to holiness, there seems to be an electric chord touched that vibrates from soul to soul. At times I would pause at the address, "Dear Brother Beebe," as these words conveyed to my mind a great brotherhood, extending to the ends of the earth, a hidden tie binding kindred spirits, a golden chain of love uniting and cementing those of like precious faith. These sweet and wonderful things carried my mind into many avenues of thought, indeed it seemed for a time that they enveloped my whole being, so that it was with a kind of surprise that I saw people engaged in other subjects. I wondered how there could be room in the world for anything but kindness and love, union and sweet fellowship, for,

"Jesus all the day long
Was my joy and my song."

Many whose comforting and instructive epistles of love were read at that time, with so much enjoyment, have passed beyond the hope of which they so sweetly wrote, into its full fruition. They have

laid down the pen for the golden harp of praise. Mourning hearts and vacant places are left, and O how many sorrowful ones who "Long for the touch of a vanished hand, and listen for a voice that is still." But that blessed restorer, faith, points away from the broken home, to a home of bliss, from the church on earth, where, sad truth, sometimes discord enters, to the church triumphant, where there is no jarring note, but where all is harmony and peace, and

"Where every power finds sweet employ,
In that eternal world of joy."

Coming out of "great tribulation," they are clothed in white robes, bearing palms of victory, and echoing praises to their exalted King. "Blessing and glory and honor and power unto him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." But the earth is not left without witnesses; there are still those who testify of the same precious truths, and those who continue to tell the old, old story, of Jesus and his love. In the ministry but few fathers are left, and to these the churches cling with loving reverence. We always hold more closely the treasures that we fear are passing from us. There are others who in full strength are by an unseen power preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, and telling of him who shall be a "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 with instruction from on high they are comforting the poor in Zion with good tidings, saying, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom." I realized something of what I am speaking while attending the recent associations in Philadelphia and at Hopewell. Others also are being raised

up and manifested in this high and holy calling, both learned men and fishermen, all by the same power, which is not according to the wisdom of this world. O how blest are they who know this joyful sound.

I am now visiting at my nephew's, in our old home. He and his wife are members of the Lord's household on earth, to whom it is said, "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The SIGNS are still a welcome messenger here, where my father took them from almost the first volume, and where I first opened my eyes upon this fading scene, and if I am not mistaken, where the Sun of righteousness first dawned upon my soul, and my affections were fastened to things unfading. My way then appeared as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Since those early seasons of which I have spoken, I have passed through many changes, and walked much by night, when no light appeared, not even a glimmering star. Sometimes the stormy billows have come with threatening and overwhelming force, wringing the cry out of the depths, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I," and peace has again been spoken to the troubled waves; at times a peace that flowed like a river, causing a carefulness to walk softly, lest I should go astray again. The Lord has ever been faithful to his promises, and notwithstanding my base ingratitude and lack of submission to his holy will, he has showered blessings upon me of which I am all unworthy, and I still desire to magnify his name, and through evil as well as good report, to be a true follower of him who was meek and lowly in heart, and though so far from realizing this desire, I feel that to possess it is a blessing.

I just laid down my pen to read letters from my brother, and sister Clarice, who have returned in safety from Canada, having had a pleasant journey and satisfactory meetings. They reached Otego in time to attend the meeting there last Saturday and Sunday, and I am delighted to learn that brother Bundy has so far recovered as to be able to be there, and join in public worship again. How good the Lord is! "O that men would praise his name for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." I send a greeting of love to your dear wife, and to all of our Father's family, and household.

Affectionately your sister,

BESSIE DURAND.

GLENMORE, N. J., May 8, 1898.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I feel my unworthiness to write to one so rich in spiritual things; but Peter says we should at all times be ready to give the reason of the hope within us. I have never forgotten the time when you spoke so kindly to me at the association at Southampton, seven years ago, about these things, and I have ever since felt I would like to see you, and talk with you about it. I will now try to tell you what has, I hope, been the Lord's dealings with me from that time. I was then very much troubled in my mind, and felt myself to be such a great sinner in the sight of God I could not ask for a home with his people, to whom my heart was so greatly drawn. This feeling gradually left me, and I grew so worldly minded, and it seemed I wandered so far away from the Lord that he could never be gracious to me. But for his restraining hand I should have gone farther and farther away. Now I desire to praise his dear name for bring-

ing me into his fold, where I can commune with his people.

When about twelve years of age, I united with the Presbyterian church, but never felt satisfied with myself. I was told to pray for a new heart, and did try to pray, yet with a feeling that my prayer went no higher than my head. But I joined the church, as I felt it a duty to do so, yet how wrong it was. I knew I loved worldly things, as I grew up partaking in the pleasures and vanities of this life. I had not then ever heard an Old School Baptist preach, and had always been taught to despise them, and when my mother united with them I felt so badly, and thought our friends would look down on her and us, for we all belonged to the Presbyterian church. But thanks be unto God, how soon I felt differently. How good they seemed to me, and I hope I was given a hearing ear and an understanding heart. How like a hypocrite I felt to meet with them, and would take a seat where they could not see how badly I felt. I was in this condition for five years, without any hope or comfort. I used to think I would go back to the Presbyterians, yet when I did go for a Sunday or two I would find no food in their preaching; all my love was for those I felt to be the Lord's people, yet it seemed I was deceiving them even to meet with them in their solemn assemblies. The spring I was baptized I passed through a season of great darkness of mind. No one can tell what I suffered, for I had a strong desire to be with the Lord's people, but could not see my way clear to become a member. How well I remember the time when these words came to me, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Then something said, "You only imagined it," and I felt as badly as ever. I would go to bed, but not to sleep, for

my troubles were so great. Soon after this I trust the Lord spoke peace to my soul in these words, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I was then made to rejoice. I felt that my feet were placed on a rock, and I could sing praises to the Most High. "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I went to meeting and heard Elder Chick. Every word seemed for me, but before the next meeting came around I was doubting again, but these words were with me, "Perfect love casteth out fear." I came to the church with much fear and trembling, and wondered how they could receive me. I have small evidence that I am a child of God, and know so little of these things. Many without the fold know much more. The day I was baptized was very peaceful, but alas, how soon the tempter came. I was reading an experience that was wonderful, and the thought came, "You have deceived the church," and for a time I was greatly troubled; but the Lord was again merciful in removing that trouble. Most of my time has been through doubts and fears, and I often have to mourn a heart of unbelief. But I have been made to feel that the Lord knows what is best for me; that as he has strengthened and sustained me in the past, he will not forget me in the future. I will close lest I weary you.

From one who is the least of all,

KATE M. BLACKWELL.

NEW MARTINSVILLE, W. Va., Jan. 17, 1898.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—You will please pardon the liberty which I take in addressing you. When I first read your dear epistle of love to the saints under the head of "Fragments," in the SIGNS of Dec. 1st,

1897, I felt deeply impressed to write to you, but fearing that the impression might not be of the Lord, and that it might be wrong to bother you with my imperfect scribble, I thought I would not yield to the impression, but I have read it again and again, and each time with so much comfort and satisfaction, and with an ardent desire to write to you, and try to tell you something of the comfort and help that they have been to me, so this morning I have laid down the paper for that purpose, and do hope that if there comes no good out of writing this, there may be no harm. I cannot find words to express my feelings of deep gratitude while reading those sweet fragments. Surely they came in a time of great need, and found lodgment in my aching heart. It pleased the dear Lord, as it seems, to bless them to my comfort, and I doubt not to the comfort of many of the tried little ones. Your words seem to be such as come from the depths of the heart, and they seem to be my own experience, and they tell my feelings so much better than I can tell them myself. What a comfort it is, when the soul is cast down and deeply tried, to feel that others of the Lord's dear children, even those whom he has called and qualified to preach his gospel to feed and comfort his flock, sometimes have the same trials. Not that I rejoice simply because they too are tried, but because it gives me hope for myself to know that I am not alone in suffering. It seems to me that there is no deep soul trouble of which I have not tasted. Many times I have been made to exclaim with the psalmist, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Much of the time, for the past few months, I have been so cast down, so deeply tried, and it has seemed, just on the border of despair, with no

strength, no power to move or to relieve myself, though I have struggled hard to get rid of such feelings. Truly the Lord only can save; he alone can deliver from such deep soul trouble. True, there is it seems, a cause for this grief. I have many sore trials and conflicts along this rugged journey, of which I cannot now speak. I am now wholly deprived of church privileges, and association with the dear kindred in Christ, which privileges have long been very dear to me. But still, for all this bitterness I would not grieve, but the things I would not, I do. I would feel reconciled to all my lot, but the things I would, I do not. O, how I do long to get away from this bondage of sin. How I feel to loathe myself on account of my weakness. I seem to be hedged on every side, and utterly powerless to free myself. How very restful it is to be able to say, "Thy will be done," and also to feel a willingness come into our hearts to commit our way unto the Lord. But at present I cannot even claim this, though in times past I think I have sometimes felt this blessed reconciliation, and O, how I long and groan to feel it again. I can say with you, I have tried hard at times, to rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, and have sometimes thought that I was resting in him, only to find myself mistaken, and disappointed, for there was no rest, no felt assurance of the casting of my care upon him. Truly we do feel very far from him at such times. I do desire, or think I do, to forsake all, give up all my will, take up my cross daily, and follow him, and yet do not know how to do so. When the enemy seems too strong, and the waves too deep, and the burden greater than we can bear, we are apt to want our own way, and can only ask that it be removed. But does not this show

an unwillingness to suffer? We surely ought to be reconciled to all our lot, feeling the sweet assurance that the Lord of love, and power, and wisdom, has appointed it all, and overrules all things. But with shame I must confess that I do not at all times feel reconciled. This has caused me more distress of mind perhaps than any other thing. Can you, my dear brother, tell me what to do? I have always found much comfort in the assurance that all things work together for good for the Lord's children, and that even the afflictions and sufferings of his people, are embraced in this. But now, and for the past few months, I have not been able to embrace this sweet assurance, as I desire to, and have been much distressed on account of it. I do not think that I have felt to doubt for one moment the sovereignty of God, but it seems to be suggested that my suffering is of an earthly nature, and that the Lord has nothing to do with it. Are not the wicked sometimes used in the hand of God as a tool to afflict his people? Are not all their afflictions, of whatever nature and kind, for their good? Then the question comes, What assurance have I, that I am one of that highly favored people? I would be glad indeed to read something more from your pen in this line, but I feel that it would be too much to ask you to write to me, or for me, through the SIGNS, but I hope that you will continue to favor us with those fragments, and thus comfort many others as well as myself. I had the pleasure of meeting you and hearing you preach several times while my home was in Washington city, but do not suppose that you remember me. I also met you at the Baltimore Association, and heard you with much comfort. We came here last August, and I have not heard a sermon

since. There are no Old Baptists in or near our town. Religiously, I am very lonely indeed, though surrounded with professors of religion. My oldest daughter is a member with me, but she is in Washington city. I think you understand something of my situation. How I do long for home, and friends, and rest, and for my former associations with the Baptist people. What sweetness there is in the two little words, home and rest. But this is not home. I think I have learned, at least in measure, the meaning of the words, "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Most of all things, I want to be willing to suffer, to lay my body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over, (Isaiah li. 23,) and to be able to say with felt confidence in the Lord, as my guide, "Thy will be done." Remember me at a throne of grace. Kindly excuse me if I have intruded upon your time, and for the liberty I have taken in writing this. I am very imperfect.

Yours in much tribulation,

ARAH ALDERTON.

HERNDON, Va., June 9, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I think I see some comfort this morning in the following language, found in the book of Malachi, which reads as follows, "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."

I have often felt that I would be so glad if I could write and talk like my brethren, and like those who write for the dear old SIGNS, but when I come to view myself, I feel to be less than the least of them all. Still when I come to

look back over my past life, and see what a wonderful way the good Lord has led me in, I am made to praise his holy name for remembering a poor worm of the dust, as I feel myself to be. Sometimes I meet with brethren who tell me that if they felt to be as good as they think I am, they would feel better satisfied with themselves. O, I can only say to them, if they could only see me as I see myself, they would surely change their minds, for I can say of a truth, that I esteem them all much better than I feel myself to be, for I do realize more and more, every day of my life, the corruption of my flesh, and must say in the language of the apostle, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." The older I get, the more I can see that which is holy in my brethren, but cannot see it in myself. I feel many times that I stand as one alone, outside of the fold of God, and separate from my brethren, as I call them. As the poet has said,

"Like one alone I seem to be,
O, is there any one like me?"

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" is almost my daily cry. Still, I do believe that this is the cry of every heaven-born child, when quickened by the holy Spirit of God. They can see then that there is nothing good in the flesh. Hence then, we feel that it is pleasant for brethren to speak often one to another, about these things, and tell how poor and destitute they feel, when left to themselves. They are made to fear and tremble, still they want to tell their brethren just how they feel. They must all speak the same language, else there would be no comfort in it. They must all be taught of the Lord, and they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest. They are taught to

know that without Jesus they can do nothing. The Arminian world is continually telling the people how much they are doing for the Lord, in saving souls from eternal death, but God's people are always telling how much the Lord has done for them, and what he has done is done forever. No room left now for man to work, for we hear the great apostle say, "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." Thus we see, when we give all the glory to him who has brought us out of darkness into his marvelous light, it is pleasing in his sight.

"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." This book was written for them that feared him, that thought upon his name. When each and every child of grace is brought to the knowledge to fear him, it is indeed wisdom given them from above. As it is written, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." This wisdom and knowledge has to be given them from above, from the Father of light. "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." They see Jesus then as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. They see him the chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. He is mine and I am his. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like

as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Dear brethren, I do believe that this book of remembrance will exist as long as time shall endure. It can never be destroyed. I am often reminded of sweet seasons of rejoicing with the brethren in years gone by. It is a sweet book of remembrance to me now, even in the darkest hours of my life. In the silent watches of the night these things can never be forgotten by me. O, the name of Jesus! Just to think upon his name. "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." It was said to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." How sweet and precious is his name in every believer's ear. As the poet expresses it,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrow, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

But O! dear brethren, while I write these things I tremble and quake, for I feel to be so backward in doing my Master's will. I am at the end of the earth. I have no confidence in the flesh. I want to rejoice in Christ Jesus. I want to claim him as my all and in all. I want to have the fellowship of God's people, though I am a poor, weak, ignorant creature, not worthy to be numbered with God's little ones.

Dear brethren editors, I send this to you to do with it as you think best. I will love you all the same if I never see it in print.

From a poor, weak sinner,
JOHN F. OLIVER.

MANSFIELD, W. Va., March 29, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—
DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find a letter written to me by a brother,

which has been very comforting and encouraging to me, and to others who have read it. Will you kindly give it place in the SIGNS? It may prove of great comfort to many of the readers. I have much enjoyed reading the SIGNS, and cannot think of doing without them. They are a great comfort to me. They come to me as a bearer of good news from a far country.

Your little, unworthy sister, if one at all, in hope of eternal life,

IVY A. WOOLFORD.

CATTAIL, Va., August, 1897.

MY DEAR SISTER IVA A. WOOLFORD:—Your kind, welcome and interesting letter, is at hand. To end right we must begin right. But the important question with me is, How shall I begin right? This must be by not trusting in myself for wisdom, but write to you trusting in the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord. So I would humbly beseech the Lord in the name, and for the sake of his holy child Jesus, to give me faith to ask for wisdom from him in whom there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. For he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and he changes not. Now the word of the promise has come to me with so much force that I feel that I can rely upon it. The word which has come to poor, sinful me is, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." Dear sister, you and all others can have this kind of wisdom only by asking in faith, for saith the word of the Lord, "Without faith it is impossible to please him," and you know that you, and all the rest of his dearly beloved people, who have, as they hope, felt their sins forgiven, and have been made to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory,

would rather please God, than all the world beside. What are worldly honors compared to the King of glory? Why, my dear sister, they are nothing in comparison with him. The wisdom of this world passes away like a vapor that appears for a little while, and then vanishes away and is gone. But the wisdom which God gives to his people is enduring, and has no end, because it comes down from him who is possessed of all wisdom, and all power, all glory and all honor. Now I hope that this is the kind of wisdom which you and I have. I trust that I am one for whom the holy child Jesus died, and for whom he overcame death, hell and the grave, and that he arose for my justification, and not for mine only, but also for all his elect people. I do desire this wisdom, that I may write and speak to the comfort of his children? But how are we to know that our petition is granted to us? The answer comes from God to that one, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Such an one desires things which he once despised; such an one has been born again; he trusts no more in his own works for salvation, his legal works are all dead. They know that they have passed from death unto life, because they now love the brethren, whom they once hated, and they love the doctrine which the Lord commands his people to contend for. Yea, blessed are you when you hunger and thirst after righteousness, for his word says you shall be filled. The wisdom which you have hungered for, has been granted you from above, for the letter which you wrote me was the kind of wisdom, or food, for which you hungered. Such food is meat and drink to my soul. Yours was a good letter, for it gave God all the glory, and to him all the glory, honor and dominion belongs.

He is ever mindful of us; he neither slumbers nor sleeps. His all-seeing eye watches over us. He is true to his promises, and his promises to his people are precious. You have always found him a precious Savior. He has never left you nor forsaken you. In every trial he has given you strength to bear it. He has made a way for your escape. Of late I met with a special temptation, but thanks to our great Deliverer, he made a way for my escape. Christ Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, and so he knows just how to deliver them who are tempted. O, what a kind and precious Savior he is! He throws his arms around us, and shields us from all harm, and from the adversary, who would gladly devour us. Not a single shaft can hit us unless the God of love sees fit. You spoke of my letter being comforting to you, and to many others, and said that your father indorsed it. I am glad for your sake and theirs, that it contained the truth as it is in Jesus, for nothing else can do helpless sinners good. His name is Jesus, and he shall save his people from their sins. They are not saved in their sins, but from their sins. The world by wisdom knows not God. The wisdom of God is foolishness to the world. Therefore they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for all, by revelation, shall know him, from the least to the greatest. All who feel the weakest and most unworthy, including yourself, and those with you, of whom you have written, shall see him, as well as those who may be called the greatest, or highest. It is by faith alone that any one can know him as the Savior of lost, helpless and guilty sinners. The word of God says, that his Son was sent from the world of glory, where he dwelt with the

Father before the world began, and came down to earth, and was born of the Virgin Mary, that he might live, suffer, die and rise again, to redeem the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Israel of old was the type, and the spiritual Israel is the antitype. The type fits the antitype. The Lord chastized Israel of old for their transgressions, and so he says to us now, "Whom the Lord loves he chastens," and, "If ye be without chastisement, of which all are partakers, ye are bastards and not sons." In this you have an evidence that you are a child of God. You say that you hate your sinful ways, and you cry,

"O heal my backslidings,
O speak the glad tidings,
That thou still loveth me."

Yea, he says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." The Lord has drawn you to love and serve him. You have always found that in obedience is a reward. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Then we may say, Put away all filthiness of the flesh, and be ye clean. What you have written to me was clear from the corruption of false doctrine, the false doctrine of our own works of righteousness. Your theme was Christ, and his righteousness, for salvation, and so you testify that he is all, and in all, to you. Yours is a good hope, my sister, through Christ. He intercedes for you.

"Lord! thou with an unerring beam,
Surveyest all my powers;
My rising steps are watch'd by thee,
By thee, my resting hours.

My thoughts, scarce struggling into birth,
Great God, are known to thee:
Abroad, at home, still I'm inclosed,
With thine immensity."

Your duty, and mine, is to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteous-

ness, and then all needful things shall be added unto us. Let us do right, and fear not, whatever others may say to us, for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. He has bestowed upon you a gift which is more precious than gold, for he has revealed the unsearchable riches of Christ to you. O, what a treasure.

Now I will bring this blundering letter to a close, lest I weary you and others who may see it, if I have not already done so. I humbly pray that God, for Christ's sake, may abundantly bless you and your family, and comfort us all in all our conflicts, and deliver us from doing anything that may have a tendency to bring reproach upon the cause of Christ. I can freely say with Paul, if a brother, "the least of all."

JOHN W. MEARS.

ADRIAN, Mich., June 17, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS:—Inclosed you will find a letter written to me by brother James Bundy, whose obituary you published in the SIGNS of June first. He often wrote to me, and his letters were very dear, and they are doubly so since I have heard of his death, and know that I shall never receive another dear brotherly message from him. O, how loath we are to give up our dear kindred in Christ, although our loss we know is their gain. Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints. I would like to see his letter in the SIGNS, if you are willing to publish it,

Yours unworthily,

MRS. H. TUTTLE.

SIDNEY, N. Y., Feb. 18, 1897.

MRS. H. TUTTLE—MY DEAR SISTER:—Your very kind letter was received by due course of mail, and was read with

satisfaction and delight, yes, and reread. I draw comfort and delight from such epistles as you are enabled by the Spirit to write. As the gospel is a savor of life unto life, so such epistles witness to me that there is life in me, however dull and lifeless I may seem at times. Forty-five years ago this month, and on the sixth day of the month, my tongue broke out in unknown strains, and sung surprising grace. I had been dreadfully tortured for weeks, day and night, in view of the depravity of my heart, my base ingratitude, and my misspent and sinful life. And worst and most hopeless of all, was a sense of the dreadful fact that I could not undo my wickedness, nor see how God could be just, and save so great a sinner. Nor could I ask him to save me, at the expense of his justice and truth. I envied the beasts of the field. I would gladly have exchanged condition with the meanest reptile that crawled upon the face of the earth, if I could thus have been freed from accountability to that God against whom I had sinned. I am sure that you have journeyed in this way, so I need not tell you of my dreadful misery, or of the blessedness of having my burden of guilt and condemnation removed. As sin had abounded to despair and condemnation, so now did grace abound to my salvation. I was enabled to believe to the saving of the soul, and shout O Faith! Faith! Wherever I went I wanted to tell of the wondrous grace and mercy of God in extending salvation to a wretch so vile as I. I opened the Bible and read a confirmation of my hope, in almost every page. I had been begging for mercy, not knowing how it could be given. Now I read, "Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth." And again I read that, "Mercy shall be built up

forever." So I did not have to labor to be an Old School Baptist, for the gracious and loving Lord had made me so, and blessed be his holy name. Yea, blessed is the man or woman to whom the Lord will not impute sin. He has charged the dreadful account to his Son, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

"O, for such love, let rocks and hills,
Their lasting silence break."

Sometimes, I think how dreadful it would be, should I be cast off at last. Then sometimes, comes Toplayd's lines where he says,

"Yes, I to the end shall endure
As sure as the earnest is given."

How I would like to speak face to face concerning that earnest. It comes nearest to the knowledge of heaven, of anything that I know. It is of our inheritance.

If you find anything in this to stir up your pure mind, I shall hope to hear from you again. How sad to lose our dear brother Jenkins. I knew him personally, and have had the honor of his presence at my house. With love to all who love our dear Lord, I remain as ever, yours in hope of everlasting life,

JAMES BUNDY.

[By this letter our brother, though he has passed on before, to the other world, yet speaks to us. As we have read the letter we could but think of that fruition of all his hopes, which our brother now enjoys.—ED.]

MOUNT GILEAD, Ohio, Feb. 6, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—I will try to write you a few lines, to let you know how I am faring. I am still in Ohio with my children. It has been a long time since I received your last letter. This is

not the first attempt to write in answer that I have made, but after writing, it has always seemed to me too poor to send, so I have laid it aside, hoping that I might feel more like writing. But you cannot expect pure water out of a stream which flows from a corrupt fountain. O, I feel to be the same poor, helpless sinner, unable to think a good thought. My cry to-day is the same that it has been for years, "O Lord, cleanse me from all sin, and make me whatsoever seems good in thy sight." I had thought that as I advanced in years, and drew nearer to the close of my pilgrimage journey, the Lord would remove these doubts and fears, in a great measure at least, and that my hope would grow brighter. But alas, there is so much of my time in which I feel so cold and barren. My great desire and prayer to God is, that he may enable me to put my trust in him always. Now, my dear brother, I desire to be truly thankful to my kind heavenly Father for his goodness to me, and for the many blessings which he has bestowed upon me. There are times, if I am not mistaken, when it pleases him to roll back the dark clouds, and to let the light of his countenance shine in this poor heart of mine. Then I am made to rejoice in his love. But these times are so short. Then it comes to me, why cannot I trust him in the dark as well as in the light? He is the same, and changes not. But like a little child, so long as I can feel my Father's hand, then I can rest in confidence. But when he withdraws himself from me, I am ready to cry, Lord save or I perish. I was reading in the Psalms, and my mind was arrested by a passage which I should like to have your views upon. Of whom was David speaking in Psalm lv. 12-14? As I have always told you that my inability to write anything

that can interest the dear children of God makes me wonder why I ever undertake it. But, from past experience, I know that you will bear with my weakness. I often think when I read the many good articles in the SIGNS, I should enjoy writing to the dear brethren and sisters, when it is so that I cannot meet with them, if I could only write as they do, but this is a gift that is denied me. May the good Lord enable me to be reconciled to his will in all things. My dear brother, I often think of you, and of the many pleasant meetings which we have attended together.

I will bring this letter to a close. May the Lord bless you, and grant you grace, and strengthen you in every trial through which he calls you to pass, is the prayer of your unworthy sister,

M. A. CUBBAGE.

[IN response to the request of our sister, concerning the words of David in the fifty-fifth Psalm, we would say that they have generally been believed to relate to the betrayal of the blessed Savior, by the professed disciple, Judas. We see no reason to question this interpretation. The language might also relate to what David must have felt personally, when Absalom arose against him, and sought to dethrone him from reigning in Israel. The language might also well relate to any case where one's own professed friend, had proved deceitful, and had sought to injure his friend. Especially would this language apply to the case of one who had professed full fellowship in the gospel, but under the guise of professed love and fellowship was seeking one's injury. It is always much easier to meet the assaults of one who is an open enemy, than the attack of a traitor under the guise of friendship. We are prepared, in some sense, for the one, but not for the other.

We expect nothing better from an enemy than ill treatment, and so in some sense can bear it, but ill treatment from one who has been a friend, we do not expect, and therefore we find it hard to bear. For this reason, quarrels among brethren are always much more bitter than a war with one who has never been a friend. How hurtful to one who loves the truth, and painful to his brethren, it is when any one who has professed to also love the truth, departs from it, and becomes our foe.—ED.]

POWELLVILLE, Md., June 4, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—

As a usual thing I have been collecting quite a good deal for the SIGNS, but for some cause there has been delinquency on the part of the subscribers in this section. It seems to me that every one that takes interest enough in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to read them, or subscribe for them, would have a desire to pay for them, for they contain nothing but spiritual food, and they would not comfort any one but a heaven-born soul, and we should suppose every heaven-born soul desires to be honest, and owe no man anything, especially those that are depending upon them for support. Now if every one would consider that you are laboring under a heavy burden and expense, and would consider that one or two dollars a year from each and every subscriber, would not be much burden to them, it would relieve you of a great burden. One might say, Well, I have such a little mite to send him, it will not do him much good. I say let every one that owes for the SIGNS send in what they owe, then you can pay your debts, and the subscribers would be no worse off, and you would be enabled to straighten your accounts, and could go on with not

so much to weigh you down. I can sympathize with you. I know it is a great relief to me when my customers settle their accounts; it keeps things in better shape, with a great deal less worry. Now dear brother, I should not think one would take the SIGNS if they did not want it, and if they did not want it they should let you know it, and if to the contrary they should pay you what is justly due you. At least I look at it in that way. We know when one is able to work, they can get enough outside of a living to pay for the SIGNS. I wonder if the amount of money is not spent for that which is not so profitable as the precious words of comfort and consolation contained in the SIGNS? I know the SIGNS has been comforting to me, and I do not feel like I want them at your expense. I hope the Lord will put it in the hearts of those that are so far in arrears, to send on what is due.

Would it not be a good thing for you to notify each and every church for some one to take an interest in collecting money for the support of the SIGNS? You, and your father before you, have labored hard to circulate them. I will take an interest in this church at Indian-town, and I think if you were to put a notice in the SIGNS, in regard to it, there would be one in each church that would take that interest. By so doing you could find out those who are able to pay, and how much they can pay, and whether or not each and every subscriber is interested enough to let them continue coming, and see that they are paid for, as far as they are able. If they are not able to pay anything, and no one else is able or willing to pay for them, and let them continue on, and you are not able to send them free to such, you can at once erase their names from your list.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., April, 1898.

Then you would begin to get your business in a little better shape, and it would not seem so much worry and annoyance to you. My opinion is, that even honest subscribers should not wait for you, or some one else, to go to them, or notify they to pay their dues. I presume there are thousands that wait for you to notify them, or some one to see and urge them to make arrangement to settle.

If you and Elder Chick think there is anything in this fit to publish, you fix it in good shape, so as to read right. Inclosed you will find check.

Your brother,

L. A. HALL.

[We feel very grateful to brother Hall, for the kind and efficient aid he has heretofore rendered the SIGNS, and for his kind suggestions above, and if the brethren in general could feel willing to take upon themselves so much of a burden, it would indeed be a great help to us in publishing the SIGNS. Of course we have knowledge, personally, of the financial condition of but few of our delinquents, and cannot tell who have neglected to pay for their paper on account of indigent circumstances, or who have done so through sheer neglect, or who are downright dishonest. But let the cause be what it may, the result is the same to us, we are minus the money, and consequently embarrassed in meeting our obligations.

If any of our paid up subscribers are willing to act on brother Hall's suggestion, they are at liberty to retain a sufficient amount to pay them for their time and trouble in collecting from any of our delinquents. A list of such delinquents will be sent to any *paid up subscriber*, on application, for any section they may desire.—ED.]

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I want to say that we are much pleased with the "Feast of Fat Things," and also with the article from your father, on the predestination of all things, with your comments upon the same, and especially what you said about the expression, "can't help it." I would like to say to the readers of the SIGNS, that the humble child of God cannot and must not praise nor attribute his happiness in this life to his good works, or to his obedience, because all obedience, or good works, are the gift of God, being the fruit of faith. When the child of God hungers and thirsts for righteousness, it is an evidence that he has no sustaining righteousness of his own. Their hungering is an evidence of life, hence it is an evidence that they are already blessed, because God has predestinated that they shall be filled. So righteousness is a gift, and is to sustain the child of God, just as our common daily bread sustains our natural life. When the child of God obeys, or does good works, it is perfectly right for him to use the personal pronoun, and say, "I obeyed," yet not losing sight of the fact that it is not I, but the grace of God in me. Thus it is the grace of God in him which obeyed in him, which obedience is righteousness, and all the gift of God. Thus his hunger and thirst is satisfied, for he is filled thereby, and his life is sustained or preserved, all this being the gift of God, through Jesus. They are preserved in Jesus Christ, see Jude, first verse. Also this righteousness as a gift is the power of God in us to sustain us. Thus we are by this righteousness, or by the power of God working this righteousness, kept unto salvation. Thus Jesus said of himself, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." Therefore,

just as we are blessed naturally in eating and drinking, so the people of God are blessed spiritually in obedience. This obedience is to them meat and drink. Thus Jesus not only imputes, but imparts his righteousness.

Yours in much trouble and affliction,
DAVID L. McNEES.

PRATT CITY, Ala., June 16, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Since the discovery and development of the mineral wealth of this country, thousands of people have emigrated here, among them a few Primitive Baptists, and as our people are only a remnant compared to the masses, a few have been troubled to find our place of worship. Until two years ago, our little church was twelve miles west of the great center, and city of Birmingham, Ala. I thought it might benefit some one in the future, to state in the SIGNS that we have a church, and house of worship at this place, Pratt City, Ala., and I am also a citizen of the town. We are five miles from Birmingham; electric cars pass every twenty-five minutes. Our membership is scattered around in the different towns, but transportation is cheap, and people can visit us, a distance of five and ten miles for a trifle. Our membership increases slowly, by letters and baptisms. We had a warm and impressive meeting the third Sunday in May. Much to the surprise of us all, my brother, two years younger than myself, came forward at the close of the meeting, for membership, and was received, and about four o'clock I baptized him in Village Creek, south of the town. Next Sunday is our regular communion time, and we look for two sisters to join us by letter at that time.

We hold our meetings on the first and third Sundays. If the lot of any of our

people should be cast in these parts, they can find us on what is called East Highlands, addition to Pratt City, Ala. Our church house fronts west on Vine Street. I am the dependence for a supply as pastor, and I feel much interest in the welfare of the little flock, and I do my very best, in my feeble way, to build up and strengthen them in the faith once delivered to the saints. While the world seeks to hear, and learn, and tell something new, I would prefer to inquire for that which is old, and to hunt for the old ways in doctrine and practice, and should be glad to know that we are identified with the apostles of over eighteen hundred years ago.

Yours in hope of fellowship,
P. J. POWELL.

EAST DIXFIELD, Maine, June 8, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES
—DEAR BRETHREN:—In sending you my remittance, I wish to add a few lines in praise of such a precious medium of gospel truth. All that I hear of gospel truth, I gain from the SIGNS. I meet with many who are engaged in the work of converting the world, and am many times distressed to know that many of those whom I highly appreciate as friends, are in love with such fallacies. Again, I feel to commit it all to him who turneth the hearts of men, as the rivers of water are turned. In a short space of time past it has been brought forcibly to my mind, that in the call from nature to grace, it is as was the call to backsliding Israel, one from a city, and two from a family, who are brought to him. And I think of the twos and threes gathered together, and of the ones, also scattered not as sheep without a shepherd, for the Master says, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. The word of consolation through

the SIGNS, to such scattered ones, is like a cup of cold water to the thirsty. It seems to me that more of the precious pearls which are only brought up by the deepest divers, have been brought to view in the present volume, than is usual. Among the contributors, I read many telling that they are about seventy years of age, and that for about forty years they have been members of the militant church. As that so nearly describes me, it brings to my mind the journey of the children of Israel through the great and terrible wilderness. Of this we are assured, the Lord is of one mind and none can turn him, and that his mercy changeth not. We who have been shut in by wasting disease, or others who are shut in by watching with those who are afflicted, and need their care, have found upon the tumult of the billows of affliction, the oil of consolation which has been poured upon the waters in all ages by the Savior's words, "Peace, be still." The winds and the waves have always obeyed him. Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound, they shall walk in the light of his countenance. The garment of Christ's righteousness is always new, and cleanseth from all sin. I trust that you may meet with such success in the conduct of the SIGNS as shall leave you nothing to ask for.

Your sister in a precious hope,

ELIZA WHEELRIGHT.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

CHURCH LETTER.

JOHNSONS GROVE, Tenn., April 16, 1898.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—As we are accused of believing in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things to the extent that God's children cannot obey the commandments of God, and that they cannot help from doing wickedly, because God makes them do everything that they do, for God so predestinated it, &c., and as we do not believe it, we wish to set forth what we do believe, and let the readers of the SIGNS know what we believe. We ask you to publish the following, viz:

We believe in the absolute predestination of all things as set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and its present editors, to be in accord with the teaching of the Scripture, therefore we indorse the SIGNS in full on predestination. We believe that God is a sovereign, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, perfect in all his attributes. He made all things for a purpose, and they will fill the purpose for which he made them. He works all things after the counsel of his own will. He commands, and it stands fast; speaks, and it is done. He does all his pleasure. He doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. That none can stay his hand, nor say unto him, What doest thou? He is good. That he influences his children by his holy Spirit to willingly, lovingly and gladly obey every command that he gives them; and when his children do wickedly they are influenced by Satan, and God chastises them for so doing, and that God has a purpose in the whole arrangement, and works it all after his own sovereign will, and for our good and God's glory.

Therefore, God does not influence us by his Spirit to do anything that is wrong; but our wrong-doings come from that sin that is condemned in the flesh. Therefore we do not charge God with our sinful acts in any sense; and God forbid that we should ever fall behind predestination for any of our meanness. It will not do to limit predestination, for to limit it, is to deny it. Predestination is the purpose of God from eternity, respecting all events. We do not believe that God is the author of sin in any sense. We believe that God's children will do every command that he gives them to do. He commands us to mourn, and we mourn; to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and we hunger; to come to him, and we come; to take his yoke upon us, and we take it; to choose life that thou and thy seed may live, and we accept it; some to preach, and they preach.

We are accused of believing and advocating that the Bible teaches but one salvation, that is eternal salvation only. We deny this. We believe in but one Savior, Jesus Christ, and that Christ Jesus is our eternal salvation. But as to salvation or deliverances or manifestations in time, there are many. The manifestation of eternal life to God's children, and the enjoyment of the same, is in time. Our obedience to God's commands is in time, and our obedience is only the fruits of our eternal life or salvation, or Christ in us, the hope of glory. There are many other deliverances in time, therefore we call them common, or time salvation. All these manifestations and deliverances are unconditional, and are of grace, and grace alone, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it [salvation] is the gift of God." God, who has saved us and called us with an holy calling. By this love of God shed

abroad in our hearts, (which is Christ in us the hope of glory) we are made willing to lovingly work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do or his good pleasure. Not at our option, or freedom of will, but of God's good pleasure. To save ourselves from this untoward generation, (not conditionally, but positively,) to take heed unto ourselves and to the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this we shall save ourselves from false doctrines. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believed," (from false doctrines). Nothing yet has a semblance of conditionalism, but all of grace, and grace alone. It is all the work of God in us, and the fruit of the same. It is not an offered salvation, but positive commands, and certain fruits. And all of God's children obey them, to whom they are given. We believe that Christ builds his church without the machinery or inventions of men. Jesus says, "And I also say unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock [revelation] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom (church). We believe he quickens and brings his sheep into the church. "It is the spirit that quickeneth [maketh alive], the flesh profiteth nothing." "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." "Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold; [Jewish fold] them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold [church] and one Shepherd [Christ]." The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Not conditionally, but shall be saved. We believe in the resurrection of these bodies

from the dead. The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall come forth. The dead in Christ shall rise first. These vile bodies shall be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. Sown a natural and raised a spiritual body (not a spirit body, but spiritual).

Now, brethren editors, we ask you to publish the above for us, in defense of the truth, as we have been misrepresented. We are called by our enemies "Fatalists," "Beebeites" and "Can't help its." May God bless our enemies to the acknowledging of the truth, as far as it is his will. There are a few of us here that have not bowed our knee to the new innovations, or images of Baal. There is one to whom we must all bow. May God bless his children everywhere, and especially the editors of the SIGNS, that you may wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

Read and received while in conference, on Saturday before the third Sunday in April, 1898, and signed by the church of Christ, known as Mill Creek, in Crockett County, State of Tennessee.

J. W. WHITENTON, Mod.

S. L. LOMAX, Church Clerk.

NAMES OF MEMBERS.

J. M. Whitenton, Leura E. Whitenton, M. H. Cousins, S. L. Lomax, John F. Carter, G. W. Kail, J. B. Ezell, Sallie Ezell, Vanna Lomax, J. D. Ward, Alice E. Kail, Annie Baker, Lula Smith, M. A. Whitenton, John Reece, S. Buford, Jennie Buford, J. H. Smith, N. A. Carter, M. J. Smith, Maranda Warren, Laura Harrell, Tennie Neal, John Prescott, J. M. Midget, Julia Midget.

E X T R A C T S .

GRASS VALLEY, ORE., July 18, 1898.

MR. BENTON BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—I have received and read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, volume 66, number 14, July 15th, and it is just simply grand. I can just sit down to the old SIGNS and eat a good meal without any fear of getting any foreign matter in my mouth. This is indeed a great blessing at this time, when there is so much uneatable matter published even among the old Baptist papers. I write to say that I notice that Elder W. J. Hess's post-office address is not given in his experience and call to the ministry, published in the SIGNS above mentioned. His address is Goldendale, Klickitat Co., Wash.

Your brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

THE

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

A pamphlet containing the following articles, viz: First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28th, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School, and the New School Baptists.

Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England.

Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fourth. "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion, of the same title.

Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Will be mailed to any address on receipt of price.

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We feel confident that these Pamphlets will sell at sight, and any one desiring to sell them, can get a liberal discount by ordering five or more copies at one time, all to one address. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SON.

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1898.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as
Second-Class Mail Matter.**EDITORS:****F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.****B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.**

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EAST COBBLESKILL, N. Y., June 14, 1898.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—Will you please give your views through the SIGNS upon Isaiah xxvi. 19? "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Opinions or views of some of the brethren, seem to differ upon this text. We shall be glad to have your views at an early date.

Yours in christian love,

G. W. GUERNSEY.

R E P L Y .

We can at best but give such thoughts as seem to us to belong to the above Scripture. While it is well and pleasant when the people of God can see eye to eye with regard to the meaning of any portion of Scripture, yet it is not to be expected, while in this imperfect state, that all should understand all the Scriptures alike. God's people have one experience, and know that salvation is all of grace for the chief of sinners, but yet their understanding of any given portion of the Scripture may differ, because of their different ideas of the meaning of words, or through a failure to note properly the context of a text.

In the first place, we regard the words of the text as being a figurative declaration of the return of peace and prosperity to Israel nationally, after the judgments of God had fallen heavily upon them for

their transgressions. It seems to us that the reading of this, and the two preceding chapters, will show that the prophet describes first, a state of desolation and death, which shall befall Israel. Mingled all along through this, and the twenty-fifth chapter, there are expressions of assurance that the Lord will yet remember mercy to them, and revive and build them up again. The work which he will do for them will be sudden, swift and glorious. It shall seem marvelous to them who behold it. Beginning at the twelfth verse of this chapter, we find a confession of their dependence upon God; then in verse thirteen, a confession of their idolatry, and in verse fourteen, an acknowledgment of the weakness of these idols; then in verses sixteen, seventeen and eighteen, the prophet speaks of their trouble under the calamities which have befallen them, of their strife to come before the Lord with their petitions, which was with such pain and eager desire as to be compared to the suffering of a woman in the pangs of childbirth, and which had not yet wrought their deliverance. Thus is presented the futility of all human help. Now in the verse which our brother has named, despairing Israel receives the assurance of deliverance. The nation which was dead, shall live again. They belonged to the Lord, and so in the second clause of the text he adds, "My dead body shall they arise." It will be noticed by the careful Bible reader that the words "together with" are in italics, which always signifies that they were supplied by the translators. In this case they were needlessly supplied. Leaving them out we have the reading thus, "Thy dead shall live, my dead body shall they arise." And then in prospect of such a deliverance, the prophet bursts out in a song of praise

and gladness, and in a description of the beauty which shall abide upon Israel when she shall be thus dealt with.

"Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead." All this is highly wrought figurative language, but the Lord uses it to describe to the people what he will do for them in the end. We have understood that the meaning of this was similar to the lessons taught to Ezekiel by the vision of the valley of dry bones, and Ezekiel was told that this vision of the dry bones was the whole house of Israel, which were like the bones scattered, and dry, and dead, and very dead. Yet they should live, and stand upon their feet once more. All this was as impossible in the judgment of men, as that dry bones should each come to his fellow, and rise upon their feet and live; but with God all was possible. He had but to speak, and it should be done. In this text in Isaiah, and in the vision of Ezekiel, he declares that it shall be done. It seems to us that this is the substance of the meaning as regards Israel literally. We have long believed that all these Scriptures have a spiritual application to the redeemed people of God under the gospel, and we have also long believed that if we wish to understand these types in their application to the people of God spiritually, we must first understand their application to the people of God literally, under the first covenant. Just what was true of them, as they applied to Israel literally, is also true of them as they apply to Israel spiritually. We have felt therefore as though it was incumbent upon us, when we have been speaking of the old testament types and prophecies, to find first, if we could do so, in what way they were understood and applied to that people,

and then to go on, as light might be given us, to consider their application now. We have not been able to see that any other way was right, or that the true meaning of the Scripture could be arrived at in any other way. Looked at in this way, it seems to us that we are taught here first, that the people of God are prone to wander, and that they sometimes go far astray, so that they may seem to have no life left in them. Second, that in such a state no man can help them, and that they cannot revive themselves, even though they may strive with mourning and lamentation over their low estate. Third, that the Lord can and does help his people, and does not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. Fourth, that they are still his body, though they seem dead, and as the dust of the earth. All this may apply first, to the power of the resurrection of our Lord, when in the midst of the years, the Lord revived his work. Second, to the personal experience of each ransomed vessel of mercy, when he or she is given life from the dead. Third, to the daily experience of departures and revivings again, to which the people of God are subject while in this mortal state. The people of God were raised up from under the power of sin, and from under the curse of the law, when Jesus arose from the dead. Thus a nation was born in a day. They come to experience this power and coming of Jesus Christ in individual experience when they are quickened into divine life, and made partakers of the grace which is in Christ Jesus. But chiefly does this apply to the times of declension and death, which befall the people of God when they, having lived after the flesh, die. They are at such times none the less his body, and at his word they shall live again, and arise out of the

dust of the earth, yea, the earth shall cast out the dead. This also is always through the quickening and life-giving power of the Spirit of God. All these revivings but show the oneness of life which has been given them in Christ, and but demonstrate more and more clearly that because he lives, they shall live also. The text teaches then clearly that when his people transgress his commandments he will chastise them, and that while their sins have brought them low, so that there is no help in man, yet he will not utterly forsake them, but will heal and make them live again. What a glorious truth this is. How full of praise to God is the truth of the final preservation of the saints to glory, through grace which is in Christ Jesus.

A BROTHER who wishes his name withheld asks the following questions, "To what does the Lord refer in Matthew v. 29, 30, when he speaks of the right hand and right eye?" We understand the Savior to mean that all who are his disciples should count obedience to God above all things else. We do not understand that he means here what we call exclusion of members from the churches, for any unrepented evil. We think that the language of the Master is personal. If but one believer should hear these words, they would be as applicable to him as though many should dwell together, and hear them. Neither do we understand that he meant that any member of the body literally should be cut off. To do so would not help the matter any. If the right hand should steal, to cut it off would not remove the disposition to steal, from the heart. If the tongue should blaspheme, to remove the tongue would not remove the heart, which gave rise to the blasphemy. If the

right eye should persist in looking upon evil, or as in the context, upon a woman to lust after her, to remove the eye would not help nor remove the lust of the heart. All this would seem so clear as not to need any argument. As we said at the beginning, we understand the Savior to teach that we ought to turn away from that which would lead us into sin, though it may be something that we prize as we would a right hand, or right eye. We would call attention to the fact that the word "offend" here, as in other places, rather means "cause thee to offend." If anything, however precious, should lead us into sin against God, cast it aside, even though it should seem to cripple us in the struggle of life. It is far better to lose in the things of this world, than to fall into sin, and suffer the judgments of the Almighty.

He asks also the following question, "Should a church give a member a license to preach, and he proves to be a hindrance to the cause, what is to be done with such an one?" We would reply that the church should remember that if wrong has been done, the wrong has been more theirs, than that of the brother to whom the license has been given. Such a license should never be given until the church has prayerfully considered the matter, and is well assured that the mind of the Lord has been made manifest to them. Lay hands suddenly on no man. We have to do with solemn things in the house of God, and haste is not therefore becoming. Still churches as well as individuals, may with the utmost care, make mistakes, and when such has proved to be the case, the church should confess her fault, and plainly say to the brother, that they are not satisfied with what they have done. But here also they should move slowly, after asking the mind of

the Lord in prayer before him. The special steps which should be taken, and how fast or how slow they should move, must be left to the judgment of brethren concerned in each case.

A third question is, "If a church calls for the ordination of a brother, and while he is a good, orderly member, yet he shows no ability to expound a text, and makes bad progress, what can be done to remedy the matter?" In the first place, so long as a brother shows no gift to expound the Scriptures, he should not be ordained to the work; but if, by inconsiderate brethren, this has been done, we know of nothing that can undo the work. Unless the brother himself comes to see that he is not called to the work of the ministry, and so refuses to any longer try to do what he cannot do, we know of nothing that the church can do, further than to bear with it as best they can. In such cases a cross has been laid upon the church, and upon the good brother himself, which they must bear as best they can. We think that it would be right for the church to be frank and brotherly with such an one, and tell him what their verdict is; yet nothing can be done, so long as the brother is good and orderly, and humble in his walk and conversation. We desire to say, however, that while the gift which one may possess may not be to the edification of one member, or some church or churches, it may be that to other members and churches he is profitable. We have known instances where good and thoughtful brethren could never see a gift of preaching in some brother, who yet was useful and profitable to many others. In all these things we should be slow to give judgment, slow to decide, slow to speak, slow to act. We will add, no church is bound to ask any man to preach for her. If she does not

find his gift to edification, it is not a declaration of a lack of confidence in the brother, if she does not ask him to preach for her. Here also, however, great care should be exercised. A fervent love for the cause, and for each other, will solve most of the difficulties that may arise among the churches. Above all things do not act hastily.

Fourth question is, "If a man has been divorced from his wife because she has gone away from him publicly, and is living with another man, and he should marry again, is he a proper subject for the office of deacon?" It has long been our opinion that the word of God allows but one cause for divorce between man and wife, and that is adultery upon the part of one of them. We have never been able to understand the teachings of the Savior in any other light. The case our brother speaks of above would be a case in point. Unquestionably the brother had a scriptural right to be divorced from the wife who had gone away with another man. It has also seemed clear to our mind, that in such a case the innocent party had a right to marry again, according to the teachings of the Savior. One who had been guilty of this crime was considered as being dead to the innocent one, since the law of Moses commanded that such as were guilty of this crime, should be put to death. When dead, the innocent party would be free to marry again of course. If contrary to the law which God gave to Moses, the law of our land, or that of any other, does not inflict the penalty of death upon the adulterer, we cannot see that the innocent party should suffer from this. It seems to us that in the eye of the law of God, the guilty husband or wife was already considered as dead. We think that as the law of God so said, it is still true, that

if either husband or wife are guilty of adultery, that one should be considered as being dead to the innocent one. If this be true, then it would follow that if the wife has transgressed in this way, the husband has no longer a wife, and if the husband has transgressed in this way, the wife has no longer a husband. The guilty one is dead to the other, in the intent of the law of God. If one is dead, then the other has a right to marry again. The innocent party does not violate the law of God in so doing. Thus we understand the Savior to say, that no one has a right to put away his wife save for the cause of adultery. And the right to put away involves the right to marry another wife. Under this condition the husband has not transgressed, if he marry again. Of course if he has not transgressed, there would be no bar in it to his filling the office of deacon, always supposing of course that he is otherwise qualified for such a place. We do not wish to close these remarks without expressing our sense of the enormity of the offense involved in divorce for any other cause than adultery. One of the crying evils of our time is the laxity in the minds of the people with regard to this very thing. Marriage, among a large class of the community, is without any sacredness whatever. It is our firm belief that for no cause whatever, save adultery, does the law of God admit of divorce. But it seems to us that the right of divorce necessarily involves the right of remarriage, upon the grounds named above. We give these views as those which have seemed for a long time scriptural to us. We do not urge them upon our brethren at large. We know that the general feeling is not what we have here presented.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

REFLECTIONS ON ENTERING THE NEW YEAR.

THE Lord God of Israel changes not, therefore we are not consumed. The bounds of our habitation and number of our days are immutably fixed in his irrevocable decrees. The measure of our happiness in this world and in the world which is to come, depends on his gracious purpose, and infinitely wise administration. His providence governs the revolving seasons of our years, causing the earth to unbosom to us that succor which our earthly nature requires for sustenance and for comfort, in such measure and manner as seems good in his sight; while from the ample fullness which there is in Christ Jesus our Lord, he, by his Spirit, constantly administers to the spiritual necessities of all those who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. It is also consoling to know that the afflictions, trials and conflicts of his children, while in the house of their pilgrimage, do not rise up out of the earth, nor come upon them by chance. An even balance is poised in his hand, and the weight, measure and duration of all the sufferings of his children is proportioned with the most exact and infallible certainty to that amount of grace which he bestows on them, whereby they are not only sustained in their deepest afflictions and trials, but made to realize the greatest profit and benefit from them all. From all their conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil, they shall emerge in triumph as more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them. "These light afflictions," says an inspired apostle, "which are but for a moment, do

work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." The trials, afflictions, losses and bereavements that we encounter in these vile bodies, are seen, they are visible to the natural sensibilities of the flesh, and therefore our carnal nature writhes under them; and while we look at them, like Peter when he looked on the heaving billows of the sea, we begin to sink; but when our faith looks up to Jesus, and we see his hand outstretched for our deliverance, we glory in that tribulation which afforded opportunity for the cheering revelation. The raging billows on which we are tossed are seen, but faith that looks to Christ is the evidence of things that are not seen. This is the blessed privilege of all the sons of God, to look on things which are not temporal, but eternal. Our fleshly powers, including all the powers, mental and physical, which are born of the flesh, and all that we can have without a new birth, are totally blind to all the things of the Spirit of God, and only able to look on things which are temporal; but that life which is born of God, can discern the things of the Spirit of God. How essential it is then to our happiness that we heed the admonition of the apostle, to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and that we sow to the Spirit, that of the Spirit we may reap life everlasting.

With this number we commence the twenty-fourth volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and it is reasonable to suppose our readers will expect some expression from us of our prospects, and of our designs. In regard to prospects we can only say, in regard to the things that are

seen, we begin the year with a greater number of subscribers than we ever have had before at the commencement of any volume. The unenviable efforts of those who have banded themselves together for the purpose of putting down the SIGNS, have thus far proved quite unavailing. May the Lord forgive them for the misrepresentations and falsehoods they have put in circulation against us. May he enable us to live down all the calumny that has been, or hereafter may be uttered against us. We know, or at least we hope we know, him on whom we have believed, and that he is able to keep us by his power and grace.

"His love in times past forbids us to think
He'll leave us at last in trouble to sink."

Through him we can do all things, rush through a troop, or leap over a wall. Having confidence in God, we can say of all our adversaries,

"Then let them fight, and rage, and rave,
I shall perceive their noise no more
Than we can hear a shaking leaf,
While rattling thunders round us roar."

Our prospect for the future is involved in the things which are not seen. Our God leads his people in paths that they have not known. To him, with the most unwavering confidence, do we desire to unreservedly commit all that we have, and all that we are, and if it be not his good pleasure to make our periodical a medium of comfort, edification and profit to his dear children, we have no desire that its publication should be continued. But from the assurances received from many thousands of our brethren and sisters, and from every perceptible indication of his will, we feel encouraged to move forward in the work.

As to our designs, we intend, as the Lord shall give us ability, to labor for the edification of the saints, the dissemi-

nation of the truth as it is in Jesus, and in opposition to heresy, will-worship, superstition, bigotry and idolatry. Nothing affords us more real pleasure than to be employed in waiting upon the bride, the Lamb's wife, with the consciousness that in so doing, we have the authority and approval of him who walks amidst the golden candlesticks, and holds the stars in his right hand. We will spare no labor or reasonable expense to make the forthcoming volume more useful, interesting and edifying, than any of the former volumes. In attempting to carry out this design, we shall rely much on the aid of our brethren and sisters who contribute to our columns. Much will depend on the character, spirit and temper manifested in their communications, as well as the tone and character of the editorial articles. All subjects vitally connected with the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom may be discussed freely, so long as such discussions can be conducted in a spirit of love and brotherly kindness, and all personal thrusts, gibes or insinuations, which are calculated, in our judgment, to irritate, are avoided. It is not our intention to suffer the paper to be the medium of crimination or recrimination among the brethren, nor a repository in which to record or publish all personal grievances. We shall aim at a higher mark. As we hold no secret or private sentiments in regard to the gospel of the grace of God, we shall candidly, fairly and unreservedly give an expression of our own views on any passage of Scripture, or point of doctrine, and on all subjects relating to the ordinances and order of the house of God, whenever called on to do so, to the very best of our ability. But in doing so we wish to have it distinctly understood that we give only the views of the humble editor of this paper. None are bound to in-

dorse our views any farther than they can see them clearly sustained by the Scriptures of truth. Any of our brethren are at liberty to animadvert upon or controvert any sentiment that we may advance, provided they do so in a kind and brotherly manner. We are fully satisfied, from many years' experience, it is not discussion or controversy that wounds or disturbs the minds of our readers, but the harsh, unkind and unbrotherly manner in which such controversies have sometimes been conducted. Brethren cannot be too careful to avoid such expressions as are calculated to irritate the feelings of each other, by impugning each other's motives, or insinuating that they are unsound in the faith, while they may honestly differ in their understanding of the import of some Scripture, or the propriety of some particular expressions. The wise man has told us that "A soft answer turneth away wrath." How important then that christians should act on that principle while following after the things that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another.

The world is at this time in a state of general agitation; wars and rumors of wars are current all over the world, to an extent hardly ever before known; and discords are prevalent in our own country, threatening to prostrate our civil, social and political institutions, and to produce anarchy and distress, where freedom has unfurled her joyful banner. It is natural that some difference of opinion should exist among our best and wisest brethren, in regard to those things which agitate the world, and jeopardize our dearest earthly rights. Great care is necessary that we do not wound each other by any rash or premature action or expression in regard to the general tumult. As citizens we have to do with the institutions of our

country, and as christians we may be interested in the final issue. But let us not forget that we are citizens of a kingdom that is not of this world, a kingdom that shall stand forever, and whatever privations, tribulations or distress may await us upon these mortal shores, we shall out-ride the storm at last, and that it will not be long before we shall be called to lay aside our armor, and the weapons of our warfare, and pass into that state where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary shall be at rest.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Jan. 1, 1856.

QUERIES AND REPLY.

ELDER G. BEEBE:—Suppose a member of the Missionary Baptist church, of undoubted piety, and sincere in his attachment to your church, were to apply for admission, would you receive him, without re-baptizing him? What should an individual do who can have no fellowship with the various (so called) benevolent enterprises of the day, and who still believes that the Old School Baptists have gone into error in reference to predestination, &c., and that they so hold and teach these doctrines as to produce bad practical results, supposing him to believe that salvation is wholly of God, and that good works do not procure salvation, but ought to be constantly required of church members as a test of christian character, and an evidence, and the chief evidence, of being under grace? These questions are propounded in all honesty and sincerity, and with the purest motives, if a constant and intense desire to see the Baptist church what it has been, constitutes such motives; and I hope you will find it convenient and agreeable to answer them in your next issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in so doing you will gratify one who has been for some time burdened with a sense of the terrible corruptions existing in the christian world.

J. I. POWER.

Tyro, Jan. 21, 1856.

R E P L Y .

If by the Missionary Baptist church our querist means those who are engaged in the modern missionary schemes of the present day, we do not recognize them as the church of Christ, and consequently we cannot hold their administrations valid. Should a member therefore of that class of professed Baptists, apply

for membership or communion with the church of Christ, we should suppose he ought to be baptized according to the order of the gospel, though he may have been immersed by the modern Missionists. And on the supposition that the applicant is a person of undoubted piety, we have no doubt it would be his wish to be baptized in an orderly manner, by a regular minister of Christ, duly authorized to administer that ordinance, and sustained in so administering it, by the fellowship of the church of God. If, however, a person who has been regularly baptized before the division took place between the church, and those Missionists who went out from us, because they were not of us, has been led off into the modern schemes of the day, and having discovered his error, and returned with his confession to the church, he would not, in our judgment, require to be again baptized. A person who has been once regularly baptized in the fellowship of the church of Christ, by a minister of the church duly recognized at the time by the church, under no circumstances requires rebaptism.

A person who can have no fellowship for the various so-called benevolent enterprises of the present day, and who still believes that the Old Baptists have gone into error in reference to predestination, &c. We think such an one should remain where he is, until he can find a church sufficiently pure for him to unite with without defiling his garments. There is a wide difference between going up to the house of the Lord, and being so holy that the house of the Lord must come up to us. We know of but one way of holding the doctrine of predestination, and that is as it is taught in the Bible, and by the Spirit of truth. Any person, however pious he may be, who believes that an

unwavering belief in the Bible doctrine of eternal predestination, is productive of bad practical results, cannot make a sound member of the church, and he ought not to subscribe to what he does not believe. And furthermore, we give it as our honest opinion, that any person professing to believe in predestination, who does not find all the tendencies of that doctrine to be such as humbles him in the dust before the thrice holy God, and to inspire within him a profound reverence, and desire to be fully conformed to the will of Jehovah, lacks the evidence that he is born of God, and therefore should refrain from making any profession of religion until by a new and heavenly birth he is qualified to "see the kingdom of God."

There is a palpable contradiction involved in the idea that any person who denies the doctrine of predestination, can at the same time believe that salvation is wholly of the Lord. The practical result of God's predestination is conformity to the image of the Redeemer. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Thus the Bible holds the doctrine; to hold it any other way is virtually to reject it. God himself saves sinners, only as he has predestinated them to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, and has made them acceptable in the Beloved. And as salvation certainly follows predestination, and results from it, so good works as certainly follow salvation and result from it. For it is God that worketh in you, (his children) both to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

We do not doubt the sincerity of the desire of our correspondent, to see the Baptist church what it has been. When he shall see her from the eminence on

which John stood, she will appear to him a holy city, coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband. The perfection of beauty, for she is all glorious within, and her garments are of wrought gold. She is fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. It is very true the poor, vile bodies of God's dear children, are black as the tents of Keder, but that which is born of God is as fair as the curtains of Solomon. But in looking after the church of God, we are to know no man after the flesh. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. The kingdom is spiritual, and those who inherit it are spiritual; these vile bodies will not participate in the inheritance until they shall have been sown in weakness and raised in power, sown corruptible, but raised in incorruption; sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body. "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."

That only is the church of Christ which is what she has been, for the church is the kingdom which the God of heaven has set up, and which shall never be removed. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God will help her, and that right early. 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." May it be our happy lot, through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, to enter in through her gates, and have a right to the tree of life.

"There would I find my settled rest,
While others go and come,
No more a stranger nor a guest,
But like a child at home."

One word in conclusion, to our correspondent. Would you behold the beauty of the Lord, his love, his dove, his undefiled, never look down in searching for his loveliness. She is "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king." God is known in her palaces for a refuge." For behold the mountain of the house of the Lord is established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills. She is the fairest among women, clothed with the garments of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness. Look up for her, she is clothed with the sun, and the moon is under her feet, and on her head is a crown of twelve stars. If you have too large a stock of perfection to allow you to be identified with her, wait until every rag of it is stripped off, and then you will be glad when they shall say to you, Come let us go up to the house of the Lord.

We know but little about the christian world, only that our Lord has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulations." And that the world by wisdom knew not God. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."—1 John ii. 15, 16. And again, "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. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us;

he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."—1 John iv. 4-6. The spirit of error which is in the world, has invented many counterfeits of christianity, but in reality the terms christian and world are of opposite signification. To be a christian is to be called out of the world, and that we may be known as christians, we must renounce the world, for we cannot possess the love of the Father, and also the love of the world. It is true, there are terrible corruptions in the world, and especially in that portion of it which make pretensions to christianity, and there are terrible corruptions even in the depraved worldly nature of the children of God, which every christian feels and laments; but the church is nevertheless the body, and members of Christ, quickened with his Spirit, and made perfect in his righteousness.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1856.

A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.

At this season of the year the work in our office falls off nearly one-half, and in order to keep our hands employed, we will, for the next three months, do small jobs of work, from the printing of a few copies of favorite pieces of poetry, to publishing small pamphlets, at actual cost. If you have any little jobs of printing, now is your time to send it on. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SON.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

BOOK NOTICES.

I HAVE some of the Mary Parker books yet on hand which I will send by mail for 55 cents each. I have about two hundred, and wish to save myself from much loss if I can. I also have some of my Meditations, which I will send for \$1.00.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

AGAIN I have to ask you to give notice of our loss by the death of another of the dear members of the Otego church. Our loved sister, **Mary A. Delameter**, fell asleep in Jesus at 9 a. m., June 8th, 1898, after a long illness of terrible pain and suffering, caused by cancer or tumors, in the right side, which gradually filled her body. She was unable to move at all, or be moved for many weeks, and lay in one position for a long time. She was fully conscious, and felt a great resignation to the will of her Lord. She said, "If it is his will to restore me to health, I would like to live awhile, yet I do not know as I want to get well after all. It seems it would be such a rest to depart, and leave the trials and troubles of this life behind, for what is there to live for, of any real worth?" Yet she felt that her dear and only daughter, with whom she lived, needed her help and care, and for her sake, if it was the Lord's will to raise her up from her sickness, she felt a willingness to tarry awhile, yet no anxiety about it. She was of a gentle, amiable disposition, very capable in the managing of every day affairs of life, and well fitted to adorn any society, and her life and walk as a child of God was exemplary to a high degree. She was steadfast, immovable in the doctrine of God our Savior, not blown about by every wind of doctrine, always abiding in the faith once delivered to her, not looking to fables or men's wisdom for instruction, but alone to God, and though she always had fears that she might be deceived in regard to her acceptance in the Beloved, she felt much comfort and assurance that God knew all things, and ruled all things after the counsel of his own will, and she said she felt to trust him, knowing he did all things well. Sister Delameter was the oldest daughter of the late brother Edward and sister Jane Crosby Faulkner. She was born April 29th, 1851, at Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y. She was united in marriage to Harvey J. Delameter, Oct. 18th, 1870, and came to Franklin, N. Y., to live, and he died in the same town, in their early married life. Brother and sister Delameter united with the New School Baptists near their home, but they were not allowed to remain with those who did not worship according to their understanding of divine things, and they came to Otego to meetings, and in October, 1875, they united with the Old School Baptist church, and were baptized by Elder B. Bundy, since which time they were at home, and never gave cause for reproof, or even offended by any word or act any of their brethren. Our dear brother Delameter dropped dead in November, 1896, as many will remember, and the church sustained a great loss in his death. He had good gifts, and was much endeared to all for his upright, honorable deportment.

The funeral services of sister Delameter were held at her home, which was with her daughter and son-

in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Ford B. Smith, who are left, with four brothers of Mrs. Delameter, and many other relatives, and the church, to mourn the loss of this loved one. Sister Delameter requested Elder Vail to attend her burial, at his last visit with her, and he was able to attend the services. Hymns 694 and 1228 (Beebe's Collection) were read, also the twenty-third Psalm, and the text used was Psalm xxx. 10-12. After the services were over at the house, sister's loved form was taken to the cemetery at Treadwell, N. Y., (where repose the remains of her husband, and several of the family,) and consigned to its mother earth. Her spirit is basking in the smiles of her Lord, forever at peace. May this hope sustain all who look for his appearing, is the earnest desire of a feeble child, if one at all,

S. C. F. GUERNSEY.

Otego, N. Y., July 21, 1898.

DIED—At the residence of sister Staten, in Newark, Del., **Mrs. Margaret Barton**, in the 66th year of her age. Our esteemed sister was baptized by the writer of this notice, in fellowship with the church at Welsh Tract, from which time to the time of her full discharge from the conflict, she lived a consistent and orderly member, being well known in this section, and esteemed for the truth's sake. She was spiritual minded, and her conversation was much on the Scriptures, especially such portions as had been opened to her mind, and favorite hymns. She could quote more from memory than is common, decided in her views of the doctrine as held by the Old School Baptists, which harmonized, as she believed, with the record of eternal truth. Our sister was the widow of the late Miller Barton, of Newark, Del. After his death she gave up the care of a house, but remained in the neighborhood until called home. She seemed in the last months of her life to be seized with a weakness, but seemed not to be a great sufferer. Yet she seemed to be impressed that the time of her departure was near at hand, which was sudden, having fallen before reaching her bed, and passed suddenly and quietly away. She leaves two sons and one brother. She is much missed by the church and neighbors. She departed out of this world May 24th, 1898. She had often requested in my hearing that her funeral should be attended without much formality, but quietly, which was carried out by reading some familiar portions of Scripture, and hymns, and remarks by the writer. Her remains were then laid away to rest.

WM. GRAFTON.

DIED—In Kempner, Texas, at the home of her daughter, **Mrs. Jessie Green**, on the 29th day of June, 1898, **Mrs. Deborah Sledge**, whose maiden name was McGinty, in the 79th year of her age. She was happily married to Milton D. Sledge, in Talbot Co., Ga., in March, 1838, where they lived until 1849, when

she, with her husband, moved to Louisiana. She was visiting her daughter, Mrs. Green, in Kempner, Texas, when the dread summons came. She came in April, and on the 29th of June, her pure spirit freed from earth's trials, went home rejoicing, to her blessed Master, whom she had served so long and faithful. She joined the Primitive Baptist church in early life, and remained a consistent member until her death. A mother in Israel has fallen, and the mourners who knew her in this life have that blessed hope of meeting her where sickness and sorrow never comes. Though we say farewell, it will not be forever. She was ready to answer the summons. Her life was a living epistle, known and read of all who knew her. May God's grace comfort all she left behind.

W.

DIED—July 3d, 1898, sister **Esther Rogers**, aged 81 years. Her maiden name was Carey. She resided in Waverly, N. Y. In 1854 she was baptized by Elder Rowland, in the fellowship of the Waverly Old School Baptist church. She lived and died in the fellowship of her brethren, and was loved and esteemed by all who knew her. She was a kind and affectionate wife and mother. She leaves an aged husband and several children. May the dear Lord give all needed grace to our dear, lonely brother, and the children. She was strong in the faith, a lover of her Bible and the SIGNS. She has gone to her eternal home, sweet home.

The writer talked some to the people assembled at the home on the 5th, after which her earthly tabernacle was laid away in Dry Brook Cemetery.

D. M. VAIL.

ERRATA.

In the SIGNS for August 1st, 1898, two corrections are required. On page 477, in the request from sister Rebecca Harris for views, it should read Ezekiel xiii. 6. And in the first marriage notice, the name should be Mrs. Hannah Risher, instead of Rider. In first obituary notice in June 1st issue, the name should read Mrs. Anna Tibbles, instead of Tibbs.

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ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Olive & Hurley church, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1898, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m.

Teams will be in waiting Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, at Shokan, for those from the west, and at Olive Branch, for those from the east.

All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

ALVAH BOGART, Clerk.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet with Salem Church, in Marshall Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1898.

Those coming by the Santa Fe R. R. will stop at Toluca. Those coming by the Illinois Central, from the north, will stop at Wenona, and those from the south, will stop at Rutland, where they will change cars to Toluca.

A cordial invitation is extended to all that desire to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist church, in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1898, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and especially brethren in the ministry who feel it in their hearts to visit us. Those who come will be met at North Berwick railroad depot, on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

THE Des Moines River Association of Primitive Baptists will meet with Linn Creek (Oak Grove) church, six miles northwest of Mt. Pleasant, Henry Co., Iowa, at 10 o'clock a. m., on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1898, and two following days, August 20th, 21st and 22d, 1898.

Trains will be met at station in Mt. Pleasant, on Friday evening and Saturday morning. A cordial invitation is extended to all brethren, especially ministers, and all lovers of truth. This is the oldest association in the State, and the next session may possibly be the last, for reasons which cannot well be given in this connection.

I. T. FLINT, Moderator.

M. W. BYRAM, Clerk.

KAW RIVER Association will meet, if the Lord will, August 27th, 1898, on the Boulevard, South World Rest Park.

The time of the association has been changed from the second to the fourth Saturday in August, 1898.

D. SAYERS, Moderator.

THE Spoon River Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, will meet, the Lord willing, with the New Hope Church, in Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., on Wednesday, August 31st, 1898, and the two following days.

Those coming from the south will stop at Avon, while those coming from the north will stop at St.

Augustine, on the Quincy Branch of the C., B. & Q. Railroad. Those coming from the west will stop at Roseville, of the R. Island Branch of the same road, where teams will be in waiting on Wednesday morning of the Association, and Tuesday evening before.

All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

S. H. HUMPHREY, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

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“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1898. NO. 17.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SUPREMACY OF GOD.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—A dear brother in Christ urges me to write for the SIGNS upon two statements of Paul, as follows:

“Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.”—Acts xxvii. 21.

“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.”—Eph. i. 11.

We believe that the apostle Paul was an inspired servant of God; that the ways of God are just and equal, and do not conflict; that there is, therefore, no contradiction between these two statements of Paul, nor between the other inspired oracles of God. But we may sadly fail to rightly understand the Scriptures, because we are very finite, and so not perceive their harmony; hence there may be difficulties in our minds, and confiction in our views; but all things are known unto God, who saw the end from the beginning. This fact should teach us our dependence upon the Lord for a true un-

derstanding of the word of truth, and humble us, as well as teach us to be charitable toward one another.

In the first text for our consideration, Paul spoke to the master and owner of the ship, and to the Roman officer, whose prisoner he was, whom he had before warned of this shipwreck and danger, but against his prophetic warning they had sailed away from Crete, which was defiant and perverse in them, after this kind and faithful prophet of God had told them that it would be with hurt and much damage. This is according to God's purpose and way. Before sin entered into the world, the Lord said to man, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” But, like the master of the ship, Adam would not hearken. Yet God was not disappointed in either case, nor his purpose overthrown, for he foreknew the end, with all the consequences; therefore in his goodness and mercy, he made provision for the deliverance of the rebellious. His foreknown vessels of mercy were in Adam, so his servant Paul was in the endangered ship. In all the transgressions of rebellious man, he is left without excuse, for God has commanded and warned him, and the creature is under a

supreme obligation to obey the supreme Creator. Therefore in every case, the sin and fault, violation and wrong are man's, and the throne of the Most High is spotless and holy. Man is the author of his own sin. The supreme Ruler has the absolute right to command, warn and punish sinful man, or to have mercy upon him and send him deliverance. The Scriptures abundantly show all this, both by precept and example. The salvation of all in the ark of Noah, but the destruction of the wicked world by the flood, is a solemn instance. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth," and for this wickedness he sent the flood. The Most High has not left himself without witness in the righteous visitation of his judgments upon the earth, for holy men of God have been raised up and sent to foretell to men the fearful consequences of their persistent wickedness, which should come upon them. But both the Bible and the world's history testify that "the heart of man is deceitful, and desperately wicked."

Paul affirms, in the last text, that in Christ the saints have obtained an inheritance, "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This is a very great and wonderful revelation of truth. Another like it is, "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."—Romans viii. 28. All things work together for good to all those, for the reason that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, as says the inspired Paul. This applies to all events in all times and places relative to the called of God according to his purpose, because his dominion and power are unlimited and supreme. And so no event

can possibly arise without the knowledge and leave of God. With him there can be neither surprises nor accidents. If such a thing could be, it would destroy the sovereignty or supremacy of God, because it would deny either his wisdom to foresee, or his power to prevent the chance event, or both. But the Scriptures abundantly teach the self-evident truth, that our God is infinite in wisdom, and omnipotent in power, and that he therefore both foreknew all things, and controls all things. To deny this is simply to undeify the Almighty, and deny his eternal Godhead. And to deny this universal supremacy of Jehovah, would be to admit chance and chaos into God's universe, and so overturn his government, defeat his eternal purpose, and subject all to anarchy and ruin. But we rejoice that blind and ruinous chance cannot obtain in God's universal dominion, and that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Our dear Lord assures us that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of our Father in heaven. The text connects all things with the infinite and eternal and immutable counsel of God's will, therefore there cannot arise any device of men or devils, nor any wicked thing against his counsel, to defeat his purpose. If such a thing were possible, then some of the predestinated unto the adoption of children might fail to obtain the heavenly inheritance in Christ; then Paul and all in the storm-wrecked ship might have perished; then some mishap in the long chain of calamitous events in the afflictions of Joseph, or in the afflictions of Moses and the children of Israel in Egypt, might have changed all, and defeated the divine mercy, goodness and blessing there was in it all. Yet the envious brethren of Joseph wickedly sold him into slavery, but God sent him into

Egypt. And most cruelly and wickedly did the Egyptians and Pharaoh oppress the enslaved chosen people of God, yet the Lord said to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." Truly then God's counsel was in all those great and mighty things, and his wisdom and power brought great and lasting good to his people, and glory to his name through those trying things. Therefore "the sweet psalmist of Israel," who understood all those things, would exultingly exclaim in praise to God, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Surely then it was according to the eternal purpose of God that the wrath of man should praise him, and that he should restrain the remainder of wrath. So in the purpose and counsel of God, he has limited and bounded the wrath of mankind, just as truly as he has fixed a limit to the seas, saying, "Thus far shalt thou come, and here shalt thy proud waves be staid." With David we may rejoice that it is so. The psalmist says, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder: he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph. For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of

Jacob whom he loved. Selah." David says again, "For the kingdom is the Lord's; and he is the Governor among the nations." And so a great heathen king was humbled and made to say, "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me; and I blessed the Most High; and I praised and honored him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? * * * Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."—Daniel iv. Well did this king know this, for God had abased him, and taught him to thus confess the supremacy of the Most High. In this is the safety of God's people. His dominion is over all worlds and beings and things. Therefore, says Paul, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

As a most momentous and solemn instance of this truth, and the truth of the text, let me refer to the ancient prophecies of the life and persecutions, the cruel betrayal and mockings, scourging and crucifixion, of the meek and lamb-like Jesus of Nazareth, for every event of all this was determined and foretold hundreds of years before their awful fulfillment, and so were embraced in the counsel of God. The very persons engaged in this most wicked of all wicked man-

ders, were also foretold, as Judas and the high priest, Pilate and Herod, the mocking and smiting soldiers, the one who offered the blessed sufferer the vinegar, and the other who thrust a spear in his side and heart, and also the two thieves on the right and left of Jesus, yea, the darkness and earthquake, the rending rocks and rent vail, the opening graves and rising dead, all were foreordained and foretold. Of all this crime of crimes, the apostle Peter by inspiration said, "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: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Not long after Peter thus spoke, being assembled with the other apostles, "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 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 before to be done." Words could not be plainer, nor stronger; and these are divinely inspired words. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Thus did the Lord hear and bless them in this prayer. O Lord, this

is enough for us to know, and here we may rest, trusting in thee.

The counsel and purpose of God so determined the fearful storm and shipwreck, in bringing all on board safely to the island of Melita, that by his servant Paul he greatly blessed the people of the island, who not only healed their sick, but also made known to them the gospel of our Savior. So the two texts that the dear, distant brother gave me, are in unison with the divine counsel and purpose, and yet the accountability of man and secondary causes are established. All worlds and creatures are under law to the Lord God omnipotent, and all are subjected to his sovereignty, and held within the determined limit of his eternal purpose. Both the Bible and the book of nature teach and prove this. Were it not so, then we could have no assurance of anything good, but uncertainty, peril and awful destruction should run riot everywhere throughout the universe. Why this would be nothing less than to wrest the crown of dominion from the great white throne of God, and leave us as a ship turned loose to drift upon a storm-tossed sea, or it would be virtually saying, with the fool, "There is no God." When the spiritual poet, Cowper, driven by gloomy mental affliction, sought to go and drown himself, but God held him back by a singular providence, he returned home, and wrote the inspired song:

"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."

Jehovah himself affirms this truth, saying, "I am the Lord that maketh all

things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof; that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."—Isaiah xlv. This was more than a hundred years before Cyrus, the Persian king, was born. Please read on through the next chapter, in which the Lord says of Cyrus, "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none else. * * * 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." The things here foretold, which God said he would bring to pass, involved wars, the overthrow of peoples and nations, the return of the Jews to Judea, from their seventy years' captivity, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the tem-

ple, through great suffering and perils. Yet God had purposed to bring to pass all those great and mighty events, "And it was so."

In the histories of nations, their rise and fall, recorded in the Bible, the careful reader cannot but be impressed with the fact that the Almighty determined, directed and controlled their great battles, all of which were connected with his chosen people, either directly or indirectly. Elihu testified to Job of God and his ways and works, and of clouds and stormy winds he says, "He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth. * * * God thundereth marvelously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. * * * He scattereth his bright cloud. And it is turned round about by his counsels; that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth. He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy. * * * With God is terrible majesty. Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict." Then the Lord said to Job, "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it. * * * Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous? Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? * * * Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee. * * * Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee."

It would be well for us all to meekly receive these divine rebukes and lessons

of truth, and make the contrite and submissive confession that Job did in the end of his trial. Before we presume to either criticise the Almighty, or apologize for him, as he has revealed himself in the Bible, let us remember these two positive attributes: God is holy; God is love. Then let us remember also, God is infinite, omnipotent, supreme. Remembering these, and our unholiness, ignorance, weakness and dependence, we shall be impressed with a spirit of awe and reverence before his majesty, and should shudder at the blasphemous and horrid thought of charging sin or wickedness to God, or of saying that his ways are unequal, or he is unjust. God himself says, "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker!" And his servant Paul says, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Poor, sinful, ignorant man. Yet he vaunteth himself as wiser and holier than the Holy One. How shocking for any sinful creature, whose very breath is from the Almighty, to jeeringly talk about the holy Jehovah being the author of sin, if he would dare to comprehend all things in his eternal purpose and almighty control. Yet the very being, preservation and salvation of those who thus rant is bound up in this dominion and supremacy of the ever blessed and holy Lord God Almighty. His word is, "Be still, and know that I am God." O, with his suffering Son, let us meekly say, "Father, thy will be done." Man's accountability is bound up in God's sovereignty.

Trusting in God omnipotent, farewell.

D. BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Feb. 25, 1898.

HAVANA, Kansas, July, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I have a desire to write a few lines to tell of God's goodness and mercy to me, perhaps more to relieve my mind than anything else. I have often been asked to write my christian experience, and have it published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but I invariably answered, No. I could not write it at all, certainly not for publication. But when I read in the SIGNS the experience of God's dear people, I am so much comforted and encouraged, that I think, O, if I knew that any one would enjoy reading what I might write, I would be willing to try, yet I feel my inability and unworthiness to do so. Without God's help we can do nothing. How true that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things God hath prepared for them that love him," and that none but God can reveal his mysteries. To this I can testify, as I attended preaching nearly all my life, and no one ever told it to me, so that I could understand, until it came his time that I should taste that the Lord is gracious. There was no such thing then as being almost persuaded, I was fully persuaded, from the very moment that I saw myself a justly condemned sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. In February, 1894, the United Brethren held a protracted meeting in our little town. I attended only two or three times in that many weeks. I did not like these meetings very well, and was sure I could do no good there, so stayed away. But I went again, and that night there were three sermons preached. Not one word was said that had the least effect on me. I never felt better satisfied with myself than I did that night. Before the meeting closed several of the members talked, among

them a dear friend of mine, one whom I always believed to be a christian. She said she had prayed for the parents in the community who were out of the church. I supposed I was included in the number, and I thought, I am very sorry if she is troubled about me, I know that I am all right. I was not troubled about myself. Then she said, "My prayer is that Jesus will show them the right way." At this moment it seemed my heart was pierced with an arrow. The tears began to course down my cheeks, and I could not keep them back, although I tried so hard. This was altogether contrary to my proud nature. I said in my heart, "Jesus show me the right way." Never before did I feel the necessity of asking God's forgiveness for my sins. I tried to go to sleep that night, thinking I should feel better the next day, but when I awoke in the morning, I was surprised that my burden was no less than the night before. I did not go back to church, or tell any one of my feelings, for several days, as I thought no one ever felt as I did, hoping each day that on the morrow I should feel better. I was praying constantly, and it was the prayer of every poor sinner, when they come to that place in their experience, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I would often ask the Lord to give me some sign or token that would enable me to feel that he had mercifully borne my sins in his own body upon the cross of Calvary. How I longed to hear the voice of my God, "I love thee, pass under the rod." But the thought always came, there is not a ray of hope for me. My husband went to his place of business, and my children to school, and I was very glad to be alone all day. I was almost constantly in tears, except when some one came in, then I tried to be very

cheerful. I was asked several times if I was sick, but said no. I would have done anything to get rid of this terrible feeling. I could even have gone to the mourners' bench (which I had always said I would never do). I did not stay away because I formerly disliked it, or that I was now too proud to do so, but I simply did not think it necessary. I was sure it could do me no good. I then went to church two or three afternoons, but returned with the same sorrowful heart. One day while alone at home, I sat with my hands clasped in agonized prayer. I cried, "O God, be merciful, O Lord have mercy." The misery and distress of soul that I was in I never can describe. I could not shed tears. I do not know how long I remained thus. At length I said, "Dear Jesus, only give me tears." This last request was granted. I often thought I would go to my room, and kneel down and pray, but something always seemed to say, You are too sinful; such a worm as you dare not kneel in the presence of God. I finally had to tell my husband. He said, "If God has commenced a good work, he will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ." This gave me a little hope for at least half an hour. I heard that sweet and loving "Come unto me," as I had never heard it before, but I knew that unless Jesus showed me the way, I could not come. I read the Bible a great deal, but got no relief. In about ten days from the time my trouble began, as I was retiring for the night, all at once I felt that my burden was gone. I could not tell how or when, but that heaviness was gone from my heart. I told my husband so; he rejoiced at this, but I could not. I felt very sad, but had a feeling of reconciliation to God's will, but in less than half an hour I could, and did, rejoice and

praised God with every breath. Jesus seemed very near, and his everlasting arms were underneath me to bear me up. It could not have been plainer if it had been spoken in audible words, "Thy sins are all forgiven." I shall not attempt to describe my happiness; my "joy was unspeakable, and full of glory." "Tongue cannot express, the sweet comfort and peace, of a soul in its earliest love." I wanted to get up about midnight, and go tell my sister, who lives two blocks away, but my husband said, "No, you must wait till morning." The next day was Sunday. I wanted everybody to know of my happy change, so I went to the M. E. Sunday School. It was a very stormy morning. The rain and hail on the window panes was sweet music in my ears. From there I went to the U. B. church to preaching, and told them, "This is the happiest day of my life; the darkness has passed away, and I trust the true light now shineth, blessed be the name of the Lord." It was then no longer a secret, my many friends all rejoiced with me. I shall never forget that day, and many others that followed. Some told me that I would not always be so happy. I thought I certainly would be, that I should never have any more trouble; Christ had spoken peace to my sinsick soul, and how could I ever doubt it? "Little of myself I knew, little thought of Satan's power." I soon commenced reading the SIGNS, and was often lost in wonder at the writers telling my experience better than I could have told it myself. One mystery was solved, what my husband had always found in the SIGNS to interest him so much. This paper has always been in our home since we were married, but I never read it before. A few months previous to the time that I became interested in reading it, I gathered

up a lot of them, and piled them away, because there was no room in the house for them. (We never destroyed them, not that I cared for them, but because they were precious to my companion.) These were now brought back by me, and read and reread, and now there is room for them, and all that we have received since. I remember saying to my husband once, when he was reading to me, "That everything in that paper was very monotonous." That I believed one wrote thus and so because another did. To-day I trust I am writing the same thing over again, and I know that I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. O, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of God. He is the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. A few weeks after I rejoiced in hope, I went with my husband to his Baptist meeting. During the sermon I thought, Has he told the minister everything that I ever said to him about my experience, and more, too? But no, he has not met him since, and to-day he has had no opportunity. It seemed every word he said was intended for me. From that day to this, I have never tired of hearing the Old Baptists preach. All was joy and peace for a little less than two months from the time my story begins. Then all in one day I became, I thought, the most wretched being on earth. I had believed that I was numbered with the redeemed, now I was positive I never passed from nature's darkness into his marvelous light. I was sure it had all been a delusion, and I was very miserable. Only those who have tasted of God's love, and felt his pardoning mercy, and then realized that they are forever banished from his presence, can

have any idea of my distress. I did not close my eyes in sleep that night until very late. It was plain to me that I had profession, and not possession. That dreadful cry went up, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" The next day, while reading the SIGNS, my eyes fell upon these words, "Dear reader, have you ever felt as if God had forsaken you, and justly, too?" and much more of the christian trouble and warfare. "If so, rest assured that you are numbered with the saints." It seemed I did not breathe while I read these few lines again, I was so astonished. I thought, Can it be possible that after all I am not a cast-away? I read the article through, and to my surprise found that it told my experience of the past two days better than I knew it myself. It was wonderful. It lifted me up, and encouraged me. It came just at the time when I greatly needed the solace of a dear saint. Before night the Lord triumphed gloriously. I was again led in the green pastures of his love, and beside the still waters of his abounding grace. Joy and gladness crowned my drooping head, and the Sun of righteousness healed my broken and contrite heart, while anthems of praise came to me from everywhere. The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion. God leads his little ones in a way they have not known. Soon after this my mind was greatly exercised on the subject of baptism. "If ye love me keep my commandments." There is comfort in living in obedience to our blessed Savior. For about three months I thought about it every hour in the day, and whenever I saw a body of water, the first thing that entered my mind was, "O, here is water enough to be baptized." I was now no longer satisfied out of the church. I longed for a home among God's people.

I had ere this made up my mind which was my choice. For reasons which need not here be explained, I did not unite with the church until the next November, when my name was written with the Primitive Baptists, and I was baptized by Elder Nathan Reader, the following May. It was a sweet welcome home, and a haven of rest to my soul. I could not be persuaded to return from following after them. I have heard people say they were sorry they did not start sooner in the service of God. I have not much use for this expression, for I believe verily that it all came to pass at the appointed time of the Father. He is our Savior, Priest and King. God says, all his people shall be taught of him, and we shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us. When I first felt the forgiveness of sins, and the love and peace of God was so sweetly felt in my heart, I thought I should always walk in his footsteps, and obey his commands, and never stray. Only four years have passed since then, and I have come so far short of doing this, I feel very unworthy of God's rich blessings, yet I desire to live nearer to Jesus, and long to abide in his love. O that I may ever love these things, and live worthy the vocation wherewith I am called. Some do not understand me when I say that I have more sorrow now than when I was without hope in the world, but the things that grieve me now, did not trouble me then. He hath not dealt with us according to our sins. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." He says he has loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. The sincere wish of my heart is that God will bless all.

Your sister, I hope,

MRS. T. R. PITTMAN.

Formerly Mary Vore, of Bucyrus, Ohio.

NEW YORK CITY, July 28, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BENTON BEEBE:—I inclose a letter witten to me by brother Coulter. It did me good, and others who have read it think with me that it would be profitable for publication. I have not asked brother Coulter's permission to send it, but I know it will be all right with him.

Affectionately your brother in hope of life in Jesus,

JOHN McCONNELL.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., July 4, 1898.

MY DEAR BROTHER McCONNELL:—I have done so little writing this summer that I hardly know how to begin, or what to say. I must confess to an entirely barren mind, my heart is a field neglected and uncultivated, overgrown with foul weeds and fit for nothing. I cannot talk, I cannot think, and of course I cannot write. I would have my heart to be a fruitful field, but I have continually to cry, "My leanness! My leanness!" I long for the experience of the sweet singer of Israel when he said, "But his delight is in the law of the Lord: and in his law doth he meditate day and night." The beautiful city of Zion, that was a delight to my soul, has faded from my view. I feel to know that its transcendent beauty and glory is not dimmed, save to my own failing vision. It is I that am afar off, and not the city. The fountain of God's love is not dried up, but I am hedged up, and walled in with the mountains of my own carnal-mindedness. I seem to have sold my "birthright for a mess of pottage," bartered away the weighty and precious things of the kingdom of my gracious Redeemer, and gone in "the way of Baal."

A brother asked me yesterday if I believed the "five foolish virgins" of the

parable, were virgins indeed, and members of the body of Christ? I made answer, that if it were not so, then I have no hope, for if I am a virgin at all, I am the weakest and most foolish of all the virgins. I know that my Lord is true and righteous altogether, while "I am carnal, sold under sin." As he ascends, so I must descend. My flesh is servant to the law of sin. I am weak and unstable as water. Yet I feel that constant desire in my heart to walk uprightly in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Once in a while I can say of a truth, that my delight is in the law of the Lord. I feel to have within my very grasp, sometimes, the realization of the wondrous truth, that, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart," &c. But I seem to grasp them as the drowning man grasps the straw, as one whose "feet have well nigh slipped." I am sure at such times the prayer of the psalmist is in my heart, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer." In the days that are past, "I have tasted that the Lord is gracious." And when I call to mind the way the dear Lord has led me, my soul does cry out under the weight of a weary load of sin and anxious thoughts, "Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God." For it is surely with me, "As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" Yet I feel it to be far better to have all the turbulence of unrest in a constant conflict, than to be apparently dead to any feeling sense of grace working its perfect work. In the conflict, hope points

to an end of the struggles with, perchance, victory. But this awful leanness, barrenness and emptiness. Surely it is a time when our enemies can startle us with the subtle question, Where is now thy God? This law of the Lord, brother McConnell, that is perfect and converteth the soul, has it any limit? Does it not go all the way back to the garden? To the beginning of time? If it is now a law written in our heart, was it not always (before its promulgation) an unwritten law, inherent in every child of grace? And when each subject of grace is quickened into divine life, is it not the publishing of that perfect law, which shows him his just condemnation? In other words, Is it not then that the law enters, that the sin may abound, in his experience?

Will you write me about those words of the psalmist, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul?"

When I sat down to write you, three days ago, I truly felt as I said, that I was empty and could not write; but I fondly hoped something would be given me that I might interest you. But it does not come, and all I can talk of is self, self, self.

We are all in usual health. I looked in vain for some word from you in the letter that brought the Minutes. Our brethren here are scattering to cooler climes. Brother Fetter will be with us again next Sunday, if the Lord will. We will be glad to announce an appointment for you for any Sunday morning.

We all join in love to yourself and sister McConnell.

Affectionately your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 28, 1898.

BENTON L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I have been made to feel again that I would like to write you a few lines,

after reading your editorial notice on page 211, of the SIGNS, number seven, current volume. I felt this way some time ago, when I read that notice of yours, referring to the editorial of your dear father's on "Absolute Predestination" in the SIGNS number four, but my weakness seemed to prevent me. Much of my time I feel my weakness and ignorance of these things, yet they are the dearest to me of all things. Your face is not remembered by me, whether I have seen you I do not know, for I am young, and have been a member here but a few years, yet I do love to read those short notices from your pen. I felt like writing you particularly when I read those lines of yours in SIGNS number four, referring to your dear father, Elder Gilbert Beebe, but it seemed that I was prevented by one stronger than I. You of course do not know me personally, whether you remember the few articles of mine that have been printed in the dear SIGNS I do not know, or if my name has been mentioned to you or not by others. But I have learned, the little that I have visited other churches, that Elder Durand has mentioned my name at different times, which has made me feel very unworthy. He is a very dear brother to me, showing me so much kindness, and seems to take so much interest in me, and why I cannot tell, for I surely am one of the least of my Father's kingdom, if really one at all. I sometimes think it must be because of my ignorance in these things that he takes this interest in me, pitying my ignorance, which it seems no one can help seeing.

I did not intend to write in this way, or to take up your valuable time, as I have been doing. I only wanted to say that I wanted to add my little mite to those of whom you have received letters

of indorsement, encouragement and approval, of the editorial of your dear father's, republished, headed "Absolute Predestination," and the remarks by yourself, which to me were very comforting, and which I wanted to tell you of before this. When you spoke of the "Can't help its," how good it was to me. Surely we "can't help it," or "the good that we would," we would do, and not the evil which we would not. Truly we find a law in our members, that, when we would do good, evil is present with us. Yes, warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. It is only by the grace of God that we are enabled to do the things that we would. For he says, "Without me ye can do nothing."

But I must not impose upon your time. After you have read these few lines, lay them aside or destroy them. I do not look for you to answer this, for I know that your time is very much taken up, I only wanted to add my little mite to others. I do not ask you to publish this either, for it was not my intention for it to be published. I have presented but little else in it than my weakness and ignorance, but I wanted to express my love in some way. May God uphold all that are connected with the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and all others that are fighting the good fight.

Your brother, I hope, though in much weakness,

CASPER G. FETTER.

[THE above remarks of our young brother are a fair sample of the many letters we have received in commendation of the editorial of our father's, and the remarks appended, in number four, of this volume. We have not had time to answer these letters personally, and take this method of thanking brother

Fetter, and all others, who have written us indorsing the above mentioned editorials, and assuring them of our high appreciation of their approval, and of the encouragement it has been to us.—ED.]

ARENA, N. Y., Feb. 18, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—AS it is time for me to forward my subscription for our family paper, the SIGNS, I will submit a few thoughts for your disposal. I wish to cast in my testimony with many others who have written. I am well pleased with the new form that our paper has assumed. I think that it is neater and more convenient, and sometimes I think that it grows better with every number. To me it is more interesting when it contains a variety of short articles, from so many different members of our Father's family. One has a revelation, one an experience, and another an exhortation, but all to the edifying of the body. What a loss we, as a denomination, sustained when such tried and true soldiers of the cross as brother H. Cox, and sister M. M. Hassell, with many others that I might mention, were called to their home not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. How gifted they were, and for persons of such advanced age, it was wonderful. Every word they wrote seemed to be in the right place. Their understanding seemed so clear. But they have laid down their faithful pens, have laid their armor by, and have entered into that rest which remains for the people of God. Yet our adorable Master will not leave himself without witnesses. He is able to raise up other faithful ones to expound the gospel, and to testify of his power and love. For we read, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God hath perfected praise." I hope that those who are accustomed to

write for our paper will continue to do so. Do not weary in well doing. Cast your bread upon the waters, and in due time, it shall return unto you again. How does it return? This is one way. One brother writes that "Such a communication came to hand when I was walking in gross darkness and had no light, and it illumined my pathway." Another writes that such "A sister's communication was so rich in experience, and so childlike that I took courage again, for I thought that indeed I knew something of that way so beautifully described." Thus if any of the little ones can drop a few crumbs for the hungry, or give a cup of cold water to the thirsty, only in the name of a disciple, they shall not lose their reward. I noticed an article concerning dreams, in our paper a few months ago, in which I felt some interest, and would like to express an opinion. I can say as Elder Chick says, many of my dreams are worthless, many are utter impossibilities, yet notwithstanding these, if I have not received warnings in dreams, and also revelations, then I am a deceived person. I believe that the Lord of heaven and earth has just as much power to-day to warn or to teach his children in dreams, as he had eighteen hundred years ago, when he warned "Joseph in a dream saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word." He also warned Pharaoh of the seven years of plenty, and the seven years of famine, and several other instances might be quoted. In my early experience, more than thirty years ago, when I was without hope and felt my transgressions were weighing me down, I retired one night to rest, I was afraid that I should never live to see another morning. It seemed that I dreamed all night, but in each and every

dream the central figure was a being clothed with a halo of light, he was most glorious and wonderful beyond description. When I awoke in the morning I thought that it was Jesus whom I had seen in my dreams, and these lines dropped into my mind:

"The angels could do nothing more,
Than to fall at his feet, and the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners adore."

If I know my own heart, I did adore the Savior that day. Truly the Lord has many ways of revealing himself to his children. His ways are as far above ours as the heavens are above the earth.

Your sister in hope,

JULIANA H. DICKSON.

NEW MARTINSVILLE, W. Va., Feb. 10, 1898.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—DEAR AND ESTEEMED BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your good kind letter has been received. I can hardly tell you what a blessing it is to me, to receive such kind expressions from those whom I esteem very highly in the Lord. It is of priceless value to me, though I am not worthy of it. How good the dear Lord is to give to his servants such kind words of comfort, and good cheer, to hand to his poor and afflicted people. Your answer to my question as to what to do, to become reconciled to affliction, is altogether satisfactory to me. After I had asked the question I immediately felt reproved. While we know, as you say, it comes as the Lord will, and when he will, not when we will, yet in our extremity we are so apt to inquire, What shall I do to be saved? Only in our extremity it seems, do we really learn that salvation is of the Lord. I mean our time salvation, as well as our eternal salvation. Unutterable soul anguish prepares us to learn this great and good lesson. Never before have I learned it so fully as of late, for never before have I

so fully felt my utter helplessness, and absolute need of God's rich mercy and infinite love. My present situation is indeed a prison to me, yes, as the inner prison. Yet this boundless mercy, and infinite love, does sometimes change our prison-house into a palace, and enable us to sing praises to his wonderful name, even while thrust within the inner prison. O, that all my days might be thus spent in praise to his great name. But I am so little, so weak, and worthless, and much of the time in darkness, and how can I glorify his great and wonderful name? Those who live near me would comfort me if they could, by telling me to do thus and so, and to exercise faith. No doubt they mean it for good, but they do not comfort. I am not so rich in faith that I can exercise it at command. Through the persuasion of a friend I was at a crowded meeting last night, where they professed to exercise much faith, and were exhorted to that effect. I listened to a lengthy discourse, but there was not one word of soundness in it. Grace was not even hinted at, and the Lord only named, or thought of, as being greatly disappointed because sinners would not yield. The Lord had expected to convert fifty to night, (using their own words) and we have only twelve. [Such words seem almost too blasphemous to even quote.—ED.] How forcibly was I reminded of the words, "Men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." Still, we hear much said about the world getting better. I feel thankful, I trust, from the depths of my heart, that I too was not given over to be thus deceived, and that my name and my sympathies are with a people who magnify the Lord. I think it good if we can feel a pity for them, rather than blame them. They have been holding what is

called a revival service, since the first of November, but last night was the first of my attendance, and it will be the last. The opera, or ballroom, or any other similar place, is preferable to these meetings, where the name of God is blasphemed, and the glory given to man. [We say amen. Neither places of worldly amusement, nor such places of worship, are suitable for followers of the Lamb.—ED.] O, how I do long for the people of this town to hear the gospel preached. I have just read and enjoyed your article in the February first number of the SIGNS. I especially enjoyed that part in which you speak of the attractions of heaven. Truly, as you say, they are not in gold and pearls, things of earthly value. We can find and admire these things while here, but this does not satisfy. But to be where sin cannot enter, to be free from sin, to be with the blessed Jesus, and to be like him, is heaven enough for the heaven-born soul. This will satisfy.

But I must close. I did not intend to write but a few lines this time, as your letter seemed to demand a reply. You ask permission to send my former letter to the SIGNS. It was written while I was greatly distressed in mind. I do not know what I wrote, but I fear that it cannot benefit any one, but I am willing to abide by yours, and the editor's judgment.

With much christian regard for you and yours, I remain your sister, as I trust,

ARAH ALDERTON.

STATE ROAD, Del., June 29, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have not been in the habit of sending you private letters, for publication, although I always have some good ones on hand. I will now inclose you one from sister Emma Hines, of North Carolina, whose experi-

ence I once asked you to copy in the SIGNS. I never read a more interesting one, nor one in which deeper sorrows and more sore and desolating afflictions were passed through. Sister Ella Coulbourn, of whom she speaks, is a young member at Snowhill, Md.

In love and fellowship,

E. RITTENHOUSE.

PERNELL, N. C., June 27, 1893.

ELDER E. RITTENHOUSE—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It seems that something always deters me from giving you a prompt reply. I enjoyed your letter much, and appreciate the acrostic highly. I received a letter from our dear sorrowing sister Ella Coulbourn last week, telling me of her mother's death. I know perfectly well how to sympathize with the dear girl in the loss of a dear good mother. God gives us but one mother. However kind and loving others may be, nothing earthly can take her place. Time can blunt the keen edge of most sorrows, and God can reconcile us to them, yet there are times when my heart yearns with unutterable longings for my dear parents, and I believe that it will always be so, at times. Then there are other times when I am made to be reconciled to it all, and to rely upon the precious promise, "As thy days so shall thy strength be." We may read and think of the promises, but none can do us any good until God applies them. I cannot exercise faith as the worldly religionists tell us to do. I would that I could always believe. I would, if I could, always be instant in prayer. I would, if I could, always serve him in the beauty of holiness and ever be found walking in the King's highway. But this sin that dwells within me, is always leading me into trouble. I think that I realize more and more, that I am

but dust, for it is said, dust shall be the serpent's meat, and I find him ever preying upon this body of mine. But thanks be to God, the serpent can never gain the victory over the souls of God's little ones. O no, he can only give us trouble, fightings, &c. But Christ has risen, a mighty conqueror over death, hell and the grave. "O, death were is thy sting?" It is lost in Christ. This body gives a little shudder, a gasp, bears a little sting, and returns to the mother dust. But the happy spirit, released from its prison-house, goes to God who gave it. "O, grave where is thy victory?" Since Christ has risen, will he not raise us too at the last day? Yes, robed in his own purity and righteousness, I verily believe. Speaking of sister Ella, she has my sympathy, and I believe that she has the sympathy of Jesus, and I believe he has given, and will give her strength to bear it all. The Lord's dealings with her have been wonderful. His word shall not return unto him void, but shall prosper in the thing he pleases, and accomplish that whereunto he sends it. I feel sure that the sickness of Mrs. Coulbourn, and her death, and sister Ella's faithfulness, and pure christian character, are among the mysterious ways in which God will perform his wonders, and that she will see a great and good result therefrom in her family. I do not know why I should feel so, but I do. But I must close. I send inclosed my photograph. It is the likeness of one who has met with many sorrows and trials of many kinds. It is the face of a sinner saved by grace, if saved at all. Write when you feel like it. Your letters do me good. Pardon all amiss, and pray for me.

Affectionately,

EMMA HINES.

KANSAS, III., Jan. 18, 1898.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed find a letter addressed to me by a stranger, a brother from the state of Kansas. After looking it over if you deem it profitable reading for the patrons of the SIGNS, I should be pleased to see it in print. I have his consent to forward it to you.

Yours in hope,

JAMES M. TRUE.

HUTCHISON, Kan., Jan. 9, 1898.

ELDER JAMES M. TRUE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—You may be surprised at receiving a letter from me, as you perhaps do not know there is such a man living. I trust that you will pardon me for my boldness in addressing you as a brother, and yet a stranger in this life. I have been reading after you for quite awhile. Your article indorsing Elder Chick, in the last number of the SIGNS, is the cause of my writing you this letter. I want to say that I indorse your views, as well as Elder Chick's, upon the predestination of the great Ruler of all things. I stand almost alone in the church where I belong, with one or two exceptions. I live about fifty miles away from my place of church meeting, and when I go, which is perhaps two or three times a year, the principle theory preached of late is the common salvation.

As to common, or time salvation, as it is preached by many in our part of the country, I cannot agree with them, because it has so much similarity to the law commands, blessing for obedience, a trespass as it were upon free grace. I would not say that we should not be obedient, but are made obedient through free grace which is a gift of God. I have read a number of the Baptist papers, but have settled down to one, the SIGNS. I have

read a great number of Baptist books, and I must confess that I like the SIGNS best of all. In fact it is the only preaching that really suits me. Our pastor told me a short time ago, that he liked the experience part of the SIGNS, but not the doctrine. I told him that the doctrine suited me. Preaching without sound doctrine, did not fully suit me. I was an old Virginian, but have lived in Kansas twenty-five years. I am sixty-one years of age. I am poor in worldly goods, poor in spiritual gifts, a poor scholar, but rich in sin, thus being poor because of that also. I have not many refreshing seasons. This wandering scribble may be very unacceptable to you, and tire you to read it, and so I will close by asking an interest in your prayers. I only meant to indorse yours and Elder Chick's views upon the doctrine of predestination.

Unworthily yours, in a little hope of a better life,

A. M. McINTURF.

[It is always right to exhort believers, upon gospel grounds, to obedience and right living, but not upon legal grounds. We also, have seen the subject of time salvation, as it is called, treated upon in a way that seemed to us to savor of the law rather than of grace.—ED.]

WAVERLY, Pa., May 9, 1898.

BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Inclosed is testimony from brother Tappener, which I think has the right ring. At least I indorse it as internal truth. I do miss Elder Jenkins so much. He was a faithful servant of God, a lovely and loving brother.

Yours unworthily,

D. M. VAIL.

DELPHI, N. Y., April, 8, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I write you in the bonds and fellowship of the gospel of

our Lord Jesus Christ, who has saved us, and has 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 foundation of the world, and not because of our own good works. The apostle says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." It is free and unmerited. He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, but not for any good thing that there is in such a poor unworthy sinner as I am. I am prone to sin as the sparks are to fly upward. But I have hope sometimes, that this is an evidence of spiritual light within me, that I can see the darkness and sin of my heart, which causes me to groan, and mourn the absence of the spirit of obedience and praise to the name of God, which is my reasonable service. I feel to say with the apostle, "For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." The things that I would not, them I do. So I know that if I am saved it must surely be by the grace of God through the merits of his Son Jesus Christ. Jesus said, none can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw them, and I will raise them up at the last day. I cannot call to mind but one instance where the Savior said anything about one person leading another, and that was, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." I desire to be led and directed by the almighty power of God, and according to his own will, and not mine, that I may attain to that which shall be to the honor and glory of God. I love the doctrine of salvation by grace, without works, the predestination of all things, and his election of his people according to his own purpose. I have no faith nor confidence

in a God who did not purpose all things from eternity. It needs all the attributes of God to save a poor sinner like me. I love the gospel in its fullness, not daubed with untempered mortar, to tickle the natural ear. It is none too stong for me.

I leave this testimony for my brethren in the church.

Your brother,

S. E. TAPENER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July. 12, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The following was written by Miss Esther A. McColl, daughter of the late John T. McColl, who was the eldest son of the late Elder Thomas McColl, of Canada. It was found after her death. She came to the meeting at Ekfrid, Canada, two years ago, where I last saw her. Not long after she passed away at the house of her uncle brother Duncan T. McColl, manifesting that she had been given a good hope through grace. Her mother showed me this when at Ekfrid two weeks ago, and I requested it for publication in the SIGNS, "He fashioneth their hearts alike."

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

DECEMBER 29, 1895.

Dear Lord, is there anything which can soften this hard and senseless heart? Can anything warm it, and thaw the ice of my soul? Was anything ever so stupid, indifferent, unfeeling, careless, helpless and hopeless, accepted in thy undeserved mercy, as this flinty heart of mine? It hangs on thee, dear Lord, in spite of its coldness, and looks to thee with a trembling faith that cannot let thee go, as it recognizes in thee its only salvation, and only help.

Speak, dear Lord, and bid my soul to live, and not die, as it seems ready to do.

I know that naught that belongs to Christ can die, since because he lives, his people shall live also. And thou, Lord, knowest that I believe thou hast spoken a promise of life to my soul, and I believe thou art faithful who hast promised, for thou art the Lord, and changes not. So this feeble hope has come to my despairing soul, and relieved it of its greatest burden. But, dear Lord, if I am thine, and thy divine life is in my soul, why can I not see more fruit of it? More love to thee? More desire to do thy will? More longing for thy presence and teaching? More understanding of thy word? More of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus? More mourning for sin? More struggling against it? More kindness for those about me, and desire for their welfare? Is there one heavenly grace that I possess? Thou knowest. But if I were really dead, would I know it or feel it? But thou tarriest and my soul languishes. Do, Lord, teach me by thy Spirit, thy truth. Give me a love for it, and a faith in thee which shall enable me to hold it fast, and defend it when attacked.

Strengthen my coward, traitor heart, that I may not fear to declare what I believe to be thy truth.

Lord, what thou givest, no man can take from me. Give me a living experience of these things in my heart. Then shall I be unshaken by the suggestions of error and evil, since they are written not only in thy book, but on the tables of my heart.

I believe that thy Spirit has laid upon my heart, through the reading of thy word, and thy divine light shed upon my understanding, some of thy doctrine, predestination, election, indissoluble union of Christ and his church, and the impossibility of their ever being separated from him. Enable me to be faithful to the trust

which thou hast reposed in me. May I never deny thee, nor keep silent when I should speak, through fear of men. Lord open up my way, that I may know where I should go. Thou knowest the tossings to and fro, the darkness in which I walk, not knowing if it be thy path. O, shed thy light about me, and may it be light to my feet, that I may know where to step, and not walk in forbidden paths. Was there ever so blind and ignorant a creature as I?

Lord, I cannot let thee go. Though doubt and fear beset me, yet is my hope in thee. How often have thy words revived my sinking faith, and caused me to hope anew. There shall not fail any good thing of all that the Lord thy God hath promised thee. O, do not let me sin by doubting thee. I believe thou hast given me many tokens of thy faithfulness to thy word. O, that I may realize the blessings of an interest in the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus.

Above every other blessing, give me love for thee, without which I cannot fully hope that the work is divine, and not imagination. Lord, on thee alone, my hope rests. Thou dost not fail those who put their trust in thee. For Jesus' sake remember a poor, unworthy creature.

BRUNSWICK, Me., Jan. 9, 1859.

DEAR BROTHER JOHN STAPLES:—I have had it in my mind for some time to write you a few lines by way of encouragement; although I know that you are surrounded as it were by the saints of the most high God, and by those, too, which are far more capable of imparting to you good instruction than I am. But I know that young christians are apt to think, when a dark cloud passes over their minds, and hides their Savior from their view, that they have been deceived, and

are apt to think that they never knew what it was to be a true disciple of Christ, and they often think at such times that the children of God never have such wicked thoughts, or such temptations, or such doubts and fears as they do. But, my dear brother, if clouds should pass between you and the natural sun, and hide it from your view for weeks together, you would not say that you never saw it, or that you had never felt the warming influence of its rays. No child of God when they look within their own breast will ever see anything there but selfishness, wickedness, darkness and depravity, as long as they remain in this evil world. Remember that every one of the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty have to walk by faith, and not by sight. Often they have to pass through fiery trials, and endure sore temptations, and often severe afflictions, and heavy bereavements come upon them, and they are apt to think at such times that if they were a child of God it would not be thus with them, but let us examine the word, and see what that says in regard to God's children. "Behold I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."—Isaiah xlvi. 10. "For thou wilt save the afflicted people."—Psalm xviii. 27. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."—Psalm xxxiv. 19. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. iv. 17. Then let us consider what the chosen people of God had to endure in old times. You will find some of their afflictions spoken of in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. You will find that some of the saints "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and impris-

onment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy :) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." And then we ought to consider how much Christ has suffered for us. May you, my brother, consider well all of those things, and may it lead you to yield a cheerful obedience to all the requirements of your Lord and Master, and may you be willing to go without the camp bearing the reproach of Christ.

I must leave you now. I hope you will keep the commands of God, that you may have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city, to go no more out. This is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

[As will be seen by the date of this article it was written nearly forty years ago, but it will doubtless be read with deep interest by many who were personally acquainted with our dear brother, the late Elder Campbell.—ED.]

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

To the churches composing the associations with whom we correspond, the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada, sendeth christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We received your messengers at our meeting held at Ekfrid, Ontario, June 25th, 1898, and give expression to our fellowship with you on the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. We desire a continuation of your correspondence. Your messengers were well laden with the blessings of the gospel of Christ, and their teaching was very acceptable.

WILLIAM POLLARD, Mod.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"I AM GLORIFIED IN THEM."

(JOHN xvii. 10.)

These are the words of the Lord, in his prayer to his Father, just before he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies. In approaching the consideration of any of the words or works of Jesus, we should remember that we are treading upon holy ground, but some things cause us to feel this in an especial manner, as we approach the consideration of this prayer of the Savior. First, it was a prayer in which he was communing face to face with his God and our God. Second, it was the expression of his feelings as he stood within the shadow of the cross, where he was about to finish his work of redemption and atonement. It seems to us that the words of this prayer are in a peculiar sense holy ground. We feel like writing or speaking of these words with solemnity and reverence. It has seemed to others, and it has seemed to us, that to this prayer, rather than to the prayer which Jesus taught to his disciples, which commonly is called the Lord's prayer, should this distinguishing title be attached. This is truly his prayer, while the other is the disciples' prayer, which

he taught to them. It has long seemed to us that in this prayer, which Jesus offered, and in that which he taught his disciples, we have the substance of that for which the Spirit will always move the people of God to pray. At least these are the chief things which are needed by those who believe in God. We know that in all things, the believer is to commit his way unto the Lord, both in that which is temporal, and in that which is spiritual. These two prayers contain the good things which the Lord has prepared for those who love him. They express the gifts which the risen Lord has received for men, yea, for the rebellious also. In this prayer Jesus asks for the manifestation of that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. He asks also that he might be glorified in his people, and they in him. He says that he prays not for the world, but for those who are his. He prays that they might be sanctified, or set apart, for his service and glory, as he sets himself apart for the glory of God. And he asks that all his may be one, even as he and his Father are one. He presents the oneness of his people with himself and with his Father, and finally asks that they may be with him, that they may behold his glory which the Father had given him. These are all precious things which he has in store for those who are his. No mortal tongue nor pen can begin to describe that which is involved in all this, of grace or glory, for those who love God. God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit, but they are the unspeakable things which Paul saw when he was caught up to the third heavens. We would gladly speak of all these things could we find words to do so. Glorious as they are, we see but little of them, and can utter still less than we sometimes think we see.

Among the pregnant words of this prayer, there has seemed to us to be none more full of present comfort and encouragement, than the words quoted at the head of this article: "I am glorified in them." He had said just before, "And all mine are thine, and thine are mine." He thus shows that he was not seeking to interest his Father in the objects of his love and care, but was speaking to him of those in whom he and his Father were mutually interested already. If these disciples were his, they belonged to his Father also. Both he and his Father loved them, and would come to them, and take up their abode with them. It has seemed to us that these words, "And I am glorified in them," were used in the light of an appeal to God for them, and that they come to us as an additional assurance that God will never leave nor forsake us, seeing that the darling of heaven, the only begotten Son of God, whom he loves, and has everlastingly loved with a supreme love, is glorified in them. If he loved us before Jesus was glorified in us, much more will he continue to love us now. Therefore Jesus speaks for the comfort and assurance of his disciples, and conveys to them the sure evidence that they shall always be kept by the power of God. However unworthy they are in themselves, and however much they may doubt the forbearance of God to them, because they are in themselves so unworthy, they cannot doubt the love of God to his Son, and that the uppermost thought of the Father is to glorify the Son, and that therefore he will, for his Son's sake, preserve those in whom he is glorified to his heavenly kingdom.

Now we come to consider more especially the words of the text itself, and in doing so, we seek to emphasize each word of this short sentence. Let us pause over

each word, as we read the text. First, the pronoun "I" should be emphasized. All the glory is his by right. No other one, no other thing, has any right to bear the glory of the Father's house. No other one shall ever have any of the glory. He is the redemption of his people. He is also their life. It is this last thought that seems to us to be particularly presented here. His glory is seen in the atonement upon Calvary. We cannot too highly exalt him as our sin-bearer and our sacrifice. But the thought here is, as it seems to us, not this, but the glory of the Savior as the life of his people. The new life which they have, and which he has given unto them, is not of themselves, and neither is it conferred by any other man. Jesus said, "I give unto my sheep eternal life." Elsewhere in the word he is himself said again and again to be their life. Whatever then dwells within the people of God that is good and heavenly, they have of him. He is glorified, and he alone, in them. No earthly parent nor teacher, no exhortation, teaching nor prayer of godly men, no Sunday School, nor Bible class, nor any other means, by which men strive to impart salvation to others, shall ever be glorified in one of his people. The work wrought in them is such that he alone is exalted in the experience of his people. In this age, as in all other ages, the creature strives to ascend into the places where God alone works, and to point to their work, rather than to the Lord's work. We hear much about men being saved by men, but very little about men being saved by the Lord. But while Jesus is not glorified by men of the religious world, and means, and money, and societies, and efforts, particularly organized efforts, are exalted, so that in them all Jesus has no room, there are places where

his name is exalted, and his work glorified, and they are the humble hearts of those who know him in their salvation as a whole and perfect Savior. In these he, and he alone, is glorified.

Second, we notice the second word in the text, "am." "I am glorified in them." He does not say, I was, or I will be, but, "I am." Many a poor, sin-burdened soul, who yet has a trembling hope in the mercy of God, through Jesus, has thought, "It cannot be true that the Lord is glorified in me." Such ones have looked forward to a time when the Lord may be glorified in them, and by them, but they cannot think it has been so yet, or that it is so now. Paul said, I am the chief of sinners. And again he said, I am the least, yea, I am less than the least of all saints, and yet at the same time Paul could also say, to him to live was Christ, and to die was gain. Jesus is not glorified in any other than the poor and unworthy. He is not glorified in any who can boast of human goodness. That man who is full of his own goodness, neither knows, nor can know, Jesus. He who is stripped of all that he has exalted himself in, so that he has come to count it all but dung and dross, is the one who is prepared for the indwelling of the life of Jesus, and in whom therefore Jesus is glorified. To such ones Jesus comes to be all in all. He is the only name given under heaven, and among men, whereby they can be saved. The soul may feel sinful and weak, and utterly dependent, and what is more, utterly destitute of any good thing, but this is all for the lifting of Jesus on high, in them. These are prepared to make mention that the Lord is exalted. The Lord's humble poor write bitter things against themselves. They often say, "The good that I would, I do not, and the evil that I

would not, that I do." They feel that they disgrace the holy profession which they have made, rather than that they glorify the name of Jesus. But the very feelings of self-abasement, which humbles them, is the best preparation for the name of the Lord to be exalted in them. It is by an experience of this kind that Jesus is glorified in them; and this is now. Wonderful, and well nigh incredible, as it may seem, even while they are abased, Jesus is exalted; even while they feel that they are far from him, he is nigh them, and as they deplore their great lack of spirituality, it is made manifest that they are spiritual. As in the heart of a man the conviction of sin and unworthiness increases, so is the name and work and power of Jesus glorified.

Third, let us consider the glory of the Lord. In what does it consist? What is it that most glorifies the Lord? Of one thing we may be sure, that the glory of the blessed Savior is not the glory of the world, nor is it any form of glory that the world can recognize. The glory of Jesus does not consist in the possession of great wisdom, or power, or wealth. Mental qualifications, or the possession of what the world will admire, do not constitute his glory which he had with the Father before the world began. If we want to see what it is that constitutes the glory of Jesus, we must go to his life, and teachings while in the flesh. What did he set before his face as the one thing at which he aimed? Was it not to do, and to suffer uncomplainingly, and with meekness and humility, and with patience and forbearance, and all the lowliness of his Spirit, just what his Father had given him to do? His glory was of the Spirit, hidden from men indeed, but known unto God, and acceptable to him. He did not possess great worldly power or honor, or

riches. The great of the earth knew him not, and did not bow to him. There was nothing in him that would cause them to bow before him, but the spiritual said that he possessed the words of eternal life. It was his glory to bear wrong with meekness, to render no reply when he was accused, and to do good to his enemies, and to pray for those who evil entreated him. In the sight of God a meek and quiet spirit is of greater price than all gold and rubies, than all intellectual power or knowledge, than all the trappings of earth. This he had, and this was his glory. And now he says, that he is glorified in his people. In that day, when all secret things shall be brought to light, and when the churl shall no more be called bountiful, then it will be seen that the things which men despise, are the things which God prizes, and which when possessed, glorify the giver of them. Jesus possessed no honor from men, nor anything which could call out the praise of the multitude, but he did possess the precious graces of the Spirit. Now these graces of the Spirit, made manifest in his people, are to-day the things which glorify him in them.

Fourth, let us emphasize the adjunct, "in them." We have seen that Jesus alone is glorified, that he is now glorified, and in what his glory consists, and now we are told where it is that he is glorified. It is in his disciples. It is no doubt true that Jesus is glorified by his disciples. But he is declared in this prayer to be glorified in them. He must be glorified in them before he can be glorified by them. This all, it must be remembered, relates not to his essential glory, but to the manifestation of it, in his people. The hope which they have is said to be "Christ in them the hope of glory." By the indwelling of his Spirit, all the graces

of the Spirit, which adorned first of all the blessed Redeemer, are begotten in them. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, temperance, &c., are the fruits of this Spirit in them in whom it dwells, and by these things is Christ glorified. This is the manifestation of the life of Christ in them. We always bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Christ might be made manifest in our mortal body. In the manifestation of these fruits in them, Jesus is glorified, and they are glorified with him. It is true the branches of the vine bear the fruit, but it is only because they are united to the vine, and grow and thrive by it. When we see the beautiful and luscious fruit, we do not say what a good branch, but what a good vine. So when we see the fruits of love, joy, &c., manifest in the branches of Christ, who is the true Vine, we do not say what a good man, but what a good Savior. At least this is what we should say. Not only in the fruit which they bear is Jesus glorified. He is glorified in them in still another sense. The believer, as he looks at himself, fails to see the fruits of the Spirit, as he would like, in himself. It appears to him, for the most part, that he has but little if any of these fruits of the Spirit manifest in his life. But one thing he does know, viz: Jesus is more and more exalted in his sight. Just in proportion as he sees little that is excellent in himself, does he come to magnify the grace of God, which saves him. It is not merely with his lips that he sings, "Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all," but from his heart does he desire this, because Christ is already exalted in his experience, as being made unto him of God, wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.

Jesus is glorified in them as the one life by which they come to know the fellowship of the Father and the Son, and by which they come to be one in him. Whatever his people have come to need, that he is revealed in them as being possessed of, in all its fullness of blessing. Being thus glorified in them, his fullness flows out in all their life. They were some of them adulterers, thieves, murderers, and followers of all that is evil, but they are now washed, they are justified, they are sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. They were aliens and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, and to the covenant of promise; without God, without Christ and without hope in the world, but they are now made nigh by the blood of Christ. They were dead, but they are now made alive. They were in the kingdom of darkness, but they are now translated out of it, into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death. They were once sinners, running after sin with all of their might; they are now sinners running away from sin as hard as they can. They once rolled sin as a sweet morsel under their tongue, they now cry out against it, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Once they did not see God, but now they see him, and abhor themselves, and repent in sackcloth and ashes. All this and much more is the result of the life of Christ manifest "in them," and in all this experience is Jesus glorified. Right at the time we know that his disciples were doubtful, and fearful, and unable to understand him, or his work, they were carnal in their feelings and judgment, they were swayed by covetousness, and envy, and strife, to be the greatest in his king-

dom; they were not humble and lowly as their Master was, in all his life, but yet Jesus said, notwithstanding all this, "I am glorified in them." What encouragement for us poor, halting creatures now, is this. Since Jesus was glorified in his disciples then, with all their failures, we may hope that it is so now with us. May he be glorified by us, as well as in us.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

A PREDICTION.

THE *Religious Herald*, of Virginia, the columns of which were burdened some years ago with many hard sayings against the Old School Baptists, either from inability to maintain the conflict to the satisfaction of its publishers and readers, or from some other policy, has been comparatively silent on that subject ever since the year 1837, about eighteen years, has opened a fire against us again in a late number. In its editorial department we find the following prediction, viz:

"MARYLAND BAPTIST UNION ASSOCIATION.—This body comprises all the Regular Baptist churches in the State. There are besides two small Anti-Mission Associations, which are gradually dwindling away, and will, within a few years, probably be extinct."

That the number of those who remain steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the bounds of the State of Maryland, and who protest against the modern mission craft of the present age, is comparatively small, none will dispute; but it by no means follows that the cause of truth and righteousness is declining, or that those Baptists in that State, who oppose the mission abominations of the age, will soon be extinct.

We have no doubt that Mr. Sands, and

all other worshipers of the mission idol, desire their utter extinction; but thus far their desires and predictions have perished together. If the doctrine and order of those Baptists in Maryland, who by way of reproach are called Anti-Mission, is of God, as we believe it is, it cannot become extinct. God will defend his own cause. He has formed the smith that blows the coals and bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and he has created the waster to destroy. But for the lasting consolation of his people he has said, "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. But if the cause in which the Old School Baptists of Maryland, or of any other State, is not of the Lord, the sooner it shall become extinct the better. It is only from a firm conviction that we stand on Bible ground, in opposing all innovations on the faith and practice of the church of God, that the Old School Baptists so cheerfully endure all the reproach and opposition of their enemies.

The same number of the *Herald* from which we clipped the foregoing prophecy, contains a communication from a Missionary hireling, from which we extract the following:

"Two things have contributed much to retard our progress in this country as well as elsewhere, viz: the opposition of the Anti-Mission Baptists and that of the Campbellites. But as the world judges of religion, not as it is preached, but as it is practiced, our membership, by their orderly, pious deportment, are winning for our cause a preponderance of public favor, that needs only to be nurtured, and prosperity must and will crown our efforts with more general and permanent success.

That the standard bearers of truth, whom God has raised up in Virginia, are in the way of the modern mission speculation, does not surprise us any more than that the preaching of the early disciples of our divine Master was an annoyance to the ancient pharisees, or that Paul's preaching troubled the craftsmen who had their wealth from making shrines for the fabulous goddess, Diana, of the Ephesians. It cannot be otherwise, so long as it is written that the preaching of the cross is unto them that perish foolishness. But the boastful air with which the writer appeals to the world for its approval of missionism, and condemnation of the Old School Baptists, forcibly reminds us of the inspired words of the beloved disciple, "They are of the world: therefore, speak they of the world, and the world, heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us: he that is not of God, heareth not us: hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."—John iv. 5, 6.

In the kingdom of Christ, all boasting is excluded; but in the order of modern missionism, boasting is retained. The orderly, pious deportment of their membership is winning for the cause of modern missions a preponderance of public favor, which needs only to be nurtured and prosperity will crown their efforts with more general success. God's people have no such reliances. No preponderance of public favor from the world is courted, expected or desired. If any man will live godly he shall suffer persecution. "Therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe." Woe unto the professed disciples of Jesus, when all men shall speak well of them. What christians desire is, that they may be ap-

proved of God; that they may be enabled by grace to walk worthy of the vocation whereby they are called of God. With christians, to be orderly is to be conformed to the rule of order which Christ has given in the New Testament, and when enabled to conform strictly to Bible rules of order, there will be no fellowship between them and the world. Instead of exultingly boasting of preponderance of the world's public favor, the order of the house of God and gospel of Christ demand of the saints to renounce the world with all its pomp, pride and lying vanities. For, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."—1 John ii. 15, 16.

But what do Missionists rely upon for preponderance in the public favor of the world lying in wickedness? In what does their "orderly and pious deportment" consist? Not in their preaching. Neither the world nor the church can see anything in their preaching either consistent with the order of the gospel of Christ, or by any means offensive to the ungodly world. But that which secured a preponderance of public favor of the world to the pharisees and hypocrites of a former age, was that wherein they made void the law of God by their own traditions, their long prayers in the corners of the street and in the market places, to be heard of men,—their sanctimonious looks, disfigured faces, and the zeal displayed in their anti-scriptural missionary enterprises, wherein they compassed sea and land to make proselytes, while all who contended for the truth as it is in Jesus,

were, by an irrevocable decree of God, to be hated of all men, for Christ's sake.

In conclusion, we submit, for the consideration of all who read, whether the modern Missionists of the present age, display any evidences of "order and piety" which differs in any essential respect from those marked to be avoided in the scribes, pharisees and hypocrites, who figured eighteen hundred years ago?

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 1, 1856.

PERSONAL.

BROTHER John R. Hurst, of Combs, Ky., desires to say that he is dissatisfied with the section where he now lives, because there are none of like faith near him. He asks that Old School Baptists in Ohio, Indiana and western Kentucky, should write him as to the country where they live, as he wishes to move to some section in those States where he can have the privileges of the church.

OTTEGO, N. Y., August 8, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Please publish the following, viz: Elder Bundy is much more comfortable since July 1st, than he has been since his illness began. He was at the meetings Saturday and Sunday last, and took a little part in the services, yet he is a weak, sick man, but so different from what he was at first, that we are comforted, yet not encouraged.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER H. C. Ker, formerly of Delmar, Del., having accepted the call to the pastoral charge of the New Vernon, and the Middletown & Wallkill churches, his correspondents will please address him at 20 Ridge St., Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

EXTRACTS.

WINFIELD, Iowa, June 2, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN:—Inclosed you will find three dollars and twenty-five cents, two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, due yesterday, twenty-five cents for "Feast of fat Things," and one dollar for you to help pay expenses. Dear Baptist sisters, it pains me to think the editors of our precious paper have to beg for their own, cannot we do a little to help them? Let us remember it was women that administered to the wants of our dear Savior, while here in these low grounds of sorrow. The SIGNS contains most all the preaching I have. I heard three gospel sermons last October, from our dear brother Byram, of Freemont, and I am still gathering rich clusters from those sermons. I cannot think the SIGNS will be allowed to suffer for want of support. Dear editors, have faith in every trial. May the Lord bless, comfort and spare you, to proclaim his gospel in its purity for a long time. Please publish this.

Your very poor, unworthy sister,
CLARA BEAUCHAMP.

TOUCHET, Wash., May 30, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for June 1st, is just to hand, and I have read your appeal to delinquents, and being some five months behind with you, I respond to your appeal by sending my subscription for the present year. I would be glad if all others who are in like condition as myself would hasten to do as much, or more, for you. We cannot afford to have the dear old SIGNS OF THE TIMES suspend publication, or pass into the hands of a receiver. It is the only publication that I now read that strictly advocates Bible

doctrine as I understand it, from reading of the Scriptures, and my own experience. I am much pleased with brother Chick's editorial in the last number of the SIGNS, on "Chastisement." It is timely, and I think unanswerable, and I hope will do much good to many brethren wavering or misled upon that subject. I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the most of the time for forty-four years, and have seldom had cause to find fault with the editorials, or the doctrine advocated by the correspondents. The doctrine now advocated by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is, and has been, the same, for the forty-eight years that I have been reading it. Eternal election, unlimited predestination, the eternal vital unity of Christ and his church, as taught in the Scriptures of divine truth, has been some of the fundamental principles ably set forth by its editors, and many of its correspondents. May the Lord be with you, and enable you to still conduct it as heretofore, is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

R. CUMMINS.

MACOMB, Ill., July 21, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I wish to write you in regard to Elder S. L. Dark. He is now very old (nearly ninety-three). He wishes you to continue the SIGNS to him at Macomb, Ill. He is now very feeble, and we think this perhaps is his last sickness. He is the pastor of our church since my father's death, and has been an able defender of the faith for over sixty-five years. He requested me to say to you that he was present when the prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, of 1831, was read, with your father's editorial, on the "Mission" system, and our association adopted them, and have ever been true to those principles.

He says he has been contending for this same faith ever since, and now as he is nearing the grave, he is firm and strong in the faith. He loves the SIGNS, and we all do here. It is not too strong for the Baptists in Illinois. I love the grand old Bible doctrine it contends for. I trust those behind will pay up. I do not see how a Baptist can read the paper without paying for it. My mother, Mrs. I. N. Vanmeter, still receives her paper, and ever feels grateful to you. She is not very well.

I will quit, wishing you every success for the dear SIGNS. I fully agree with you on predestination. One reason we love the SIGNS is, there is not so much controversy or disagreements published in it. Some have quit taking other papers on account of this.

In love and fellowship, your sister,
SARAH E. RUNKLE.

THE

"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

A pamphlet containing the following articles, viz:

First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28th, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School, and the New School Baptists.

Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England.

Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fourth. "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion, of the same title.

Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Will be mailed to any address on receipt of price.

BOUND IN PAPER COVERS.

Single copy, 25 cents; five copies, \$1.00; twelve copies, \$2.00; twenty copies, \$3.00.

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Single copy, 50 cents; five copies, \$2.00; twelve copies, \$4.00; twenty copies, \$6.00.

We feel confident that these Pamphlets will sell at sight, and any one desiring to sell them, can get a liberal discount by ordering five or more copies at one time, all to one address. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SON.

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder S. H. Durand, at his residence, Southampton, Pa., July 20th, 1898, Mr. Theodore F. Vandrigt and Miss Laura H. Pierson, both of Ivyland, Pa.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At his home near Arlington, Tenn., July 16th, 1898, at 1 o'clock p. m., **S. D. Aydelott**, aged 79 years and 28 days. He was an old time southern gentleman, who had lived in an age of patriotism, but he has gone after a long and well spent life. Deceased leaves an aged wife, with whom he has lived forty-seven years, and two children, to mourn their loss. He had the respect of all who knew him. He united with the Primitive Baptist church in 1873, and continued a devout member up to the time of his death.

W. L. AYDELOTT.

It is with a heavy heart I send you a notice of the death of my dear husband, **J. T. White**, who died April 7th, 1898, after an illness of four months. The last he ever read was the SIGNS. He loved the doctrine your paper sets forth. I have often heard him say it was a great comfort to him. He has taken the paper for many years.

Pray for me, that I may know the truth, and do my duty.

From his wife, in great distress,

CORDELIA D. WHITE.

CADIZ, Ky., July 27, 1898.

SISTER **Cordelia Foree** died Dec. 6th, 1897, at her home in Campbellsburg, Ky., of heart failure, while sitting in her chair sewing. She was born June 7th, 1817; married Calvin Foree, May 21st, 1835, and joined the Union Spring Church of Old School Baptists, soon after, and united with Sulphur Fork Church in June, 1869; by relation, and was a faithful member until her death. Sister Foree was a daughter of Elder Robert W. Ricketts, well known among the Baptists during the "split" in 1840.

Her children, four in number, have preceded her to the grave, but she leaves fourteen grandchildren, twenty-four great-grandchildren, with many friends and her church, to mourn their loss. She believed fully in the Old Baptist doctrine, and was ever ready to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, punctual in attendance at her meetings. Her example through life, both in church and business matters, is worthy for all to follow. We believe she is now united with the glorious choir, hymning more perfectly the songs of the redeemed, free from the cares of this life, sweetly basking in the sublime brilliancy of

the glorious Son of God, in the land of glory and peace.

The funeral was attended by Elder J. G. Eubanks, at Sulphur Fork Church, and the remains laid to rest in the family cemetery on the farm of Mrs. R. L. Ricketts, there to await the trump of God, to be changed to the likeness of the Redeemer.

May the grace of God sustain the grandchildren while passing through the valley and shadow of death, is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

ERNEST F. RANSELL.

NEW CASTLE, Ky., August 1, 1898.

Mrs. Loretta Bellis, beloved wife of M. T. Bellis, and daughter of the late Deacon William Rittenhouse, of the Kingwood church, and of Ida Rittenhouse, now living in Lambertville, N. J., passed away from earth on June 8th, 1898, at her home in Newark, N. J., aged 44 years, 7 months and 17 days. Brother John McConnell, through whom the request to publish this obituary has come, writes us as follows, concerning the deceased friend named above. He says, "I was well acquainted with Mrs. Bellis for many years, and I have had the privilege of conversing with her a number of times concerning the hope of the Lord's people. I know that I but express the conviction of every lover of truth, with whom she came in contact, that she was taught of the Lord, and that her coming to the church had been an expected event for many years. Her deep sense of unworthiness, however, prevented her from asking a place with the only people whom she loved in the world. An exemplary life, devotion to the cause of truth, anxious and persistent, seeking the assembly of the saints, all expressed better than words, where her affection was. Four children, a husband, mother, sister and four brothers, remain to mourn her seemingly untimely decease."

We will add that we learned that she was ill for some days before her death, and that she suffered uncomplainingly while reason lasted. We were sent for, and attended the funeral service at Frenchtown, N. J., June 11th, using as a text the words found in 1 Cor. xv. 14. Our friend, as we learned, was not a member of the visible church, but how good to know that many names are written in heaven, which have never been enrolled among the people of God, in the sight of men. It is our earnest prayer that God may comfort the bereaved friends with his word of consolation.

ED.

DIED—At his home in Vanburen, Hancock Co., Ohio, April 23d, 1898, **Johnathan P. Conaway**, aged 67 years, 5 months and 5 days.

Funeral services were held April 25th, 1898, conducted by his pastor, Elder A. F. Dove.

Brother Conaway became a member of the Primitive Baptist church at Vanburen, Ohio, October, 1862, and remained in fellowship with the church until death. He served the church as clerk for many years, and

was clerk of the Sandusky Association for a number of successive years. In all his service he was faithful, and was never absent from a church meeting, unless providentially hindered. He is greatly missed by his church and pastor, and will live long in their mind and hearts. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years, and a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, thus leaving for his companion, family, brethren and many friends, lasting consolation in the evidence of his having passed from death unto life, and from a world of affliction and sorrow, to a world of sweet rest and everlasting joy.

A. F. DOVE.

EXPERIENCE.

IN the summer of 1863 I was troubled on account of my sins, this Scripture being on my mind, If you believe not you are condemned already. (John iii. 18.) Believing that I was condemned already, this trouble continued until the night of the 9th of September, 1863. I spent part of that night weeping because of my condition. The psalmist says weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. In my prayers for mercy that night, I adopted the language of the poet, "Here Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do," and immediately my burden was gone, and this Scripture came to me as if spoken, "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." It was now the morning of Sept. 10th, 1863, not yet daylight, but I arose praising the Lord. "Now I wanted to tell to sinners round, what a dear Savior I had found." So I told my nearest neighbor, a man who preached to a congregation every Sunday, and he ridiculed the idea, saying, "People are not brought that way these times." But I have found many since then that have been brought that way. Jesus says, I am the way, no man cometh to the Father but by me. "The sinner by his justice slain, now by his grace is born again, and sings redeeming love." I came and said a few words to this church on the first Saturday in October, 1863, was received by the church, and baptized on Sunday following, thirty years ago last October.

The above was written by brother Conaway, in 1894.

A. F. D.

RECEIPTS.

TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS"
TO INDIGENT SUBSCRIBERS.

G. C. Jordan, Ill., \$1.00; J. F., N. J., \$5.00; Mattie S. Bowen, Ill., \$10.00; Mrs. W. T. Clark, Ill., \$8.00.—Total, \$24.00.

APPOINTMENTS.

ELDER Wm. L. Beebe is expected to attend the regular monthly meetings of the Otego church, Sept. 3d, at 2. p. m., and Sept. 4th, at 10:30 a. m.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next annual meeting of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist church of Schoharie, N. Y., at their meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, (21st and 22d) 1898, at 10 a. m. each day. We desire that ministering brethren, and others of our faith and order, of other associations, and all who love the truth, will meet with us.

Those who come by rail will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday previous.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the Olive & Hurley church, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1898, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m.

Teams will be in waiting Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning, at Shokan, for those from the west, and at Olive Brauch, for those from the east.

All are cordially invited, especially ministering brethren.

ALVAH BOGART, Clerk.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet with Salem Church, in Marshall Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1898.

Those coming by the Santa Fe R. R. will stop at Toluca. Those coming by the Illinois Central, from the north, will stop at Wenona, and those from the south, will stop at Rutland, where they will change cars to Toluca.

A cordial invitation is extended to all that desire to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist church, in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1898, and continuing three days. We shall gladly welcome all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and especially brethren in the ministry who feel it in their hearts to visit us. Those who come will be met at North Berwick railroad depot, on Thursday before the time appointed for our yearly conference.

FRED. W. KEENE.

M E E T I N G S .

THE annual two days meeting of the Shohola Creek Church, of Predestinarian Baptists, will be held at the Shohola schoolhouse, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 21st and 22d, 1898. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. All will be met at Shohola, Tuesday afternoon, and conveyed to place of meeting, commencing 10 a. m. Wednesday.

GIPSON MCKEEN, Church Clerk.

A YEARLY, or two days meeting, is appointed to be held with the Cammal church, Lycoming Co., Pa., Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 20th and 21st, 1898. Place of meeting only a few rods from Cammal Station, on Fall Brook R. R. We hope to see many lovers of the truth present, ministers included.

D. M. VAIL.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has decided to hold their yearly two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, September 28th and 29th, 1898, and the monthly meeting for October is to be Saturday and Sunday after the yearly meeting. Any of our dear kindred in Christ who can do so, are cordially invited to attend the meetings. For the benefit of any one who does not know of the location of Otego, I will say, Otego is situated on the D. & H. R. R., ninety miles from Albany, and fifty-three miles from Binghamton, and one hundred and eight miles from Scranton. Also it is fourteen miles from the Ontario & Western R. R., the nearest station of which is Sidney, N. Y., which is also on the D. & H. road.

Done by order of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

**"THE EDITORIALS,"
FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES,**

Contain all the Editorial articles written by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, from its first issue to the sixth number, volume fifteen (1832-1847), together with an alphabetical index of all the subjects and texts of Scripture treated upon.

These books are reduced to the following prices, viz:

Plain cloth binding, first or second volume, \$2.00, or both first and second volumes ordered at the same time and to the same address, \$3.00.

Imitation Morocco \$3.00, formerly \$4.50.

Genuine Turkey Morocco (damaged), \$3.50, formerly \$5.00.

HYMN BOOKS.

(BEEBE'S COLLECTION.)

These books contain 800 pages and 1311 hymns, carefully selected by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe, especially for use in the Old School or Primitive Baptist Churches of America. Also an alphabetical index of the first line of each hymn. Our assortment of the small books embraces:

Cloth Binding, single copy, 75c; half dozen, \$3.00.
 Blue Plain, single copy, \$1.00; per dozen, \$9.00
 Blue Gilt Edged, single copy, \$1.18; per dozen, \$12.00.

First Quality Turkey Morocco, very handsome, \$2.75 single copy or per dozen, \$30.00

LARGE TYPE EDITION.

We also have an enlarged fac-simile of the small books, being about twice the size, in a variety of bindings at the following prices, viz:

Cloth Binding	\$1 00
Cloth Binding, half dozen	4 50
Blue, Marbled Edge	1 50
Blue, Gilt Edge	2 00
Imitation Morocco, Full Gilt	2 50

At the above prices we will mail the books, postage paid, to any part of the United States or Canada.

G. BEEBE'S SON.

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1898. NO. 18.

CORRESPONDENCE.

GLEN RIDGE, Essex Co., N. J.

ELDER BEEBE—DEAR FRIEND:—I am a poor, starved sinner, but I find much comfort in reading the SIGNS; and I so long to be one of the dear little flock. It is hard to have such a desire to go, and so little evidence that it would be right to ask them to accept such as I. Still for fifteen years I have been waiting and longing to have sufficient evidence that such a step would be right. All I have is love—love for the Old Baptists. Even when too small to understand the difference between them and other denominations, any insult to them was a stab in my heart. My friends here do not understand me, and think it very strange that I will not take an interest in their churches, fairs, &c.; but I cannot. My heart is with the Old Baptists, and I stay at home in preference to going amongst them that believe differently. But if I have been born again I cannot tell when or how. I have always felt as I do now, knowing that I am a sinner; but trusting in the grace of God.

I enjoyed your sermon one Sunday in March, when I was in that meeting-house for the first time. You may not remem-

ber me now; but I am a niece of Elder Rittenhouse. As my mother was a member of the church at Locktown, N. J., up to the time of my marriage, I always attended meetings there. My friends here say that is the reason I think as I do, “Because I was brought up so.” But my mother and one brother were the only ones of my family who were members of that church.

Will it be asking too much of you to request you to write at your earliest convenience for the SIGNS, from Mark xvi.? It has been asked so many times why the Old School ministers do not go to foreign countries to preach. Perhaps you know the Arminians are always harping on that text. If it is mentioned anywhere else, will you please write from that also? In my weakness I cannot make it plain; nor do I entirely understand what it does mean; or, if the Lord did intend the heathen to be preached to. I have wished to hear some one speak from that text; and if perfectly convenient to you or Elder Chick to write on it, you will do me a great favor.

Hoping I have not tired you with my long letter, I am very sincerely yours,

MRS. R. O. ROBERSON.

MARK XVI. 15.

"AND he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

IN compliance with the request of Mrs. R. O. Roberson, of Glen Ridge, N. J., the following comments are submitted. Instead of wishing to deprive her of the views of Elder Chick, which she solicits, however, it is my desire to unite in her wish for his comments on the subject.*

Before treating upon the text submitted by the inquirer, it seems advisable to express some thoughts in regard to the case of the friend herself. Doubtless there are many readers of the SIGNS who are bewildered by the same circumstances which perplex her. To all such it may be appropriate to address some considerations which apply to them with the same force as to this troubled friend.

She says that even from a little child she has loved the Old Baptists. Evidently she does not doubt that they are the church of Christ. Hence that love which she has felt is the very evidence which conclusively identifies her as one who has been sealed by the Holy Spirit as a child of God. There can be no mistake in the inspired test, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Again, "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."—1 John iii. 14; iv. 7. Now, to call this decision in question involves a denial of the truth of the inspired Scriptures. The fact that this love was felt before the natural mind was sufficiently developed to remember anything preceding it, does not affect the truth established by this infallible judgment. Nor is it less absurd to doubt the reality of the new birth because you cannot remember it, than to doubt your natural birth upon the same ground. The

natural life does not depend upon the memory of natural birth; neither does spiritual life depend upon the remembrance of the birth of the Spirit. Nowhere in the inspired record is it said that the remembrance of a time when we hated the truth is an evidence that the life of Christ dwells in us. That love which is drawn out to those bearing the image of Jesus, is the fruit of the Spirit of God. That fruit can no more be produced by the natural mind than grapes and figs can be produced by thorns and thistles. Therefore, wherever that love is found in any sinner, there can be no mistake that it identifies its possessor as a vessel of mercy, and an heir of immortal life in Christ. So, our Lord does not say, "If you can tell a satisfactory experience, keep my commandments; but, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Although the request is for writing upon the whole chapter in which the text is recorded, it is apparent from the question which she has so often been asked, that the subject in the text is that upon which she desires more particularly to have an expression of views. Therefore, in the first place, it will be needful that the language of our Lord in the text be considered in connection with the explanation given by the inspired writer, in the immediate context.

It was to the eleven apostles that this direction was given by our risen Redeemer, as declared in the fourteenth verse. Then in the twentieth verse it is written that, "They went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." Thus the command was fulfilled by those to whom it was given. So Paul says that this gospel "was preached to every creature which is under heaven."—Col. i. 23. Since the declara-

tion of the fulfillment of this commandment is written by the same inspiration which records the giving of it, there can be no question that it was obeyed in the sense in which it was designed by our Lord. But, even if there were any authority for extending the injunction to others besides those to whom it was given by our risen Lord, this commandment cannot authorize the popular system of societies to send men into foreign lands to preach. The apostles were not commissioned to send others into all the world; much less can this direction authorize uninspired men to select and send such men as they approve, and to depend upon the power of money for their success in the proclamation of the gospel of salvation. There is not an expression in the Bible which can be distorted into supporting the modern system of humanly organized societies for sending the gospel into heathen lands. Indeed, our Lord taught his disciples to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest. (Matt. ix. 38.) Gospel preachers are sent forth by no other authority but the command of the Lord himself. He has never delegated that work to any created being. In the record of this commandment, as written by Matthew, it is accompanied by the assurance of Jesus, "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." On this assurance they went forth, requiring no earthly societies to secure them from want. While there is no account that any of them ever had as many pieces of silver as Iscariot received for his betrayal of the Lord, they were in every way provided for, and they still continue to obey the commandment even unto the end of the world. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes,

verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."—Rom. x. 17, 18. If reason objects to this testimony, the only answer needful is furnished by the same word of inspiration, "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid! yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."—Rom. iii. 3, 4.

The ministers of our Lord do not enter the service of human societies as missionaries to foreign countries, because they are not their own, and their services, as well as all their life, are subject to the direction of their Redeemer; and he has given them no commandments to sell their ministry for money. No claim has ever been made that there is any scriptural authority for the organization of missionary societies. They are the invention of men, who devised them little more than one hundred years ago; although they are in all essential principles fashioned upon the pattern of the scribes and pharisees, which was condemned by our Lord, as recorded in Matthew xxiii. 14.

As a necessary consequence of the presumption which would substitute human invention for divine authority in the proclamation of the gospel, that which is preached by those who are sent forth by such societies, is not the doctrine of God our Savior. Instead of ascribing salvation exclusively to the grace of God, those who are sent forth by men must always give the glory to the power of money, by which their system is supported. The very principle upon which the popular missionary plan rests, is the denial that "Salvation is of the Lord." It claims that without the assistance of men and

money, sinners will be lost, for whom Christ died. Certainly those who are saved by the use of means devised by men, should give the glory to the power by which they are saved. But it is not the gospel of Christ which proclaims salvation dependent upon such corruptible things as silver and gold.

If the worship of false gods constitutes heathenism, it is not needful that gospel preachers should leave this country to find heathens to whom they might preach. But the ministers of Christ are not sent to select their own audiences. They are to preach when and where they find an opportunity presented in the providence of God. It may be in the desert, where a lone traveler seeks to understand the revealed word which he reads; or it may be in the midst of assembled multitudes. They do not carry the gospel, but the gospel carries them where God has prepared a people to hear and receive the glad tidings of salvation. In obedience to the direction of the Spirit of Christ, his ministers do go and preach. They are not directed by men in this work; neither do they trust in men for their support.

With the earnest desire that these thoughts may be acceptable to the inquiring friend at whose suggestion they are written, and that she may be led in the way of obedience to the commandment of our dear Redeemer, I must leave the subject to the consideration of those who love the truth as it is revealed in our gracious Redeemer.

In hope of life, as ever, your fellow-pilgrim,

WM. L. BEEBE.

WARWICK, N. Y., Aug. 8, 1898.

P. S.—I wish to say to those whose requests for my views have not been answered, that it is not for lack of deference

to their wishes that I have not responded to their inquiries, but for want of light and opportunity.

W. L. B.

“SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.”

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I had fully decided to lay aside my pen, and drop out of notice, so far as writing for our publications is concerned, for I realize that when I would do good, evil is present with me. The world, the flesh and the devil, are so strongly allied against the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, that it seems many times we will fall, as individuals, by the wayside, and that the church as a body must all but come extinct. When I read Elder Bartley's article in a recent number, on the text, “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt,” &c., I felt his points were well taken, for certainly many of the bodies (churches) lie dead in the street, for they are without visible life, being inactive, “Have a name to live, but art dead.” “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.”—Rev. i. 1, 2. John was commanded to speak to the angels of the seven churches. These angels (ministers or pastors) were addressed severally, or individually. The command was emphatic, the instructions definite, and it was the Spirit, or Holy Ghost as personated by Jesus Christ, as the first-born from the dead, the faithful and true witness of God the Father, as sent to these pastors, or stars, which was held in his right hand, to proclaim to the

seven golden candlesticks, or churches. Now it seems to me if the cause was so sacred, and of so much importance, that God caused John to be banished to the lonely Isle of Patmos, and to be there alone, in order to receive those wonderful profound revelations, that it was not to cease with the final disorganization of these several churches of Asia. They were organized and established by apostolic authority, and must serve as a pattern for apostolic, or properly organized churches, for all time to come. This being admitted, does it not appear that all pastors, or ordained ministers, are vested with authority, not only to proclaim the riches of God's grace and mercy, extended to lost and ruined sinners, through the precious blood of Jesus, as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, but also to rebuke, reprove, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine? It appears to me unnecessary for our pastors or ministers to be forever "after Arminians with a sharp stick." It is well enough incidentally, but God's command was, "Speak to the children of Israel that they move forward." Then it is the true Israel of God that are the objects of address. If Jesus is preached, if he is lifted up for an ensign, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, those who are bitten with the plague of sin, will look, for they are ever looking, with a "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Lord, save, I perish. And when they hear a proclamation heralded from the throne of God, they receive with joy and thanksgiving the testimony, for they themselves have an unction, a witness within, which further proves that we are saved through preaching, not saved with an eternal salvation, this was, and is, the work of Jesus, but it is through the foolishness (simplicity) of preaching, that God will

save them that believe, they receive the word gladly, and are transformed from a prior belief, where they were in a state of unrest, and enter into a gospel rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." They rest in hope, in faith, in charity. The love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit, which Jesus promised to send, is now received by the poor, doubting soul, and in the power of faith he can proclaim, "The Lord our Righteousness." This plan of salvation is no longer seen with an obscure vision, "as men as trees walking," but they see a resurrected Savior, as born again from the dead, a triumphant, glorious conqueror, a Hero of heroes, a King of kings, and Lord of lords, and rest not only in sweet forgiveness of all sins, but rest in his promises, rest in his dear arms of everlasting love, and look upon the company of his saints with great favor, beg, in their hearts, for entrance to their communion, they are now come unto Mt. Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, &c. Further Paul says, "Let brotherly love continue," implying that it is liable to grow cold, that we are liable to become selfish and covetous, which is idolatry, and a sin against God, for as we do to the least of these his brethren, even so do we as unto our Savior. Then let us not think, after that God has been gracious to us, in granting us our desires, by being baptized in the name of the "Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and thus following the dear Savior in fulfilling all righteousness of God's law, that it is doing all that is required of us, by putting on Christ in open profession of our faith in him, by following in this ordinance which he ob-

served and honored, and requires all his believers to also recognize and honor. Nothing is farther from Scripture teaching. Read the Spirit's command to each of the seven churches. They were composed of men and women of like passions as you and I, chained to a body of this death, who also by nature were the children of wrath, even as others, but God in his own counsel predestinated them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, and chose them heirs of salvation, and as children of his kingdom they were and we are subjects of him as King, and he has a right to require them. As Paul says, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." Dear child of God, think of the price it cost to redeem your soul from hell; look to the cross of Calvary; behold your dear Savior nailed to the rugged wood; see the accursed band of Roman soldiers, and the fiendish mob, jeering, and making merry at his awful sufferings; see him sweating great drops of blood; look at the thief on his left hand, railing at him because he does not show the power of a God in his release; look with me at the malefactor on his right, hear him telling his companion, we are only getting what we deserve as law breakers, but this tortured man that occupies the centre of the group, is innocent; then see him turn his dying eyes to the dear Savior; hear his pleading cry, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;" hear the response, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Look for the sun, and the moon, and stars, where are they? Darkness itself has covered all; the very earth is reeling and staggering like a drunken man. All nature is convulsed. The God of earth and heaven is personated in Jesus nailed bleeding and torn and racked with pain. He is fulfilling the demands

of stern justice, which would ultimately been our doom. Was not this a great sacrifice? Now, my brethren, what sacrifice are we making for the carrying on of the cause? Are we doing our part, or are we putting all the burden on our ministers and publishers? Sin, like the plague of leprosy, is in the world; none of us are free from it contamination. Do we strive to overcome? Are we doing what we can? If we were, brother Beebe would not need to make the second call for aid in sustaining the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Providence is now most certainly blessing its present readers as much as those who have read it in days past, and who now are gathered to the fathers. Will we betray the trust committed to us, their successors? Let us be up and doing. The laws of commerce say, "Pay me what thou owest." All bills of a financial nature must be met promptly, else they will go to "protest." Some may say, "Brother Beebe has gone daft, or is quite an Arminian, and the next thing we will hear that he is a Sunday School superintendent, or has gone to darkest Africa to convert the heathen." Not at all, brethren, plenty of work at home. Let us reason together. The condition that surrounds our churches to-day are different from "ye olden times." The strange woman and her children have usurped great authority. They come into our very houses, telling us about their gods, and try to get our children away from our influence. O, how many of our brethren have lived to see their children led away to serve other gods. How many have labored late and early, hardly take time to go to the house of our God, even on Sunday, say nothing of Saturday service; working to lay up treasure, perhaps for their children to spend on the gods they themselves abominate. He

that believeth and provideth not for his own house, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. It is proper to provide for the future necessities of our own, but to do this to the exclusion of looking after the welfare of Sion, is altogether wrong. If we are in a nice shape financially, the world will court our favor, but way down deep in their hearts the enmity exists that God said should, for he declared that he would put enmity between thy seed and her seed, in the things of this life. So, brethren, the sooner we break away from the love of the world, and have a love for our brethren, and aid them in the service of the Master, either in the preaching of the word, or publishing approved papers, the more money you will have as a result. I would that I could condense this appeal, and make it in a few well chosen sentences, but I cannot. I have put this matter from me as long as I can. I was trusting some one of more note among the brethren would take up the subject, and stir up the pure minds of the brethren relative to this matter. I wrote a dear sister in Illinois soon after brother Beebe published his first appeal last year, urging her to lend her voice and pen, to raise money, to relieve permanently, the embarrassment of the SIGNS; but she did not have the courage, but was in sympathy with the project. But we know the custom has been so long with our churches, of "a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding the hands in sleep," that it appears a sin to mention money. Paul says, be diligent in business, serving the Lord. He commands that the details of the house be kept in order, and if money was required, to gather it and use it, and if a member was covetous or selfish, to deal with that member as an offender. This is the gist

of the whole matter. Now brethren, when there is a will there is a way. Brother Beebe has been forced to raise the flag of distress. Will we stand on the shore of self complacency, and tell the Lord we "can't" afford to aid him? when the Lord knows most of us can help if we have the will.

I ask the publishers to print this letter, and if it offends my brethren, I will stand personally responsible, and if in their hearts they excommunicate me for making this appeal, I want to know it, and know where to find them. "A friend in need is a friend indeed." "An unfaithful friend in time of trouble, is like a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint." Let us all say, by the grace of God, "THE SIGNS SHALL NOT GO DOWN," and in less than thirty days after this appeal is published, brother Beebe will feel to thank God, and take courage, feeling that the Lord has heard his prayer, and cry of distress, the SIGNS will be continued, and we all will feel it the best sacrifice we ever made. I would like to write my experience on this line, in my travels of the past fifteen years, and show cause why I take this view of the matter, and make this appeal. I have thought the reason so many of us do not like to let the left hand know what the right hand does, is because it does so little it would be humiliating to let it be known. Brethren, let us raise this thousand dollars at once, and donate it to the cause of truth, and to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have come through the late panic badly singed financially. At times I thought I would drop all subscriptions, but by hustling I kept them and other dues paid up, the Lord opening the hearts and pockets of strangers, to tide me over. So I have found that if we do right, nothing is lost, if we do wrong,

God can, and will punish his children. God is no respecter of persons. Before I became acquainted with the Old School Baptists, I was associated in a friendly way with Presbyterians, and Methodists, and if money of any amount was needed, some one would say, I will be one of ten to give fifty dollars, one of twenty to give ten dollars, as the case might be, and the necessary amount would be forthcoming at once. Now, brethren, let us put our shoulders to the wheel. Pastors, call the attention of your deacons to the importance of this matter; put this before the brethren at the very next meeting of your churches; do not wait till brother Beebe is forced to make an assignment, then it will cost more to redeem the publication, besides save the humiliation, not of brother Beebe, but of the readers of the SIGNS generally, for it can be prevented, and no one distressed. Let us use the means, and not cavil the question. A cause that is not worthy of our financial support, is of no value to us morally or spiritually. If we profess to be the light of the world, let us prove it by putting on our beautiful garments of charity, which is love, and show by our works that we appreciate brother Beebe's labor of love in publishing the SIGNS. Let us strive to keep the house of the Lord in order, be prepared to meet the Bridegroom when he cometh, not only by a well ordered walk, and a godly conversation, but to do our duty, and not live so much for self as for others. I shall make no apologies for what I have written, only that I could not condense and make the article shorter. Could I have been in the vicinity of our churches, I should not have written, but made the appeal personally in different churches. I will show my faith in my brethren, to aid me in raising a thousand dollars, by

starting the list with fifty dollars, which I will pay October 1st, 1898. Away with mock modesty, show your hand, and encourage others, and when we read the list let each one feel before God that we "have done what we could." "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

B. F. BUTLER.

HOLMES, N. D., July, 1898.

[It is with considerable hesitancy that we publish the above letter, least some of our readers may attribute mercenary motives to us, but if we are capable of judging our own feelings, such is not the case. It is indeed encouraging to receive such letters of appreciation of our feeble efforts in publishing the SIGNS, especially when their sincerity is proven by such substantial evidence as brother Butler has given, in his liberal offer to contribute fifty dollars in support of the SIGNS. There has never been a time since our connections with the paper but what there was many times more due us on back subscriptions, than we were in debt to our creditors, and if we could now succeed in collecting these amounts, the publication would be financially established for many years to come. We have made appeal after appeal, to many of our delinquents, to remit us the amounts due us, but have not succeeded in collecting more than ten *per cent.* of the amount due on back subscriptions. Yet we have never felt, nor do we now feel, that it would be right for the friends of the SIGNS to make so great a sacrifice as brother Butler suggests, by sending on gratuitous contributions to sustain the SIGNS. Some of our subscribers have doubtless not been financially situated so they could pay what they owe us, and others have neglected to do so simply

through procrastination, while some, we fear, have been guilty of dishonesty. It is impossible for us, from personal acquaintance, to know which class many of our delinquents belong. We would sooner suffer inconvenience and distress ourself, than to distress some poor widow, or indigent brother, by extorting from them the money due us, by taking them by the throat and saying, Pay me what thou owest. There are a number of business concerns known as "News Paper Subscription agencies," and we are frequently solicited by them to send them our delinquent list, to collect at ten *per cent.* commission, but we have never yet appealed to Cæsar in collecting from our debtors, and trust we never shall.

Now what we suggest as an amendment to brother Butler's generous offer, (and we have so written him) is that our brethren and friends assist us in collecting our just dues on back subscriptions, from those who need their pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance, and notify us of all cases where they know that we are being imposed upon, as well as inform us of such cases where they may know that parties are utterly unable to pay, that we may place such on our indigent list. In order to enable our friends to thus greatly assist us, we will mail to any of our PAID UP subscribers, a list of delinquents, with the amount of each one's indebtedness, within the territory for which they will accept the agency. If by the united effort of those interested in the publication of the SIGNS, we shall be able to collect one-half the amount due us, it will avoid all danger of the SIGNS becoming the burden to its patrons, that we fear the magnanimous plan suggested by brother Butler, would make it? What do you think, brethren and friends? Let us hear from you.—ED.]

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 5, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—VERY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Will you allow me to call you brother? I look up to you as a father, as you have for some time seemed very near to me. You have requested me at different times to write to you, but I have felt that I had nothing to write that could interest you. This morning I do not know that I have anything to write, but yesterday you were on my mind, and therefore I have felt impressed to say a few words to you in my weak and ignorant way, if you will pardon me for taking the privilege. If I am not mistaken, you have taken deep interest in me with regard to spiritual matters. One year has passed since you led me down into the baptismal waters, and buried me beneath the yielding waves, and the happy person that I was then will never be forgotten by me, as I hope. I deeply felt the firmness of my step into the meeting-house that day, and yet I thought that I hardly walked upon the earth. I felt that I was lifted up above all earthly things. I have been as low down in the valley since then, as I was high upon the mountain top then. I remember saying to you, I felt that I was upon the very peak of the mountain. I felt like proclaiming upon the housetop the good tidings to every one, and if they all could know the joyful sound, I felt that it would make me still more happy, but I find that there is but one who can proclaim the joyful tidings, and make men know the joyful sound.

"God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

I have been for some time, as I have thought, dead to spiritual things. I would not have thought one year ago that I could have gotten so low down in the valley. I have been down to the very

depths, and have at times doubted my experience, although I had felt at times that I had such a bright and marked one. And I do know it was. You have said to me, "God has been good to you." I certainly feel that he has. He has done by me far better than I was worthy of receiving. He has been, as it seems to me, too good. How can he take any interest in me, who is so sinful and vile? Would it not have been better had he called some one else instead of me? It would have been just. Probably you will tire of hearing me speak of myself. I will tell you of my visit last Saturday. Doctor and I went up to New Vernon Saturday afternoon, to the church meeting. I had never attended their church meetings but once before, and that was two or three years ago. How differently I felt at this time, from what I did before when there. Then the scales had not fallen from my eyes. I could not then see clearly. I was trying, day by day, to see light. And my heart was aching to know the truth as it is in Jesus. This time, I enjoyed the meeting exceedingly. I wish I could tell you all my thoughts while I was sitting there, but I cannot, words could not express them. As I cast my eyes over those people it seemed to me that I could see the arms of the Savior around them, and it seemed solemnly beautiful to me, indeed a precious meeting. These words were presented to me at the time.

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise."

It carried me back to my own rejoicing time of one year ago. I was glad to be there. Three came forward and desired a name and home with those people. They were unanimously received. I felt to rejoice with that church. The candidates will indeed find a sweet home with

them. There is no place like home, a home in the family of God. Nothing equals it. I was made to say again.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

We remained all night with dear sister Mapes, who is just a babe in Christ. On Sunday morning the candidates were ready for baptism. Our dear young pastor, Elder Ker, performed the ordinance nicely. As Elder Ker led them down, one by one, into the water, to follow their Lord and Master in baptism, and then buried them in the watery grave, it did seem most beautiful to me. We then proceeded to the meeting-house, to hear a sermon from our beloved pastor. He gave out hymn 910 (Beebe's collection). How many times had I read that, and derived much comfort from it. It is such a perfect description of prayer. He then spoke from Luke xi. 1-4. It was a very sweet, comforting sermon to me, and I felt thankful that the dear Lord had permitted me to be there. I do feel that once more the dear Lord has shown me his face in its wonderful beauty. How long this will last with me, I cannot tell; no doubt until he sees fit to remove his sensible presence from me. And may I be made to say, Not my will, but thy will be done. Though he slay me, yet may I trust in him. He is a wise and omnipotent God. He reigns both in heaven and upon earth. His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. Yesterday, these words were given me, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days thou shalt find it again." Could you at some time, give me the spiritual meaning of them? I do not know as I have written the words as they are recorded in the Bible, but have given them as they were presented to me. Whenever I write anything from the Bible and hymn book, I

give them as they have been presented to me.

Well, I must close, for fear that you will weary in reading this. It is imperfect, like the writer. I do not wish to make myself forward or foremost. I would be much pleased with a reply, at your convenience. Doctor joins me in christian love to yourself and sister Chick.

Your very unworthy sister,

M. A. EMORY.

[DOUBTLESS the travel of our sister, during the past year, as she has here recorded it, will prove of deep interest to all those who are pursuing the Christian pilgrimage. They are all subject to the same "ups and downs." We also rejoice at the good meetings which have been given to the churches at Middletown and New Vernon, of late. We desire at this time to express our heartfelt prayer for those churches, who were so sorely bereaved when their former pastor, Elder Jenkins was called away to his reward, that now both they and their new pastor, may be made a mutual blessing to each other in the gospel of our Lord. We shall rejoice to hear that the Lord has, from time to time, bestowed upon them soul prosperity. Our good wishes go with our dear brother Ker to his new field of labor. May the arms of his hands be made strong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, and his bow abide in strength. May fervent love abound between him and the churches where he shall now labor. Only as he shall love them, and they shall love him, can they be useful to each other. May love therefore abound. We shall be glad to respond to the request of our sister, when we feel that we can do so.—ED.]

IS THE WILL FREE?

DEAR BROTHER:—As you requested, I will now state my objections to those articles on "The Freedom of the Will."

First. They are an effort at skilled argument, rather than preaching Christ. They are cold and theoretical, obscuring the cross, rather than pointing to it.

Second. The word "freedom," in discussing the human will, is irrelevant. Our will is, at all times, and under all circumstances, dependent on its environments. In fact nothing in nature is free, and when anything is spoken of as free, its freedom is defined or understood as pertaining to some certain environment. Freedom always means separation from environment, or having control of the environment. For example, Cuba will be free if she succeeds in throwing off the Spanish yoke, but that freedom pertains only to the one environment, the severing of which will always be understood when her freedom is mentioned.

Again, I may lock myself in a house, yet I am free in that environment, because I hold the key, and can unlock the door and go out at will. But if another should lock me in the house, and hold the key, I am not free, but bound. I cannot go out at will, yet I am free to walk and talk, and think within the bounds of its walls. My liberty could be further restricted by binding me hand and foot with strong cords. But we are too apt to consider this subject in the light of unpleasant restraint or compulsion. This is a mistake, for the bird that flits among the twigs in the forest, without any conscious restraint or compulsion, is sometimes taken as an emblem of freedom, but it is so bound by its environments that it can do only as it does. The lion is not free to "eat straw like the ox," yet there is no sadness in it.

It seems that man is the only creature that is discontented with his environment. He would inhabit the water, as a fish, soar in the air with the birds, build thoroughfares to the planets, yea, he would take heaven by storm, and occupy the throne of God, but he cannot.

What evidence have we that Adam and Eve would ever have eaten the forbidden fruit, if it had not been for the environment of Satan? "The serpent beguiled Eve." Do these words mean anything? If it took the temptation to cause a determination to eat, the doctrine of Free-will and Free Moral Agency, is proven false; but if the words mean nothing, it may be contended that the man's will was free, and he would have eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil without the temptation.

We may with propriety assert the doctrine of the freedom of God, for he has power over all his environments, but the man that is free from all the environments of this world, is a dead man. The man who feels the greatest degree of freedom in this life, is the one who is content with his environment. To say that a man is free to act upon his will, would argue that his will is free to exercise according to its motives, but as the man's acts are bound by the exercise of the will, so is the will bound by its environments.

Third. I object to the use of the phrases, "Freedom of the will," and "Free Moral Agency," because they were coined to express the Arminian idea that a man is capable of accepting or rejecting salvation, in accordance with the offered mercy of God. This use of these phrases has never before been called in question, and whoever attempts to change their meaning will cause confusion to no profit, and will lay a stumbling-block before his

own feet. Established phrases are not to be analyzed and their meaning determined from the several words contained in them. Their meaning, like that of a word, is known by the use made of them. For example, we speak of "the sunset," but if we were to seek for the meaning of this phrase in the prime meaning of its several words, we should arrive at a very different meaning from the one generally given it.

The doctrine of "free will" had its birth among the Stoics, about B. C. 300. It was nourished by the Alexandrian School in the fourth century, and adopted by the Waldenses and others in the sixteenth century. The phrase is not found in the Bible, neither do those articles go to the Bible to sustain it.

Those phrases have not varied in meaning since their introduction. In Hassell's Church History there is more than thirty references to "the freedom of the will," as taught by preachers in different ages of the church, which fully demonstrate their meaning. It is always set over against the doctrine of electing grace, making salvation dependent on the will of man. I will give some quotations; speaking of the Waldenses and others, he says, "They were, in the darkness of the dark ages, Arminians. They exalted the Scriptures above all human books, and accepted the doctrine of salvation by faith, but they earnestly insisted on the freedom of man's will to accept or reject the provisions of divine grace."—p. 335.

In speaking of Erasmus, the author of a book on "free will," he says, "He seems to have been an utter stranger to genuine, spiritual, christian experience, and he died at last (in 1536) in bitterness and darkness. His defense of free will, which contains the usual arguments of conditionalism, is admitted to be the

weakest of his writings, and is really Pelagian in its nature, as may be seen from his defining free will to be a power in the human will by which a man may apply himself to those things which lead unto eternal salvation, or turn away from the same."—p. 482.

He says of Swedenborg, "He also taught that all religions, even those of the heathens, contains the essence of saving truth; that man's will is free; that God loves all alike, and gives himself equally to all, but all do not receive him."—p. 537.

"Wesley's bitter opposition to the doctrine of election and predestination is most conspicuous in his sermon on "free grace," a sermon which he decided by lot whether to preach and print or not, and a sermon which should have been entitled, not free grace, but free will, for if human language means anything, it makes the salvation of every sinner depend, not on the free grace of God, but on the free will of the sinner."—p. 545.

Those phrases have been the livery of Arminianism for centuries, and it would be injustice to them, and no gain to us, to capture them. They would be to us as the ark of the covenant was to the Philistines.

Your brother in the fellowship of the gospel,

W. N. THARP.

[We desire to commend to our readers the above paper from Elder Tharp. It states in a succinct and clear manner some of the chief objections to the Arminian notion of free moral agency, or free will. To advocate the idea of free moral agency, as it is called among our people, in any manner whatever, can work nothing but evil. The phrase can never be so dressed up as to make it palatable to believers in free grace. The

word free, to have any definite meaning, must mean "self-determining," or in other words, that the choice of the will is determined by nothing outside of itself. This is true only of the God who rules all things. No one has ever disputed that the will always chooses what, all things considered, seems best to it. But this is not self-determination, but a choice determined by things outside of the will. This is not freedom of the will, but rather shows that the will is not free. The will is not free in choosing to do wrong, which all natural men do. Here the will decides as it is compelled to do by indwelling sin. The will is not free when the believer chooses righteousness, but acts under the control of grace, the grace of God, which has caused that righteousness should appear to be the most lovely thing in the universe, to that man. But if we should write further we should only be enlarging upon what brother Tharp has said so well, in a brief form. We would not write to convince open Arminians and Pharisees, because if we could do so, it would be but a convincing of the reason, and not of the heart, but we do think it needful to warn the brotherhood against this heresy in any shape that it may present itself to them. Let the wolf be disguised ever so nicely, as a sheep, it is nevertheless a wolf still. Free will, or free moral agency, in any form or in any place, is an enemy to sovereign grace. Free will and free grace, can never occupy the same ground. If free will has any province in the universe where it dwells, into that province grace cannot enter. We believe in grace, first and last.—Ed.]

ACTS XXVI. 8.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

My mind has been drawn to this subject by hearing a minister preach a funeral discourse. He said that the brother now dead, was in heaven with a body that God had prepared for him, and that so far as a resurrection in the future was concerned, he knew nothing about it. Brethren, I cannot help but believe that there is a day coming, as soon as the last vessel of mercy shall be gathered in by reigning grace, and when the man of sin shall be fully revealed, and when the God of heaven shall declare that time shall be no more, that the dead shall be raised up, and those who are alive and remain at his coming, shall not prevent those who are asleep. For it is said, "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." This same Jesus that ascended, shall come again in like manner, and it shall be declared that time shall be no more. It seemed that Martha fully believed that her brother should rise at the resurrection at the last day. How did Martha know that her brother should arise at the resurrection at the last day? Was it only a traditional idea of hers that had been taught her of man? No, for Jesus had before said, "Of all which the Father hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." —John vi. 39. See verses forty, forty-four and fifty-four, where this language is repeated. So Martha had sufficient grounds, from the words of Jesus himself, to believe in the resurrection. We find the dear Savior demonstrates his power in raising up Lazarus, who was dead four days, manifesting the glory of God, in

order that the Son of God might be glorified, by showing that he was the resurrection and the life. And they that believe shall see the glory of God in the power of his resurrection. "He is the resurrection and the life." He was crucified upon the cross for the sins of his people, and if he did not rise, what would it profit us? But he arose a conqueror over death, hell and the grave. And so it can be said, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The grave shall not hold them, for our God shall gather the sleeping dust. The first man was of the earth, a natural man. It was this very natural man that sinned. It was also this man that needed redemption. It was not an eternal life, or something else that came down from heaven and took up its abode for a time, and then returns to heaven, the vessel being no part of it. But I believe that Jesus gives to that very same natural man that sinned, eternal life, and this is the man that shall never perish. This man shall be raised up in the resurrection at the last day. The resurrection is truly a mystery. When death comes, the dust returns to dust, and the spirit to God, yet to explain the mystery, is beyond the power of man. The testimony is, They are with Jesus. It was not possible that Jesus should be holden of death. This Jesus hath God raised up. They "killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised up from the dead." God hath both raised up the Lord, and will raise up us also by his own power. "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false wit-

nesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." "If the dead rise not, at all, why are they then baptized for the dead?" Now, some will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." It goes to the grave a natural body, but, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." "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 through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you."

I have given somewhat lengthy quotations from Scripture, which to my mind seem to show that there is a future resurrection, both of the just and the unjust. It is said, in the time of the apostles, that there were some who said that the resurrection was past already, and so over-

threw the faith of some. The apostle declares that though he, or an angel from heaven, should preach any other gospel than that he had preached, let him be accursed. We find that the Galatian brethren were bewitched, and we should also watch closely, and follow no man, any further than he follows the divine teaching as laid down in the Scriptures. If we cannot know anything about a future resurrection of the dead by what is written, then I do not see how we will come to know anything about the death of Christ, or how we shall find out of a truth, that he did die upon Calvary for poor sinners, since the apostle says, that if he did not die and rise again, and if we are not also raised, we are without hope. Then, "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."

Hoping that this may be of some use, I have written it for insertion in the SIGNS.

Your brother in hope,

E. D. VARNES.

FARMINGTON, Ill., June 25, 1898.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 13, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you this letter from Elder J. P. Allison for publication in the SIGNS because of the interesting incident narrated. I have the consent of both brethren Allison and Mayfield.

As ever yours,

S. H. DURAND.

GRASS VALLEY, Oregon, Jan. 18, 1898.

ELDER S. H. DURAND—ESTEEMED BROTHER:—Twelve months have passed with all their changes, turmoils, trials, disappointments and pleasures, since I last wrote you, and if not deceived, I feel under increasing obligations to thank and

praise God, the God of all grace, for his extended mercies to us poor, unworthy sinners, in giving us food and raiment, a share of health, the use of our minds, and above all I would thank him, and praise his holy name, for the manifestations of his love and mercy in sometimes setting my feet in an even place, and filling my mouth with laughter, and my tongue with singing, and in enabling me to walk in and love the truth as it is in Jesus. I would also thank him for enabling me to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free, and to still, in my feeble way, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Dear brother, I would write you a line oftener could I muster the courage to do so, but I feel so small, and so weak, and ignorant, in spiritual things, and so unlearned in letters, that I am ashamed of my writing. In fact, I am heartily ashamed of my ignorance. I do not know why I am so ashamed of myself, but nevertheless it is so. And then I feel so unworthy and so sinful how can I write to, and claim fellowship with, such godly men as you are? I will now try to speak of the subject which was upon my mind when I sat down to write. In the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Vol. 66, No. 1, I read an article from Elgin, Oregon, written by sister E. H. Eckles, and one from Weiser, Idaho, written by Elder G. B. Barton. Now what I wish to write about may not interest you, but those two letters were very interesting to me, as they spoke of dear brethren and sisters with whom I have spent many pleasant moments in the worship of God. The dear brother G. E. Mayfield mentioned in those two letters, is one that I baptized some twenty-four years ago, and whom I helped ordain some four years later. He was a poor, unlearned boy, unlearned in

the wisdom of the world, and poor in this world's goods, but rich in the faith of the Son of God. He was very timid and backward in his first attempts in speaking in public. He related his experience and the exercises of his mind with reference to preaching, when he was working for me. We were grubbing and clearing land, (I do not suppose that you eastern Baptists know much about the hardships of us pioneer Baptists.) I was satisfied with his calling, and advised him to unite with our church. He then belonged to the Missionary Baptist, and was about eighteen or nineteen years of age, and was already married. He united with our church, and I baptized seven beside him in a few months, all coming from the Missionaries, and all who are living are good, orderly, sound Baptists. Elder Mayfield is now an able minister. He has studied at home until he is now quite a good common scholar, his wife being a school teacher. Sister Eckles speaks of being a sister to sister Carter. I suppose that you are acquainted with her, as I think she told me about hearing you preach. When Elder Mayfield was yet quite young in the ministry, he and I appointed a three days meeting over at Grand Round Valley. I lived in Washington, and he in Eastern Oregon. I lived over a hundred miles away from the valley, and he lived something nearer. We had to make the trip by wagon, across the blue mountains. So I drove my team and we made the trip together, my wife accompanying us. There was yet quite a great deal of snow in the mountains. Imagine two Baptist preachers, wading in snow waist deep, and breaking road for the team, and camping out, and going through privations and poverty of spirit, and of purse. I do not think that we did it to make a display of our talents,

for neither of us was bothered with that commodity. But we finally got to our place of appointment in time for meeting to begin at two o'clock. When we arrived, we were introduced to some strange brethren and sisters who had united with the Valley church since we had visited them, and among them was sister Carter and her son. Sister Carter had ridden on a man's saddle, twenty-five miles in a rain, to be at that meeting. Soon after our arrival she began conversing about the ability of yourself, Elders Chick, Beebe, Respass and others. I tell you, my brother, I really pitied her, to think she had come all that distance to hear what little we could say. I felt the dear sister will be so disappointed after hearing us. Brother Mayfield took me aside and said, drawing a long breath, "I cannot possibly try to speak before that dear old sister. O, "he says," to think that she has ridden in the rain all the way. O, do not call upon me to speak." "Why," I said, "you can speak better than I, and how do you think I feel?" I insisted that he should go forward, and he had not spoken a dozen words, till the dear sister was smiling and nodding her head. And after the meeting she said, "O, my dear young brother, it is not the eloquence, nor the logical sentences, that feed, but just the the truth. Why, you preach just like brother Beebe. He preaches truth, and so do you. And I am well paid already for my long ride." I can assure you that this rolled a mule's burden of earth off from our shoulders.

But I will have to close. Your unworthy brother in hope,

J. P. ALLISON.

WHITTON, Md., Jan. 26, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF OUR PRECIOUS PAPER, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—A sense of unworthiness would make me blush to

call you brethren, but still I hope that I am a brother to all who proclaim the same truth that is published in the SIGNS. I thought that I would relate a little of my experience of grace. If you publish it, it will not cause me to have any less doubts about myself, and if you do not publish it, I do not think that it will destroy my hope. I do not know exactly when my mind became exercised about the subject of religion, but it was as far back as I can remember. Perhaps I was about eight or ten years of age. I then went to meeting at Nassaongo, and heard Elder Housel say something that at the time amused me, though he said it in a very stern, firm tone. He said that the Arminians danced around the mourners' bench as the children of Israel did around the golden calf. As I had been to one or two protracted meetings, I was sure that he told the truth. It was not long afterward, at the same meeting-house, I heard one of the Elders Purington preach. In his remarks he said the devil would go down to the water, but would not go in, for fear of getting his feet wet. Also he spoke of children being baptized. He said there was a little girl about nine years of age, who wanted to be baptized, and the preacher asked her, after what pattern? She replied that she wanted to be baptized like Christ was. When I was going to school one day, I asked one of my schoolmates, If he was ever afraid at night, after it was dark? He said he was, if he did not say his prayers. As I was very fearful in the dark, especially by myself, I learned what he said, so when I went to bed I could say the same. But this did me no good. Also, one of my brothers told me to say my prayers night and morning. He taught me one to say at night. It was, "Now I lay me down to sleep," &c. He

also told me to say the Lord's prayer in the morning. I thought saying the words of prayer was praying. The time I have been talking about was about twenty-five years ago. Sometimes I used to think going to meeting made me better, and that I was not so bad afterwards, at least for a time. I think that I could remember more of the preaching then, than I can now. I remember some texts that interested me. Elder Poulson once preached from the text, "The axe is laid at the root of the trees, and every tree that bringeth not forth fruit is hewn down." Elder Chick also once preached from the words, "Go and tell John what ye do, hear and see." About this time I attended church meeting, which was held on Saturday. At the close of the meeting I noticed one of my brothers in tears. This affected me some. But, as the Elder dismissed I went out, but think my brother went before the church then, as I learned when I went home, that he was to be baptized the next day. I had a very pleasant dream that night, which I have never told any one, and which I could not tell now. But I remember the impression made upon me. It was the sweetest one that I ever had. Not long after this, one day I was at my work, and the thought came to me, that I was a sinner. It came with such force that I cried about it. I thought that I would not sin any more, but it seemed instead I got worse all the time. Very often when I was alone I would try to pray, and then resolve that I would do better. Then I thought that it was better not to make any more promises, than to make and break them. After this I moved farther away from meeting, and did not get to meeting as often as I had done. Some with whom I talked, would tell me that I was a Baptist. I would answer, "By

grace are ye saved." I went to a meeting near by once, and one of the preachers told the people that it was very hard for any one to put their mind on prayer alone for ten or fifteen minutes. I thought he was telling the truth. I heard another one say that God could not save a man against his will. I thought that was so also, but did not think then that God made his people willing in the day of his power. I remember at a yearly meeting at Indiantown, I was staying with my cousin. There was preaching, but it did not seem to be for me, so I got up and left. A year or more after this, a half brother of mine went with me to Indiantown to a meeting. Elder Poulson preached something about the wheat and the tares. Elder J. L. Staton made some remarks afterwards. He said he thought that he had received a thrashing. I thought that this was so with me, and I wept, but told my brother when going home from meeting, that my eyes had run water from a cold that I had. Six or seven years later I heard Elder Joseph Staton preach. He said something about prayer, which I thought was according to my own feelings. It was that he did not know whether he had prayed, or could pray, but he felt that there had been times when he had asked the Lord to give him the spirit of prayer. I never said anything about my troubles that I recall, but Elder Staton once asked me, If I had any trouble? I answered that I was sick sometimes, and took medicine. My brother asked Elder Staton to pray that night before retiring, but I left before he began, and afterwards this made me feel very guilty. Time passed on till the time of another yearly meeting at Indiantown. I was at my brother's. I retired early, but if I went to sleep, the friends awoke me by singing. It seemed to me the

sweetest singing that I ever heard. Three or four years later, I was plowing, when a root or something struck me; instead of cursing as I had sometimes, when such things happened, I felt like mourning. I repeated the words of the poet,

“Prone to wander Lord, I feel it;
Prone to leave the God I love.”

I went to my brother's one Sunday. Elder Poulson was there. I asked him a question. He tried to explain to me, but it seemed that I wanted to know more about it, so I wrote to him about it, and also about what I would like to be, some time. I did not think that I was fit to be one of the people of God, and therefore was surprised when he advised me to leave my case with the church, at the next meeting, which was in April, 1893. He came to my house the night before, and we had some talk, but I did not tell him that I would offer myself; I did not know until about ten minutes before the time, that I would do so. I felt my heart was like a stone, and that there was not a spark of love in it, but I trust the Lord wrought a change, and I went forward, and was received and baptized the next day. I remember it was a beautiful spring day.

But I must close; my letter is much longer than I intended. I remain one of the least, if one at all,

JAMES HALL.

OPELIKA, Ala., June 17, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It may be presumption in me, but I feel that I must write some things upon a subject which has doubtless led many astray, by a use of false logic, and the want of a correct knowledge of the testimony of God's word. Andrew Fuller, by his fine-spun theories, like the spider (which spins her web out of herself, be it

remembered), has led many from the line of truth which God has stretched out. God says, “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.”—Isaiah. Fuller's theory, about faith being the act of the creature, and the turning point of salvation, and about a general atonement, and special application, is entirely misleading, and calculated to deceive the simple. It is also noticeable in Dr. Gill, of England, a learned man, in science, and history, and language, and in Spurgeon also, that they, with many other English writers, have taught that the preaching of the gospel quickens sinners into life. This is misleading. Although I admit their extensive learning, I cannot, with my experience and the word of God before me, believe it. I have Dr. Gill's comprehensive commentary, and often consult him, but have to lay it aside, and wonder how such learned men could be so badly mistaken. There is not an instance on record in the word of God of the kind. Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, which showed that he was already quickened, and Jesus spoke to him of the new birth. Philip preached to the eunuch, but the eunuch was reading the Bible, which was evidence that he was quickened. Peter preached, after the Holy Ghost came upon the people, and to Cornelius after that he was quickened. And Lydia only attended to the things which were spoken by Paul, after that the Lord had opened her heart. Paul heard Annanias after being struck down. The jailer, after being shaken by the same power that shook the prison, said, What must I do to be saved? Paul says, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, and neither can he

know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Jesus, even himself, said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." He could do no mighty work in a certain place, because of their unbelief. God worked, or went before the Son himself, and quickened and prepared men for that preaching of Christ which made manifest, but the preaching did not do the work. There is doubtless a sense in which preaching the gospel quickens. It quickens into obedience, but not into life from the dead. I search in vain for any instance actually occurring, or for any vision, or prophecy, or teaching, or type, which presents such a lesson as that preaching the gospel quickens men. When Paul said, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts," we mostly hear it quoted "into" instead of "in," and many see not the difference, and preach that God shines into the heart, by the avenue of the ear or eye. But this is far from the truth. God shines in the heart. He is omnipotent and omnipresent, and the light breaks out in the heart, and shines out of it, and not into it. As Jesus was in the midst of the apostles when the door was shut, so God is in the heart, and shines out his light. The doctrine which I am combatting, is the quintessence of Campbellism, and is not like Bible Baptist doctrine, and Baptists should deny it, and so glorify God in the truth. But it is the sugar-coated doctrine of men and devils, to hide the glory of God, and to try to claim some glory for themselves. God prepared a people, and John preached to them, and they brought forth fruit unto God, which he had planted when he turned their hearts. When John had that evidence he baptized them.

I could cite almost numberless instances in the Scriptures, which teach the order of God's sublime things which belong to his house, wherein he is glorified. But time and space forbid. I glory in the truth of the effect of preaching. It is truly wonderful, and God accomplishes his will in it. But that it is his will to quicken dead sinners by it into life, out of death in trespasses and in sins, I do not believe. I could cite several instances from the writings of Dr. Gill, which I think it would be unsafe to follow, and as for Andrew Fuller, he was an errorist, and has led his thousands astray from the truth. It was his fine-spun theories which served as a wedge to divide the Baptists, and such teaching can only produce confusion and dismay. The grand truth of God is like a diamond. It sparkles with the glory of God, and is hard enough to cut up the glass houses of false logic, and vain philosophy. The more we know of it, the higher we appreciate it, and it never gets old enough to lose its value. It is eternal, and so will never get old, because time cannot effect eternal things.

Yours in hope,

WM. LIVELY.

[BROTHER Lively is right. There is all the difference in the world between God-given faith, and that which is preached as the duty of men. There is an equal difference between the gospel, and the preaching of it. The work of the Holy Spirit must always go before the preaching of men, if that preaching is to have any good effect. The faithful preaching of the word will anger the natural man, but it can never give him joy until he is quickened into divine life. Preaching good morals is not preaching the gospel. It is not the business of the preacher of the word, when in the pulpit, to preach

good morals to natural men, but to preach Christ. Paul determined to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified, in his ministry. As a man among men, he would advocate good morals, or obedience to the law of the land, among all men. But this was not part of the preaching to which God had called him. The minister of Christ has no message but Christ as a Savior for poor sinners. He is not sent to the dead, but to the living. When our God has a message for the dead, he speaks it himself by his Holy Spirit. Then that dead man lives. Now to the living soul is the word of this salvation sent. Brethren, let us not prostitute our high calling by preaching morality to the dead. We have a living message for living souls. The righteousness of an earthly morality is as much an enemy to the gospel or Christ, as is the open wickedness of the world. Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom before the pharisee.—ED.]

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 11, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—I received the Bible, and am well pleased with it, the print is so large and plain, and the way it is gotten up is quite good.

I notice a communication from brother Hall, of Powellville, Md., in Vol. 66, August 15th, noticing the view he takes. I think he is correct, as it is the best periodical I know of. It is sound according as I understand it, and I feel to say it contends for the faith once delivered to the saints, and as such, we ought to try as much as in us is, to sustain the good old SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I am now sixty-six years old, and feel to thank God for the wonderful blessings received from his unwasting fullness. I have been comforted so much in reading the dear old SIGNS, the many able editorials are a

great feast to read, and so instructive, and they all sound so much like your dear, blessed father, whom I had the pleasure of hearing preach that which I indorsed, and thank God I can feel to say it did me good, as nothing but the truth will do any of us any good. I also read so many able communications written by the dear kindred in Christ, I often feel that if I could write, I would be glad; but such is not the case, and I must be content with my lot. I do feel my unworthiness so much, I fear I am not what I profess to be, and it makes me tremble and fear. I know there is nothing I can do within myself, and feel to say, "Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor sinner." For such I feel myself to be.

May God, my dear brother, in his wisdom still spare you to wield the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon," is my prayer.

Yours in hope,

O. B. HICKERSON.

A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.

AT this season of the year the work in our office falls off nearly one-half, and in order to keep our hands employed, we will, for the next three months, do small jobs of work, from the printing of a few copies of favorite pieces of poetry, to publishing small pamphlets, at actual cost. If you have any little jobs of printing, now is your time to send it on. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SON.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1898.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as
Second-Class Mail Matter.**EDITORS:****F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.****B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.**

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

CHILICOTHE, Ill., July 15, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I want your views published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES upon my case. I am a very old and unworthy sinner in the sight of my God. I have had a membership in good standing with the Old School Baptists for years. For many years I have not been able to go to my church. I have not partaken of the Lord's supper for over twenty years. I have now become so feeble and weak that I cannot go to the church of my choice. I want some light upon the following. There are Baptists here, but they do not believe my doctrine, nor I theirs. Now is it necessary for me to receive the communion before I die? I have not been able to go to church on account of the long distance. Now, would it be right to partake of the communion with any other denomination? I believe in the doctrine of predestination and of election. Please give me some light.

Your unworthy brother,

CHARLES W. HOLT.

R E P L Y .

We feel to greatly sympathize with our aged brother in his lonely condition, cut off as he is from the communion of his brethren, and from the ordinances of the church. It is indeed, to those who love the assemblies of the saints, a great trial to be deprived of these gatherings. No doubt our aged brother often feels lonely and sad. No doubt he longs for christian companionship and fellowship; yet he says that he does not find it among the people where he dwells. He may have kind friends there, so far as natural

things are concerned, but they do not understand nor sympathize with his spiritual experience. His faith is not their faith. They do not believe in a finished salvation, as he does. They glorify human efforts, in the salvation of sinners, while he must glorify the Lord, and his grace, alone. And so, though dwelling by the side of each other, and perhaps in the same house, and while ministering all that human kindness can do to each other, yet they are strangers in the things which are religious. It is said of the blessed Son of God, and Son of man, that of the people there was none with him. He was alone in the world, and yet he spent his days amidst the multitudes, who were continually gathering to hear and see him. He was never alone in one sense of the word, but in the true sense of the word he was always alone. Thus it is in great measure with the people of God. To some it has been given to dwell with those of like precious faith, but to others, like our aged brother, it is given that they shall dwell alone, so far as the companionship of those of like precious faith is concerned. In their loneliness their hearts may seek for companionship, and they may begin to think that perhaps they can find company that will be better than none, among those of other faith; but a trial of this always ends in additional sorrow to their souls. They will not only be disappointed, but they will find that they have thus forsaken the fountain of living waters, and have hewn out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which will hold no water. They always find, as our brother will surely do, that it is better to dwell alone, than among those who fight against the things which are dearest to them. It is emphatically true that two cannot walk together unless they are agreed. Our aged brother

Holt says, that he does not believe as do the Baptists with him. He cannot then have any real communion with them, even though he should go through the form of eating the bread and drinking the wine with them. In such an event it would not be the communion of the body and blood of Christ, which he would engage in. He would wound his own conscience, and dishonor the name of the Lord whom he desires to glorify. He would be expressing a fellowship which he does not feel, and this could never be right.

As our brother has asked us to write upon his request, we feel to consider the whole subject of the Lord's supper as an ordinance, for a little time. First, our brother asks, "Is it necessary for him to partake of the supper?" We suppose that he means, is it necessary for salvation? We answer most emphatically, no. Nothing is necessary for any sinner's salvation but the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Neither baptism, nor the supper, nor any other church ordinance, nor any work of man whatever, can in the least aid in the sinner's salvation. It is of the Lord that men are saved, if saved at all. If our brother simply means, is it necessary for him to partake of the supper, in order to be an obedient servant of the Lord? we would answer that it is not necessary for him to partake of what men call the supper, with those who have no commandment of the Lord to eat the supper. Such a commandment is limited to the church of God. It is one of the ordinances of Zion. No other people are commanded to partake. As the Moabites, or Philistines, of old, were not placed under the law which God gave Israel, and were not commanded to offer the sacrifices of Israel, or pay the tithes

of Israel, so the ordinances of the church belong alone to the church. An Israelite could not, if away from his own land, eat at a heathen feast, and then his eating be accepted as though he had eaten the feast of the Lord. This certainly is clear. If an Israelite was so circumstanced that he could not meet at the solemn assemblies of Israel, the only thing for him to do was to wait until he could assemble there, and then eat and drink at their feasts. So the only thing for our brother to do is to wait upon the Lord. The Lord knows his desire, and the desire is, in his sight, obedience, when providential circumstances hinder the fulfillment of that desire. He would be most certainly acting in disobedience to God, should he partake of the form of the supper with a people who do not have any claim to be called the church of God. For neither reason then is it necessary for our brother to partake of the supper with those Baptists with whom he has no fellowship in faith. Individually many of them may be born of God, but as a body they are not the church of God, and all the ordinances are confined to the church, and are church acts. For this reason no one has any right to administer the supper privately. It is to be for the church, and in the public meeting of the church.

We wish to notice the word "sacrament," which our brother uses. We often hear it used with reference to the Lord's supper. We sometimes hear it used among our people. We are sure that those among our people who use it mean no harm by it, that is, they mean nothing untrue by its use. But yet we do not like the word, as applied to any ordinance of the Lord's house. As it is used by that church which is the mother of harlots, and abominations in the earth, it signifies that the supper and baptism

confers some grace which could not otherwise be possessed. They attach a virtue to the form itself, and this the word sacrament conveys to most minds, when it is used. In this sense the only things which ought to be called sacraments, are the work of Christ upon Calvary in the atonement, and the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. All outward ordinances and forms have no power to confer any grace, but only signify that grace has been conferred upon those who come to them.

We call the attention of our brother to the fact that the supper is not the communion, but only the sign of the communion. The communion is in the heart, and is spiritual; it can be affected neither for, nor against, by any act of man; it is begotten in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is the result of the oneness of the people of God in the life of Christ, and in the faith of the gospel. Members of the same body, having one life in common, commune together. Another man's hand, though bound never so closely to mine, does not commune with it. The communion then is the result of one indwelling life. This the people of God realize in the facts of their daily experience. By this one life they are drawn and bound together, and as they are bound together with one another, so are they with their Head, which is Christ. Therefore the apostle speaks of the communion of the body of Christ. Speaking of the supper he says, the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ, and the wine which we drink, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? That is, is not the bread and the wine the symbol of this communion? The supper then is not the communion, but it is the evidence of this communion. When we eat this supper, we declare that we are in

communion with all the people of God, and with Christ, their living Head. When we eat the supper, among other things, we declare that we look alone to the blood of Christ for redemption, and that we find our strength, hope and comfort in the body of Christ alone. We declare that Christ is our all and in all.

Another thought seems to us to belong to the subject, viz: as in natural things there must be indwelling life before there can be any demand or use for food, and before there can be any eating of food, so in the spiritual world must there be the possession of spiritual life, before we can eat the body and drink the blood of Christ. To find any comfort and strength in the Christ of the gospel, yea, more, to desire that comfort and strength, we must be in possession of this spiritual life. To be hungry for what we find in Christ, is full evidence that we have the life of Christ in us. Before there can be any fellowship with believers, we must ourself possess the life of a believer. All who receive the word gladly, have a right to all the ordinances of the Lord's house, in their order.

Still another thing we call attention to. Redemption must precede all experience of gospel blessings. The atonement must go before all other things in the kingdom of heaven. As when the tabernacle of the wilderness was built, no Israelite could enter into its gates, or partake of any of its privileges, until the blood of the slain beasts had been sprinkled upon it, and upon the worshipers, in ceremonial cleansing, so no one can be entitled to any gospel blessing, until the blood of Christ has been applied to the conscience, to cleanse it from guilt. This we call especial attention to. Now as a conclusion which must be drawn from this truth, baptism, which is a figure of the

redemption, which we have through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, must always precede the supper, which is a figure of the eating and drinking, which all gospel subjects enjoy, and are entitled to. As the blessings of the kingdom never go before the redemption of the sinner, so the supper must never go before the baptism. This has always seemed to us an incontrovertible truth. Baptism must in all cases precede any right to the supper. Now before any one can be entitled to the supper, he must at least profess faith in Christ as his Savior, in baptism. Those who look to any work of their own, or even to the choice of their own mind, as that which decides their salvation, reject the Lord Christ, and are not entitled to baptism. If they are immersed at all, while they still do not believe in Christ as the full Savior of their souls, and as having finished redemption, so that nothing remains for them to do, they act a lie. If we sit together at the supper while we, some of us, hold to a finished redemption, and others believe that something depends upon the act or choice of the creature, to complete the redemption, and make it efficacious to our souls, we are professing to be one when we are not really one, and this must be abhorrent to the God of truth. If there be no fellowship there can be no communion, and where there is no communion, there should be no sitting down together at that supper, which seth forth the fellowship and the communion.

Now this brings us to the consideration of what is called among men close communion. We might say with perfect truth, that if there be any communion at all in anything, or between any two persons or objects, it must be close communion. That which is not in harmony

cannot commune. There is no communion between Christ and Belial. What part hath he that believeth with an infidel? is the unanswerable questioning of the apostle. If the supper be a sign of anything, it is of oneness of faith, in which alone is communion, as we have said more than once in this editorial. Those who come to the supper must then be of one faith, and one practice. This ought not to be disputed, and it will not, by any one who regards the supper as meaning anything. The communion must be close, to be communion at all, and the supper must not be carried to any wider extent than the communion which it signifies. It would therefore be the height of inconsistency to admit members of all so called churches to our administration of the supper, and so it would be inconsistent to eat with them. A little consideration will make this matter plain. For instance, should any one among us become an advocate of the doctrine and practice of the Campbellites, we should be compelled after due labor, to exclude him from our fellowship. If that exclusion should amount to anything, and mean anything, it must mean that we shall not henceforth admit him to any of the privileges of the church. This of course would include the supper as one of the highest expressions of our fellowship in the gospel. Henceforth to receive him to the communion would be inconsistent upon our part. It would be to render null and void the solemn act of the church, in which they had obeyed the divine injunction, to reject an heretic after the first and second admonition. Now then there might be absolutely nothing against the moral character of that man, and he would have no difficulty in receiving admission to any Campbellite church in the land. As a matter of fact,

we may suppose that he does this. He is received by them in full fellowship. Now when our next season for the supper comes around, many of that church are present, and he among the number. If then we, to avoid the reproach of close communion, invite all who belong to the Campbellite, or any other denomination, to our supper, we invite that man whom we have excluded, and for whom by our act of exclusion, we have said that we have no fellowship, right back to our communion and our fellowship. By our vote we declared nonfellowship for him, and now by our act we say that we do have full fellowship for him. Cannot any one see at once the inconsistency of such an action upon our part? If we exclude a man for heresy, can we receive to our administration of the supper, those who hold that heresy? Can we receive consistently those to our ordinances who have not obeyed the Lord in the first ordinance of all, viz: baptism? Ought we not to say by precept and practice, that if any one desires the fellowship and privileges of the church of God, let him render obedience to the commandment of the Lord to be baptized. Let all such come in by the appointed door. If any are ignorant of what the law of Zion requires, let such ones be instructed in the way of the Lord more perfectly.

In conclusion we say that our aged brother would do wrong, he would sin against God, and against his own conscience, to eat of the supper with any but the people of God. We leave these thoughts for the consideration of brother Holt and our readers, and say that our manner of eating the supper, does not imply the least disposition to say or think hard things of those who do not know the truth, nor does it imply that we think ourselves better than they.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

JOHN XVII. 5.

"AND NOW, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

These words were addressed by our Lord Jesus Christ to the Father, but a very short time before he was delivered up into the hands of his enemies to be crucified. Already, as the preceding connection of our text records, he had for the last time eaten the passover with his disciples, given the sop to Judas, and Judas was at this very time negotiating with the enemies to betray his Lord into their hands. The supper, commemorative of that dreadful night, or rather of the events of that time, had been instituted, the bread had been broken, and the wine, which was to signify his blood in the New Testament, had been drunk, the solemn hymn had been sung, and the solitary retreat to the Mount of Olives gained, and the last instructions to his disciples which they were to receive before his death had been imparted. This done, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and addressed the Father, and in that address used the words of our text, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

To know the deep emotion of his soul, or to describe the bitterness of that cup, which was pressed to his lips, the dregs of which he must drink before he could enter into his glory, is beyond the ability of men or angels to describe. But while his words express his desire to the Father, they are also full of instruction to his people.

It is thought by many, that this and similar prayers of our Redeemer, were

addressed by the humanity of Christ to his divinity, or that as the second distinct person in the Godhead, the prayer was addressed to the first person of the trinity of persons. Neither of these views are clear to our understanding. If by human nature is intended that flesh which he was made, when he was made of a woman, or that which was born of the virgin, for in whatever sense Christ is identified in uttering this prayer, in that very identity he had before his incarnation been glorified with the Father's own self, and had come out from the Father, manifestly as the Son of God, for so he had manifested this secret to the men whom the Father had given him out of the world, and they had known surely that he came out from the Father, and believed that the Father sent him. (See verses six, seven and eight.) None, we presume, will claim that what is commonly called the human nature of Christ, came out from the Father, in the sense here expressed, but that in this sense his humanity evidently sprang out of Judah.

2. If we take the other view, that it was as the second person of the Trinity, he came out from, and was sent by the Father, another difficulty meets us, in which we are unable to reconcile his perfect and eternal equality with the Father in the eternal Godhead, with his emanation or his coming out from, and the subordination to the Father, or asking his petition of the Father. But, in perfect harmony with the Bible doctrine of his full equality with the Father in eternal Godhead, and his incarnation in which he took part of the same flesh and blood which his children are partakers of, we learn from the Scriptures that he stood in mediatorial relation both to the Father and the church, as the Day's Man who could lay his hand on both, and that it

was in reference to his mediatorial sonship that he said he had come out from the Father, and that he was sent by the Father, not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work. As the mediatorial Head and life of the church which is his body, he had all that glory with the Father before the world was, which in our text he asks for, and has received, and shall possess when this world shall be no more. Before the world was, he was glorified with the Father's own self, and he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and express image of his person. For the word was with God, and the word was God, and he who was the word was put to death in the flesh, bear the sins of his people in his own body, and God was manifest in the flesh. And when his body was locked in the cold embrace of death and the grave, his flesh saw no corruption, in that self-same body he was raised from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and in that risen and glorified body he has now the glory of eternal, uncreated, underived, unbegotten, self-existent, independent and everlasting Godhead, which he had with the Father before the world was, no more, nor any less, is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Thus, to us, he is clearly the God Man, and Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, the Man of God's right hand, whom he hath made strong for himself, the anointed of the Father, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

“Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?” When he descended, he that was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He took on him the form of a servant,

learned obedience, and filled the character of a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, poured out his strong cries and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and finally poured out his soul unto death, and in doing so cried with a loud voice, "It is finished!" and yielded up the ghost. But having now suffered these things, he must enter into his glory, which is the glory of the Father's own self, which he had with the Father before the world was. For this joy which was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of the throne of God. Thus it behooved him to suffer, and then to enter into his glory, where,

"No more the bloody spear—
The cross and nails no more,"

shall ever pierce his hands, his feet, his heart. He is now made higher than the heavens, and reigns forever on the throne with the Father.

"Though they are known by different names,
The Father God, and God the Son,"

yet so inseparable and identical that he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also, for he is in the Father, and the Father is in him.

One consideration more we will notice briefly in closing this article. The appeal in our text embodies the perfect intercession of Christ as based on the perfect work which he had completed, and this he asks, knowing that he is always heard. The consummation of the mediatorial glory of the Son of God, is not to add unto him one single member, that was not in him when he was set up in mediatorial headship over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. He prays not for the world, but for them whom the Father had given him out of the world; and he prays that they may be one with

him, even as he and his Father are one. This intercessory prayer is according to the immutable will of the Father; and, therefore, when all the saints shall be brought into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ, he will have the same glory, in his members as well as in identity with the Father in eternal Godhead, that he had before the word was, and no more. Or, in other words, he had the same glory before the world was, in all respects, as he asks for or desires.

Such are our views on this sublime and heavenly subject, compare them with the infallible standard of truth, and if they be not sustained by the Scriptures, cast them from you, but if you find them clearly sustained by the Scriptures, bind them to your heart, and rejoice

"That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity."

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 15, 1856.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

PLEASE publish an account of the death of **James J. Patterson**, which sad event came to pass at his home in River View, Chambers Co., Ala., July 29th, 1898. His age was 50 years, 1 month and 6 days. The circumstances that led to his death were peculiar, but in strict harmony with his faith. Mr. Patterson was foreman in the cloth room of the Galeton Cotton Mills. Among the operatives in this room was Wesley Leak. About three weeks prior to the death of Mr. Patterson, Leak was bitten by a black spider, and about two days after he died in great agony. Mr. Patterson attended his burial, and while the grave was being filled the preacher in attendance said to Mr. Patterson, that it looked strange that a little insect like that would take a man's life. "Yes," said Mr. Patterson, "but when a man's time comes to die, the means of death are always at hand." And this was his faith. About two weeks before his death, he spent the day with me, and we were talking about these same things. On the evening of Monday, before he died Friday, he walked to a high door in the cloth room, and from some unknown cause he lost his balance and fell from the door to the ground, some ten or

twelve feet below. No one saw him fall, but he was finally discovered and conveyed home, but he never rallied, but went off quickly Friday morning. I visited him Tuesday, but he was so much under the influence of opiates that he scarcely knew I was there, and I learn from sister Patterson that he talked but little, and nothing about death. I was absent at one of my charges in Heard Co., Ga., and only learned of his death on my way home Sunday evening. In my absence Elder Lively was wired for, and came and spoke at his burial. Mr. Patterson was a constant reader of the SIGNS, and a firm believer in the doctrine published in its columns. Although he held a letter from the Missionary Baptists, some trouble in the church near him kept him from offering to the Primitive Baptists. To give an idea of his views, some time last year Mr. Leak one day called him to the door of the cloth room, and pointing to a turtle out in the river tauntingly remarked that there was a "hard shell." "Yes," said Mr. Patterson, "I see he is on a rock." Mr. Patterson visited me often, and I feel that I have lost a dear friend and brother. He leaves a wife and several children, and but one able to help much toward a support. His widow is a member of Ephesus church, near here. She deserves the prayers, help and sympathy of her brethren. I know nothing of deceased's ancestors. I think he was born and reared somewhere not far from Atlanta, Ga. I believe he was a child of God, and knew and loved the truth, and that he is entered into everlasting rest with Jesus.

May his sorrowing wife and children be consoled by the same hope in Christ which we feel confident that he possessed, is our prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

H. J. REDD.

RIVER VIEW, Ala., August, 1898.

DIED—March 14th, 1898, Miss Ann Miller, in the 76th year of her age. Sister Miller had been a great sufferer for many years from rheumatic and neuralgia trouble. Some two years before her death she went south to spend the winter, thinking to be benefited thereby. While there she fell, crushing her hip joint, from which she suffered beyond description, yet she bore it all with a wonderful degree of patience. She was brought back to her pleasant home, where she was almost overjoyed as she entered within its walls, as she wanted to die at home. It was my privilege to be at her home often, where I always found a hearty welcome. I remember well much of our precious conversation on spiritual things, and of that deep feeling of humility she ever exhibited, which so wonderfully displays God's gracious work in the heart. Retired in all her bearing, she never sought to gain notice by anything she did. She united with the Bethel church, Shelby Co., Ky., about the year 1840, and ever lived a worthy member. It has been my privilege to know her for the past ten years, and for that time know of

her faithfulness and liberality to the church. She was a worthy pattern or example. She was the last of the family, her nearest relatives, perhaps, are second cousins.

A large concourse of people assembled at her home, where short exercises were held, when her body was taken to the cemetery chapel, at Shelbyville, Ky., where the writer spoke briefly to the sorrowing brethren and friends, from 1 Cor. xv. 49, when the body was committed to the dust. Dear Lord, remember thy church; build her waste places, cause her to flourish and rejoice.

P. W. SAWIN.

James McFarland died at the home of his brother, Harrison McFarland, in the southern part of Peoples township, Sunday evening, August 7th, at 7:30, and was buried Thursday, August 11th, at 2 o'clock. Interment took place in the cemetery one-half mile north of the church. The services were conducted by Elder Frank Caldwell. James McFarland was born August 23d, 1813, at Bovina, Delaware Co., N. Y., and moved to Ogle Co., Ill., in 1834. He was married to Miss Julia Sanford, April 23d, 1837, and in 1843 he moved to southwestern Wisconsin, where his wife died in 1850. Mr. McFarland moved to Iowa in 1875. There were born to them four children, Elizabeth Ann, who died in infancy, Sylvester, who lives in Boston, Mass., Eleanor Jane, now Mrs. Burns, who lives in New York, and John S., who died at Albany, Wis., Dec. 8th, 1883. Mr. McFarland was one of a large family, there having been thirteen children, ten boys and three girls, two of whom survive him, a brother David, of Mora, Minn., and Harrison, of Boone Co., Iowa. He had made his home with his brother Harrison for twenty-five years. He had been a consistent member of the Old School Baptist church for sixty years. He died after an illness of but eight days. The funeral was very largely attended.

By the request of his only sister, Miss Alice Davice, I send a notice of the death of her only brother, Peter T. Davice, aged 26 years, 3 months and 20 days. Peter was a fine young man, and we have reasons for believing that he was not without hope. He joined the United States army in early life. He was wounded in the battle of Santiago, I think, and was sent to Georgia, and afterwards was attacked with typhoid fever, and died August 4th, 1898, leaving Alice alone, without father, mother, brother or sister, but not without good friends, and above all, one that sticketh closer than a brother. Peter wrote some cheering things in his last letter to Alice, so we have reason to hope that he is better off. The Lord doeth right. Alice has our prayers and sympathy, hoping the Lord will give her grace for her trial.

T. M. POULSON.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Juniata Association will convene with Sidling Hill Church, Friday, Oct. 7th, 1898, holding over Sunday. All parties will be met at Hancock Station, on Baltimore & Ohio R. R., Thursday, Oct. 6th. Would request that all come on the first train arriving at Hancock, if possible, as the church is about fifteen miles from station. Any wishing to arrive later please write Elder Ahimaz Mellott, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa. We hope our brethren will come to see us, our ministering brethren especially. Though a long way off, and poor, we appreciate your presence, love and fellowship perhaps the more. Come and see if we do not.

E. V. WHITE.

THE fifty-eighth annual session of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists will convene, the Lord willing, with the Sulphur Fork Church, near Campbellsburg, Ky., on the Louisville & Cincinnati Short Line, R. R., September 14th, 15th and 16th, 1898. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

ERNEST F. RANSELL, Clerk.

THE Licking Association will convene with the Salt River Church, Anderson Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1898. Those coming from the west, will come by Louisville, Ky. Those from the east, by Lexington, Ky. Those from the south will change cars at Burgan, on the Cincinnati Southern, and come to Lawrenceburg, Ky., where they will be met and taken care of by the brethren and friends.

J. J. WATERFILL, Church Clerk.

THE Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church in Bowdoinham, Sagadahoc Co., Maine, commencing on September 9th, 1898, and continuing three days. All lovers of the truth are invited to attend, especially ministering brethren, who feel to meet with us.

J. C. CLARK.

THE next annual meeting of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Old School Baptist church of Schoharie, N. Y., at their meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, (21st and 22d) 1898, at 10 a. m. each day. We desire that ministering brethren, and others of our faith and order, of other associations, and all who love the truth, will meet with us.

Those who come by rail will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday previous.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

MEETINGS.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold a two days meeting the third Saturday and Sunday in September, (17th and 18th) 1898. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers and other brethren, and all who may desire to come, to meet with us.

JUSTIN DYER.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, will meet with Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun Co., Virginia, on Wednesday before the third Sunday in October, 1898, and continue three days.

THE yearly meeting at Rock Springs, is appointed to commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in September, at 10 o'clock a. m., and continue over Sunday.

Those coming by rail, will leave Philadelphia on Friday, at about 2 o'clock p. m. Those from Baltimore at about the same time. Change cars at Perryville for Conowingo, where they will be met on the 4:32 p. m. train. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

D. M. THOMAS, Clerk.

A yearly meeting is appointed to be held with the Columbia Old School Baptist Church, Jackson Co., Mich., commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, (1st and 2d) 1898. A cordial invitation is extended to all that desire to meet with us.

WM. L. BROWN, Church Clerk.

THE annual two days meeting of the Shohola Creek Church, of Predestinarian Baptists, will be held at the Shohola schoolhouse, on Thursday and Friday, September 22d and 23d, 1898. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. All will be met at Shohola, Tuesday afternoon, and conveyed to place of meeting, commencing 10 a. m. Wednesday.

GIPSON MCKEEN, Church Clerk.

A YEARLY, or two days meeting, is appointed to be held with the Cammal church, Lycoming Co., Pa., Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 20th and 21st, 1898. Place of meeting only a few rods from Cammal Station, on Fall Brook R. R. We hope to see many lovers of the truth present, ministers included.

D. M. VAIL.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has decided to hold their yearly two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, September 28th and 29th, 1898, and the monthly meeting for October is to be Saturday and Sunday after the yearly meeting. Any of our dear kindred in

Christ who can do so, are cordially invited to attend the meetings. For the benefit of any one who does not know of the location of Otego, I will say, Otego is situated on the D. & H. R. R., ninety miles from Albany, and fifty-three miles from Binghamton, and one hundred and eight miles from Scranton. Also it is fourteen miles from the Ontario & Western R. R., the nearest station of which is Sidney, N. Y., which is also on the D. & H. road.

Done by order of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1898. NO. 19.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ELECTION OF GRACE.

BELOVED IN CHRIST:—We are called upon to look to the Rock from whence we were hewn, as well as to the hole of the pit from whence we were digged, showing that we are from both earth and heaven. So the song of the redeemed is, “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.” Christ is this living and everlasting Rock, and upon this abiding foundation stone the Lord Jehovah builds his church. “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.” The apostle goes on and says, “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of

darkness into his marvelous light.”—1 Peter ii. These Scriptures not only clearly show that Christ and all his members are the chosen of God, but they also beautifully present the purpose and wisdom and goodness of the infinite Father in election; that the chosen generation should not be confounded, but should show forth his praise. Therefore, whenever any people truly praise the Holy One in Sion, it is only because he hath chosen them unto holiness and salvation; for the high praises from the saints is the blessed purpose of God in their election, and the glorious end of their salvation. This is worthy of the glorious and blessed God.

In the brief text which I have chosen for this paper, the chosen and inspired Paul declares a wonderful truth of God, namely, that election is of grace, and is the grace of God. Let us hear him: “But what saith the answer of God unto him [Elijah]? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”—Romans xi. 4, 5. A remnant of the people of Israel who truly worshipéd

God, but refused to bow down to idols, in the time of the apostles, as also in the times of the prophets. The apostle goes on and says, "And if by grace, then it is 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." Works, then, are excluded from salvation, for it is "the election of grace" only that hath obtained salvation, and both the election and grace are of God. Paul, therefore, continues, "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." So then, it is only through God's electing grace that any are saved, both of the Jews, and also of the Gentiles. Now this salvation is from all sin and death, unto perfect holiness and life eternal. This is the glory of grace and election. Through these is the God of electing grace glorified forever and ever. Sin, as a destructive monster, hath reigned unto death, even in the chosen people of God; "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The very thought of continuing in sin is, therefore, abhorrent to the election of grace, for this heavenly way of salvation is through righteousness and holiness, and this royal princess of heaven reigns in and over her chosen and blessed subjects by the holy Son of God, the King of righteousness. It is a slanderous and base imputation, then, to say that, "Because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation," in a way of abounding and sovereign grace, the sacred incentive unto holiness and devout obedience is taken away or denied; nay, rather, it is established. For the King of

glory, by whom grace reigns unto all the chosen of God, says, "For ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain." "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." It must be apparent to all spiritual minds that, since salvation from sin is through the election of grace, and grace reigns by our Lord Jesus, in whom God is well pleased, therefore grace is uplifting, heavenly and well pleasing to God in all its influence or effects and power, leading her subjects to praise and bless God and honor Christ, by whom grace reigns. And since the inspired servant of our Lord affirms that grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, it is irreverent and sacrilegious to cast any reflections or reproaches upon the power and sufficiency of "the election of grace," abounding, reigning grace, "the grace of God that bringeth salvation." For there is not another way or principle, revealed from God to men, which brings salvation from sin, and the deserts of sin. Why, then, should any sinner rail against grace, or talk of another principle of salvation than grace? For salvation is always from sin, and the dire consequences of sin, and it is unto righteousness in God's sight and acceptance with him. Can anything besides "the election of grace" thus save us, and present us holy and without blame before God in love? Whether we speak of salvation in time, or in eternity, yet it is salvation from sin in some of its countless forms, and salvation by grace through God's election. Paul therefore says, "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." Such, then, is the glorious purpose of our God in the choice of all the people and members of Christ, the elect and precious Head of his body, the church. Accordingly the earnest desire of all the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," is, with David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me." "Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness." All righteousness, therefore, has its source in "the election of grace," through Jesus Christ the righteous, and the sanctification of the Spirit. Hence all divine excellence and true goodness in the chosen people, saved by the Lord, as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," are "the fruit of the Spirit," by whom we are quickened, of whom we are born, as "born again," and by whom we truly say, "Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." Thus and in this way only do any worship God in spirit and in truth, for all others are will worshipers, and worship and serve for reward, claiming salvation and its blessings conditionally for their works. Here are two opposite principles, and likewise two opposite classes of religious worshipers, one resulting from "the election of grace," according as God hath chosen and blessed us in Christ, and hath now also created us in him unto good works, which he hath before ordained that we should walk in them; the other is according to a covenant which is legal and conditional, and which says, "The man that doeth these things, he shall live by them." There is only

two ways of salvation, neither can there be any other way, for there is no middle ground between grace and works, or between Jesus and man. "For man is a fallen sinner still, and grace shall reign alone."

Let us now more specially notice that grace embraces divine election, and election embraces Jesus, the elect Head, and all the many members of the elect body of Christ, as the bride of the King's Son, and as the children and heirs of God the Father, and joint-heirs with Christ, the first-born from the dead among many brethren. This, and all this, is the abounding grace of God.

"Grace first ordained the way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan."

This wondrous plan is, as says a poet, "Sons we are through God's election, who in Jesus Christ believe." Or as God the Father says, which is better, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." And as Jesus the Son says, "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." And to Mary he said, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Thus the risen and glorified Son of God still owns his lowly disciples in brotherhood with himself on the Father's side, while he is equally their Brother on the mother's side. This wonderful and ever blessed relationship exists in the election of God's grace. This is truly glorious grace. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" And since

the Father calls us his sons, this holy relationship exists and abides in us. What "amazing grace," that children of earth, creatures of a day, should be the sons and daughters of "the mighty God, the everlasting Father," and brethren of "the Prince of peace." This is God's new covenant with his chosen people, whom he foreknew, in which he takes away their sins, and is merciful to their unrighteousness; and this covenant of life and peace is in "the grace of God that bringeth salvation" to dying sinners, to the aged men and aged women, to the young women and young men, to the servants and to the masters. Its heaven-inspired and heart-responding sentiment is, that all the chosen and blessed, predestinated and called, justified and glorified people of the living God, should be forever "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

Yours in Jesus,

D. BARTLEY.

[SINCE the above was in type we have seen the same article in one of our exchanges, but we supposed it was written for the SIGNS only, as the manuscript was sent us without informing us that a duplicate had been sent another paper. To those who may be receiving both publications, we make this apology and explanation.—ED.]

FARMINGTON, Ill., August 17, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have received a very interesting and comforting letter from our highly esteemed brother Coulter, and I feel like sending it to you for insertion in the SIGNS. I am satisfied it will be a comfort to many others that are poor and needy, and compassed about

with doubts and fears. I feel sure that dear brother Coulter has too highly estimated this poor sinner. Had he done me justice, according to my feelings, in all honesty he should have said, he had estimated me too highly, and was disappointed when he met me. For me to say, I am less than the least of all saints, is far too high a place. I feel that I am beneath, or should be, the notice of the least of God's children, for I am so ignorant of anything of a spiritual nature. I have been for years much interested in the writings of brother Coulter, as well as many others, in the dear old SIGNS. I felt glad to meet so many of the dear saints of God at the association in Philadelphia, very many that I never had hoped to see.

Yours in love,

E. D. VARNES.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August 9, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER VARNES:—Your very acceptable letter has been received, and I feel gratified that you have me in remembrance. I had desired for a long time to meet you, and I assure you it was a great pleasure to me to have you at our association. Sometimes when I meet my brethren for the first time, (especially those I have put a pretty high estimate on) I am disappointed, while at other times I discover I have not estimated high enough. So it was in your case; I had placed a pretty high value on you, but I have found I did not get it high enough. When I hear that some brother (whom I have not met) desires to meet me, I am troubled, because I feel sure I will not come up to his expectations, and he will be sadly disappointed, and at times I feel so bad about it that I almost wish we would not meet, so that I might retain his good

opinion, yet my desire to see him will overcome my fears. When I see the Spirit of Christ richly manifest in my brethren, and all the fruit they yield is to the praise of the glory of God's grace, and to the upbuilding of his church, so in proportion do I love them. For by their fruits shall ye know them, and to know the people of God, with the knowledge of divine life, is to love them. We cannot help it, and we do not want to help it. It does seem to me, brother Varnes, that there is an endless chain of divine love which permeates and illumines every member of the church of the living God; for when we, by faith, discern the body of Christ, we behold that precious body in its entirety, nurtured and kept in and through its glorious Head, from everlasting to everlasting. We behold the church in all its perfection, and completeness, and beauty, and glory, as did Isaiah, when he declared, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." And just so sure, dear brother, as we behold the King in his transcendent beauty, with his whole train of faithful and true followers, we also at the same time see ourselves as nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, altogether unworthy and undeserving of his divine love and favor. Therefore we cry out for mercy to him that sheweth mercy. And this is the fruit by which we know them. The same cry that was in the heart, and upon the lips of the dear old prophet, is also in our own heart: "Woe is me, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." This was something of my experience when I read your precious letter. But when you asked me to write you my views on a certain portion of Scripture, I

said in my heart, "Brother Varnes is not aware how very ignorant I am in the things pertaining to the great and wonderful mystery of godliness." Beyond the hope, which I hope I have, that God has been merciful to me, a wretched, lost and undone sinner, I absolutely know nothing at all; yet I am well assured, if I have a good hope through grace, that it is because I have Christ in me the hope of glory, and having him, I have all things, and through him I can do all things, yea, even "run through a troop." By him I know all things, and just as much of the riches of wisdom and knowledge of God, as is revealed unto me, through faith, by the Spirit of God, that do I know as the infallible truth of God. To this you can also attest, my brother, out of your own heart's experience. Thus it is that the children of the heavenly King do "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." How beautifully the life of Christ does enter into his people, as described in the Scripture, and its connections, upon which you asked me to write. And how completely the law is fulfilled by him and through him (not alone for his people), but in them, and made manifest in their daily experience. If you remember, it was the fifteenth verse of the second chapter of Hebrews, which you asked me to write upon, and if I am given any word of comfort to say to you about it, I would like to include the fourteenth verse also, which reads, "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 epistle to the Hebrews was no doubt

written at a peculiar time, for an especial purpose, that those Hebrew brethren who had retrograded, and gone back to the beggarly elements of the world, and to their own works, might be made to see more clearly the precious truths from which they had receded. It does set forth in clear, strong and powerful language, the perfection of all things in Christ, as in striking contrast to the imperfections found in the law dispensation. While the law was "holy, just and good," yet it could not make anything perfect. It could not make a righteous nation. Therefore the apostle says, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." The mediatorship is set forth clearly and distinctly in this epistle to the Hebrews, showing plainly that he came not as a substitute, but as the head and life of his body, (the church). Then as the children were, so he became. He found them "partakers of flesh and blood," and as he found them, so "also himself partook of the same." He must become like unto his brethren, in order to deliver them. He must be made under the law, to redeem them who were under the law. Death alone could satisfy the demands of the law; therefore he must of necessity become subject to, and susceptible of death; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. This people for whom he came to die, were his before, by virtue of the gift of the Father, being chosen in him before the foundation of the world. This constituted his right of redemption. No man can redeem that which is not his own. He came to his own (not to strangers). His own people were lost, and he came to seek and to save them that were lost. He found them "dead in trespasses and in sins," and in order to

redeem them, he must himself die, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," &c. But, my brother, you did not ask me for all this. You understand it far more clearly than I do. Your pure mind is evidently exercised on the words you quoted. "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." I deem it of great importance (and I am sure you do also) that in meditating prayerfully upon this solemn truth, we should continually bear in mind that the words are addressed to the faithful in Christ Jesus, and not indiscriminately to the world. All Scripture is the testimony of Jesus, and "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. If it were given to the world, the world would reject it; neither could it understand it, for the carnal mind is enmity to God. They that are delivered are the only characters who know anything about the fear of death, in the meaning given to it by the apostle. The abject dread of a natural passing out of this world is not considered in this connection. But they that fear the Lord, and call upon his name, have knowledge of the power of death. It is them who are in the fear of death. In other words, dear brother, the fear of death, is the knowledge of the power of death in them who have entered into the life of faith, and who know what death is, with its direful results, by reason of the knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and their knowledge of how sin entered into the world, "and death by sin." When one is quickened into divine life, that one becomes conscious, that very moment, that he is a sinner, and he is also conscious that he already hates sin, with a knowledge that he loved sin all his life before, and did roll it as a sweet morsel under his tongue. But now we

observe the fear of God is in his heart, and "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and to fear God is to hate evil. Now the consciousness of the total depravity of our nature, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, lead us into dreadful straits. We realize that death is our portion, in that the holy law of God has been violated. Death is the penalty, and the law must be satisfied. In the testimony of the Scriptures concerning Jesus, the lifetime of the children of God is counted from the time they enter (by a new and living way) the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For until then (in his natural life) he had not known the power of death, nor the fear of death. And the apostle gives us to clearly understand that it is through (or because of) the fear of death, that we are during all this lifetime subject to bondage. Not all the time in bondage, but subject to it. The fear of death (the knowledge of the power of it) subject us to bondage; because we know too well in our every day experience, the dreadful results of sin in its death-dealing power. The thunders of Sinai have overtaken us, and the darkness is dreadful in its blackness. So that we can say with Moses, (for this is a law experience) "And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." The sword of divine justice is seen through our darkened vision to turn "every way to keep the way of the tree of life," and we are in despair. Yet as faith points out the way, there comes a little rift in the clouds, and "we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." There our state of bondage is gone, and although we see "as through a glass darkly, yet

we do, by reason of our hope, "press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Do not you often realize, brother Varnes, that in your experience there is always a pressing forward, and never a going backward? That as the seed falls in the ground and dies, we first see the tiny blade, then the ear, and afterward the full corn in the ear (always going forward). That as you grow older, you grow, and become more and more established in the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Yet because of that fear of death (the knowledge of its power) you feel that if you take one step forward, there are two backward, and so all your lifetime you are subject to bondage. Why do the saints of the Lord go mourning all the day with bowed heads, and groaning in the night with groanings that cannot be uttered? It would seem that they ought to be the happiest people in all the world, having, as they do, such a glorious hope. Is it not because they continually bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus? And is not this a knowledge of the power of death, the very fear of death? How wonderful, my brother, is this christian experience. We must needs die, in order to live. We must suffer, ere we receive gladness of heart. Death must always precede life. "The evening and the morning were the first day," &c. This is always the order. We must travel all through the darkness of the night, where the beasts creep forth to plunder and destroy. After this comes the morning. The experience of the six days of toil, and weary labor through all the dark night of the law dispensation, must be traversed. But remember there is a continual going forth, and the end of that law is righteousness, and our Jesus is the end of it. Then comes the bright morn-

ing light of the Sun of Righteousness. The gospel day is ushered in. "The time of the singing of birds has come." We hear the Bridegroom in sweetest accents calling to his lovely bride, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." Do you call to remembrance the day you entered the precious abode of your mother (the church)? Did not your going forth on that bright nuptial day bring you to the sacred, solemn place, where you beheld your heavenly Lover, with the crown wherewith the same mother crowned him in the day of his espousals? Surely this was the day of the gladness of your heart. Now where is the fear of death, and the subjection to bondage? All swallowed up in the light of gospel truth, and in the joy of gospel tidings; all forgotten in the precious love of Jesus.

We all send love. Please write again.

Affectionately your brother in hope of life eternal,

B. F. COULTER.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Aug. 10, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I sent you a short time ago a prayer written by Esther A. McColl, and found after her death. I now send you a short account of her life and experience, written by her mother, with a letter from sister Kate Swartout, for publication in the SIGNS, if you think best.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

JACKSON, Mich., July 26, 1898.

S. H. DURAND—MY DEAR FRIEND:—As you requested me when parting, at my brother's, to write to you something of the life of my daughter, Esther A.

McCull, I will now make an attempt. She was born in Ontario, in 1863. When she was ten years old we moved to Jackson, Mich., where we lived the rest of her life. She was a very bright and studious child, and was always one of the best in her class. She graduated from the high school in her sixteenth year, being the youngest member of a large class. Being of an ambitious nature she could not be idle long, so after a short rest she was appointed a teacher in one of the city schools, which position she filled satisfactorily for nearly four years. At that time we saw that it was too much of a strain on her, and insisted on her giving up her position, which she did very reluctantly. She was never very strong again, although able to fill her place nobly in assisting with the cares of the home. During the spring of ninety-five, she was taken with some trouble of the stomach, which the physicians of the city did not seem to understand.

In the spring of ninety-six, she thought a change of air might be beneficial to her, so she concluded to go to the June meetings, and afterwards, if her health would admit, she would visit awhile with her relatives, many of whom lived in the country. But during the latter part of July she was taken seriously ill, at the home of her uncle, D. T. McColl. Being already much reduced in strength by the long months of suffering with her stomach, not being able to take nourishment enough to keep up her strength, after a struggle of about three weeks she quietly breathed her last, being fully conscious.

On the morning of the day she died, she told us all that were around her, that some time before she was much distressed on account of her sins, and she went up stairs to her Bible. The portion that she was reading was the parable of the im-

portunate widow, and as she read on and came to the words of the Savior, "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." And so Christ was revealed to her as her precious Savior, which gave her relief and comfort. She sent many messages of love home to the members of the family that were absent, and told them to tell each other often how they loved each other. Tell them that if I am the first to be called away, I believe I am going to a happy home. A short time before she died she was still talking, and she said, "Do you understand me, mother?" I replied, "No, Esther dear, I cannot understand you," she being so weak her voice was scarcely audible, afterwards she seemed, from an occasional word I could understand, to be engaged in prayer. The last words I understood were, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." After a few moments a visible smile passed over her countenance, and she fell asleep.

Since my return I wrote to Mrs. Kate Swartout, knowing her to be an intimate friend of Esther's, and one that she had corresponded with. I will inclose a copy of her letter to me. It will explain her feelings much better than I can. She is a very dear friend. I am sorry that her health is so poor.

Now, my dear friend, if there is anything in this that will be of any interest to you, it is at your disposal.

I hope you and your wife arrived home safely, and found your family in good health. Remember me kindly to your sister Bessie, and believe me to be your sincere friend,

MRS. JOHN T. McCOLL.

JULY 20, 1898.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I am in receipt of

your letter, which interests me very much. It awakened many thoughts concerning dear Esther, and I am sorry I am not in a better state of health and mind for writing, than I am.

You wished me to give a short account of her visits to me. It was about three years ago I first received a letter from her, asking the way to this place, and inquiring about the church here. I answered her as best I could, and at the time of one August meeting she came and made her first visit here. When I met her at the door, I could see she felt she had come to a strange house, so I greeted her just as I would any other Baptist, and from that time there was no restraint between us.

She said when she left home she so wished to hear preaching such as she could receive. She told me that a change had come to her, and she had grown tired of the preaching she had been accustomed to hearing, and she had come to feel, while listening to it, just like putting it from her with both hands, so she had ventured to come and see if she could find something that would suit her better.

Our pastor was with us the first night of her arrival, so we had reading and prayer, and I was pleased to notice the humble and devoted mind she manifested. Next day we went to meeting, and Elder Lines used as a text these words, "It is good that a man both quietly hope and patiently wait for the salvation of the Lord." She expressed herself as much pleased with what she heard, and said the text reached her, and suited her so well. She told me that when she left home she thought she would listen and keep her mouth closed, but she found herself talking all the time.

I have thought it was not strange that I should love her, so youthful, so pleas-

ant, so cultured, and endowed with all the natural graces. And when she told me of her interest in the blood of Christ, and of her hope in the merits of the Lord Jesus, I loved her with that one peculiar emotion that is only felt by the children of God when manifested to each other. She seemed to have the same love for me, though I was old and sick, and had so many deformities. But this one God-given love levels all distinctions.

"It cannot in Eden be found,
Nor yet in a paradise lost;
It grows on Immanuel's ground,
And Jesus' rich blood it has cost."

This only can bring the children of God together as one family.

She came again to our October meeting, and said it seemed she never could get tired of the preaching she heard, and that she thought she would come often, now that she had found the way. But the next time I heard from her she was sick, and continued so through the winter. So she did not come again until the next June. Two little children who had been long separated could not have been more pleased to see each other than we were. I was too sick to be about but little, so she sat by my bed and talked to me, and looked at me so lovingly, and in such a manner as I shall never forget. I was too ill to attend the meeting, but she said she enjoyed it very much, but was weak from her late illness, and she seemed not to want to leave me at all. The last morning she came running to me, and clasped me in her arms, and embraced me so lovingly and so much like a little child. I noticed she was very pale, and asked her if she had a good night. She said, No, so I motioned her to a seat in an easy chair. She began talking to me, and her exercises, as expressed by her, were so deep, and her sentiments so pro-

found, that in surprise I raised myself to look at her. She was leaning back in her chair with her eyes closed, her face so radiant and such a presence all about her that I was spell-bound and bewildered in such a manner that I lost her precious words, and cannot recall them.

She soon had to leave me, expressing regret at doing so. And when Mr. Swart-out returned from accompanying her to the train, I told him that we would not have Esther long. There was that unmistakable evidence about her that told me she was nearing the better world. She told me she was going to Canada, to attend meetings there, and visit friends a part of the summer. I encouraged her, and hoped for the best, but when the sad intelligence came that she was very ill, and soon again that she had passed away, I was not surprised.

How sad I was to feel that from the crown of my earthly joys so bright a jewel had been taken away; but I remembered him who said, "They shall be mine, in the day when I make up my jewels," so I felt to resign her to him who had the most perfect right to claim his own.

In life she was always so animated and pleased to meet me and to greet me, that when I looked upon her lifeless form as she lay in her casket, I could not realize that it was Esther. And I truly feel that the sweet love, fellowship and communion, that is given the children of God for each other here, cannot be broken nor dissolved by death.

"Yet again I hope to meet her,
When this spark of life is fled,
Yet again I hope to greet her,
Where no farewell tears are shed."

I have been very sick for much of the time since I last saw you, but in my dreadful sufferings I have been very near the Lord, and have sometimes felt that if

I had strength I could just begin to tell of his love as manifested to me. But I have no strength. My hands are as idle as an infant's, and I feel that my little work is done. I can only wish that I had done it better, that I had been more faithful, more humble, more like the Master. But such as I am, I commit myself to him who is so kind and forgiving, so faithful in his love.

Hoping to see you soon, and with sincere regard to yourself and your dear children, I am yours in much affliction,

KATE SWARTOUT.

SNYDER, Texas, May 17, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—If it is not asking too much, will you kindly send me a copy of your articles of faith? as the Baptists in these parts are having some trouble with the Ashdod speakers which are among us. I want to say that I read and heartily indorsed your editorial on the subject of, and in defense of the "Can't Help Its." It was truly comforting, for it seems to me that I do so many things that "I can't help." Yet men claiming to be Baptists, and Old Baptist ministers, tell us that we can help it. But they admit that they "don't" help it. We might have more faith in this preaching if they would practice it themselves. They hurl at us who believe that we are kept by the power of God, Arminian denunciations, such as "Fatalists," "Can't Help Its," and "Do Nothings." But I know that God is able to take care of his truth, and his people, and that he, in his own good time, will bring peace out of confusion. I believe in the absolute sovereignty of God, and that he rules supremely in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and they call this new doctrine. A minister claiming to be a Primitive Baptist, told me that he believed that things happened every day, in

the world, that were contrary to the purpose of God. He said that it was God's purpose for the whale to swallow Jonah, but that it was not according to his purpose for Jonah to go there to be swallowed. In other words they teach that God predestinated just the good things, and that we are given power in regeneration to obey God's commands, and that it is then left to us to obey and be blest, or disobey and suffer. They call this "Time Salvation." Now if this be true, it leaves me without hope in this world, for if I am a child at all, I am a very small one, and in this rough, thorny way, I cannot walk alone; I need the strong arm of our Savior to lean upon. I rejoice in the belief that every step of ours is guarded by his watchful care, and that his children obey him because they love him, and not for the selfish motive of gaining a reward. It seems that their experience ought to teach them better, for it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. Where should we be were it not for his mercy every day? If I am cast off for believing that salvation is of the Lord, both for time and eternity, "I can't help it." I united with the Baptists upon this faith, and have nothing else yet. I did not think of writing so much, and will close, trusting that God may still give you strength to declare his precious truth. There are many writers for the SIGNS whom I love, although I never met them.

We live way out here in the western part of Texas, where there are not many "Hardshells." If any of the Predestinarian Baptists pass through here, we would be glad to have them visit us.

Your unworthy sister,

M. J. JACKSON.

[THOSE who stigmatize believers in sovereign grace alone for salvation, both for

time and eternity, as "Can't Help Its," must have surely forgotten, if they ever knew, that Paul says that there is such a conflict in the believer, between the flesh and the spirit that we cannot do the good that we would. Our sister says no more than this in the above letter. We must confess that we feel as she does, that we cannot do the good that we would. We would not for a moment even in thought charge those who believe and teach what they call a conditional time salvation, with holding that a believer may arrive at a state of perfection while in the flesh, in his outward walk before men, but we have seen arguments with regard to this matter which would lead, if followed out to their legitimate conclusion, to the Methodist doctrine of perfection. Such teachings are discouraging to the little ones, who feel that they cannot do the good that they would.

On the other hand we must remember that this inability to do the good that we would, arises out of the weakness of the flesh, and as Paul says, is caused by the flesh lusting against the Spirit. When we say that we "can't help," doing the things that we would not, we do not mean to charge our sins against God, as though he compelled us to sin, but we thereby confess our own depravity and weakness because of sin which dwells in our mortal bodies still. And we would add, that while the predestination of God is unlimited, yet no true child of God, when led by the Spirit, ever felt to take shelter under the doctrine of predestination, but he has felt to say that the thing which I did, I did with wicked hands. If all our brethren will believe the first part of the article in the old London confession of faith which treats upon the doctrine of predestination, as firmly as we believe the second part of it, we will have no con-

troversy. In other words, if our brethren will believe and confess that Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, as freely and entirely as we believe they did what they did with wicked hands, in betraying and crucifying him, we shall be perfectly agreed. The same is true of every other wicked act which men have committed. So long as men believe in the relation of cause and effect, in the events of this world, so long will it be impossible to contend for the predestination of any one thing, without involving the predestination of all things. If men are held guilty in the performance of any one wicked act, which yet was predestinated, then can they be judged guilty in the performance of all wicked acts, though those wicked acts were embraced in the predestination of God. We, who believe in the unlimited predestination of God, do not accept the conclusions which others draw from the doctrine, and must not be charged with doing so. If any man should seek to hold himself guiltless because of his belief in predestination, we have no fellowship for him. Such a conclusion upon his part, would not lead us to doubt the doctrine, but it would lead us to greatly doubt his christianity.—Ed.]

Opelika, Ala., July 12, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to write of a few things which have been upon my mind. It seems to me that the more light I have, the more I feel the need of writing and meditating upon the fundamental principles of grace. The solid doctrine affords solid comfort, and solid satisfaction. The things which are matters of revelation from God, are the important things to us. Whatever may be written, if also it has not been revealed to us, we do not get enjoyment out of it. We

really know only what God has revealed to us. I was much comforted and pleased with your last editorial upon the Magi, and the truth presented concerning Jesus. There were in it many precious things to me, and I hope it was given you of God. If so, it will be handed down to others in the family who will enjoy reading it, and thinking upon it. We are told to meditate upon certain things, and to think upon these things. Christ is the central figure of all our thoughts. We view him as our King, and sometimes we see him in all his beauty. He is at all times altogether lovely, and the chief among ten thousand. But sometimes our eyes are holden, and we do not see him. In him are all the treasures of riches and wisdom, and having him we have all things. He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Therefore it may be safe for us to boast in the Lord, and to say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength." "He is my light, and has become my salvation." Does it not seem to you that if we have Christ, and he is all and in all to us, we ought to manifest it more than we do? Do not too many of us, as Baptists, do too much like the world? Do we not seem to be reaching out and showing more concern about these perishing things than we do about him, and his blessed cause of truth? Will we, in time, ever be able to tell all he has ever done for us? I think about the truth and its publication, and the object of it. I think about our opponents, those who hate us for the truth's sake, or the cause which we love, and which we write and speak about, and I become more determined in mind to follow the Master in exposing the pharisaic religion and in showing the emptiness and vanity of the same. The twenty-third chapter of Matthew, exposes and publishes them,

in all the deformity of their vain notions, and if Jesus did this, are we not in line with him, and is it not our duty to speak his word faithfully, not looking at the results, but hoping for the best? Some of these pharisees think it a disgrace to belong to this despised people, who suffer reproach because they trust in the living God. They also compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and when they have made him, he is twofold more the child of hell than they themselves are. They are like the dog in the manger, they will not eat the straw, and they will not let the ox eat it. Sometimes they see persons inclined to go to the Old School Baptists, and they do all they can to keep them away. It is as in the case of the deputy, whom Elymas, the sorcerer, tried to turn from the faith. Paul said to him, "Full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" When they try to get our children, and lead them into their snares and traps and gins, which are set by the modern engineers, and machine crowd, who hate the truth, and love a lie, and exhibit their features, by their conduct, and prove that the Savior's words are true, when he said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his lusts ye will do," we should meet these enemies of the truth with the conquering words of Jesus, and use great plainness of speech. John the Baptist had his raiment of camel's hair, which showed the character of his work. He did not use nor wear soft raiment. It was hard, honest, coarse raiment, fitting the nature and character of his work. He called these same characters a generation of vipers, (snakes, forked-tongued, talk two ways, two doctrines). They come up hypocritically and call you brother, and then go off and

laugh, and call you names, and make fun and merchandise of you. The Savior pronounces woe after woe upon them, in all their varied forms and superstitions. Beware of the scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, and of their doctrine, which is hypocrisy. There are many things upon my mind. May God enable us to write, preach and speak the truth of God, in heart, and with our tongues.

Yours in hope,

WILLIAM LIVELY.

[We feel glad that brother Lively enjoyed and can approve of the editorial of which he speaks. We desire to add our hearty assent to what he has said in the way of exhortation and warning. Especially do we wish to commend his exhortation to watchfulness when our enemies, the enemies of God and truth, endeavor to lead astray our children. We have known of some instances where Old School Baptists allowed their children, when they were small, to attend the Sunday Schools of their enemies, and their children grew up to mock the truth, and to hold their parents in derision for the truth's sake. It was but the necessary result of their own folly. We have never been able to see how one who believes the truth, can uphold falsehood, by allowing their children to be indoctrinated by it, and giving the enemies an opportunity to say, "Such an one is an Old School Baptist, but he believes in Sunday Schools, for he allows his children to attend ours. We have heard such things said frequently in the past, and we could make no reply. If it is wrong for us to attend a Sunday School held by opponents of the truth, it is equally wrong for us to send our children there. It will end in shame and sorrow to all who do this thing.—ED.]

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Aug. 16, 1898. 7

ELDER F. A. CHICK MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Your kind and highly appreciated letter was received in due time, and read with comfort and encouragement. I am glad that one so poor and unworthy as I, should be in your mind. We are now in our new home, and have everything nice and comfortable. You said in your letter, that we would find kind friends. This indeed we have found. All seem glad to have us here, and everything is being done for us that can be. But the question often comes up, Why are you here? If I have any other motive than to serve my Master's children with such ability as he gives me, I know nothing of it. For surely it was a trial to leave my family, that is, my dear mother who is now eighty-one years of age, my only sister, and my brother, my home, and the friends of a lifetime. Could I have done this unless it had been of the Lord? I do trust that it is, and that his blessing may rest upon these churches, and my feeble attempts to serve them as pastor. I have never felt that I can fill the place, and have said so often and often, but they seemed to feel that the Lord had sent me to them, and they are dear to me. I hope that I do feel a willingness to serve them the best that I can, trusting the great Shepherd of the sheep, for food, wisdom and strength. When I think of the able pastors which these churches have had in the years gone by, I almost faint by the way; only a stripling and a babe, as I am. When I was impressed to come here I was made to ask the Lord, Who am I that he should send me as overseer to such a people? But the Lord said to his servant of old, "Go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." May he be with my stammering tongue, and guide

me in truth and grace, for his name's sake. I trust that I feel something of the great importance of the work, and how great and solemn it is. And if I did not believe in the sovereign power of God, I could never attempt to speak again. How well I know that I am a poor, ignorant worm, with no might of my own, and if I had to speak ten minutes, of myself, it would be but as a puff of empty air. I do believe that the Lord has at times filled me with his power, and enabled me to speak to his praise, and the trust or hope that he will do so again, is all that sustains me from day to day. How often I would have to-morrow's strength, before to-morrow comes, but that I can never have. The promise is, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." The day first, and then the strength. If it were not for this hope I would be in utter despair. How gracious is our God, to give us this anchor to the soul. How firmly the ship is held in time of storm and tempest. High indeed the waves roll, and the billows pass over us, but yet we are held safely until Jesus speaks and says, "It is I, be not afraid," and at once, the storm is passed, the night is gone, and we are made to rejoice in Jesus our Savior.

I thank you for the kind invitation to visit you, and hope to do so before long. We would be more than glad to have you make us a visit. My wife joins me in love to yourself and family, and the church at Hopewell. Write when you can.

Yours, I hope, in gospel bonds,

H. CLAUDE KER.

[WE are sure that brother Ker will pardon us for publishing the above letter, although it was private, and written with no thought of others seeing it. We have desired to publish it because it seems to us to breathe the true spirit of an under-

shepherd whom the Lord has called. It is this same spirit of humble dependence upon God that enables any one to be of use to the church, or to any who love God. May God bless our brother, as he goes forth into this, to him, new field, and may he bless the churches also, and make him and them mutually profitable to each other.—ED.]

WOODHULL, Ill., Aug. 3, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—It has been a long time since I have written anything for our paper, and I do not feel now that I can write anything worth reading, but I have just received a letter from a dear brother in North Dakota, saying he hoped I would do all I could to help you, by sending what I could, and seeing others. I am very thankful he wrote as he did. If our dear people would make half the sacrifice he is willing to, you would soon have the needed help.

It was reported in a paper that brother Butler was killed in a storm, but we have reason to be thankful his life was spared. There are no Baptist people within ten miles of where I am staying. The Baptist Church is ten miles from here, and I do not get there often, as I am staying with my aunt, who is an invalid. I get very homesick at times, and so long to be with our dear people more, and attend the meetings oftener, but I want to be reconciled to the Lord's will.

I hope our dear brethren and sisters will try to do their christian duty in helping now. Do we realize as we ought, that all we have belongs to the Lord? I firmly believe if we were more willing to spend it as we ought, we would all be prospered more. I often think it is no wonder the Baptist people are so poor, for a great many of them withhold what God has graciously given them, and when

we do, we are only the poorer for it. Do we think of our dear ministers and their families, as we ought? I do not believe a minister ought to be entangled with the affairs of this life. Either they are not walking right, or we are not doing our duty. These are the good works we ought to do. As brother Stephens used to say, "We do not work to get life, but work because we have life." May we all encourage one another in every good work, and may God's blessing rest upon us all.

I send in this ten dollars to assist the SIGNS, and two dollars to send the paper to a new subscriber at Lebanon, Ohio. My aunt, Mrs. W. T. Clark, also sends ten dollars to aid the publication. Take out two dollars for her subscription. She is in very feeble health, but is patiently waiting and trusting for the Lord to do with her as seems best.

I trust the dear Lord will open the hearts of his people to aid you, and may they feel doubly rewarded. O, may we all praise him more and more, for his tender mercies toward us all. Remember us in your prayers.

With christian love from us both, to the household of faith.

MATTIE S. BOWEN.

NEW JERSEY, June 13, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Of the inclosed five dollars, I send four dollars to aid in sustaining the publication of your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the remainder to the indigent fund. I am a reader, though not a subscriber, but it comes regularly to my boarding place. I do hope all those who are able will help you in your present financial distress. As for me, I feel that I would rather pay double the price of the paper than to do without it, as it has been a source of great com-

fort to me, and others situated as I am. I think it a blessed medium of correspondence to us Old School Baptists. It brings us good tidings from Maine to California. It strengthens and builds us up, when disconsolate, ofttimes. It cheers the feeble ones, and many have no other preaching than what it contains. Let us all endeavor to do our best to sustain it, even if we have to economize in other things. That is the way I feel about it.

Yours in gospel bonds,

J. F.

[THE spirit manifest by the brethren and friends of the SIGNS, to make such liberal sacrifices, by sending on gratuitous contributions in support of its publication, causes us to feel both encouraged and humbled. We feel greatly encouraged to know that the SIGNS is so highly valued by its patrons, but this knowledge makes us feel all the more keenly our weakness, and incapacity for the position we hold on the paper. Could we have known a few years ago, the grave responsibilities in store for us, we never should have dared to continue our connection with the SIGNS. Mysterious indeed have been the providences that have brought us to the position we now occupy on the paper. Nearly two years have passed away since we were bereft of the invaluable assistance of our beloved brother, Elder Benton Jenkins, yet we are still receiving renewed assurances that the SIGNS is read with comfort and edification, by its subscribers. We have the able assistance of our highly esteemed brother, Elder F. A. Chick, yet he lives at such a distance from the office, we are obliged much of the time to depend on our own feeble judgment, in selecting and arranging matter for publication. This, to us, is the most fearful of all our responsibilities. To think of

our sitting in judgment as to the advisability of publishing articles written by brethren as far our superior, as noonday is brighter than midnight. The fact that we have held such a position for nearly two years, without so disheartening our brethren as to cause them to call for our resignation, is a mystery beyond the power of our finite mind to comprehend. Certainly we must have been sustained of God, or we know we should have utterly failed. And if God has been our helper thus far, may we not trust him for the future?

We had no idea when we commenced, of writing in the strain we have, but only designed to append a short note to the above letters, to repeat what we said in our remarks on brother B. F. Butler's letter, in last number. We then said, and still think, that instead of the brethren and friends making such financial sacrifices in support of the SIGNS, it would be better that all our paid up subscribers lend their assistance in collecting the many thousands of dollars already due us, by accepting territory in which they will act as agents, by seeing the delinquent parties personally, or advising us of any who are really too poor to pay. If by this means we can collect one-half of what is due us, the financial condition of the SIGNS will be permanently established.

For full explanation of the system we suggest, see last page of cover.—B.]

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 3, 1894.

MY DEAR BROTHER AARON BENEDICT:—It always affords me pleasure to receive a letter from one of the Lord's doubting, fearful ones, questioning every step they take, and groaning under a sense of their vileness and unworthiness; for that is my experience every day of my life. You have referred to the forty-

ninth chapter of Isaiah, which is full of the experience of the saints. The Lord says, "Listen," and then gives a description of his people, calling them "isles," or islands. You know that an island is a portion of land separated from other land by the water that completely surrounds it. Although thus separated, it is no better than the other land. The Lord calls his people, and separates them to himself, and surrounds them by his Spirit. He thus makes them "isles." Yet they are no better by nature than those who are not made "isles." The apostle says the saints "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." You know and feel that the Lord has separated you from the world, although you are no better by nature than those with whom you can have no fellowship religiously, nor desire their companionship. You cannot go back into the world and find comfort, for God's election has caused a crucifixion to the world, and that world has no use for you as a religious character. The Lord has called you to be his servant, to serve him, and has said that he will be glorified in you. This call of the God of Israel always makes us feel that all our labor has been in vain, and that all our strength has been spent for naught; for salvation did not come to us because of our labors, but by his own sovereign grace according to election. "Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains, for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted." Remember, dear brother, that it is only the children of Zion who say, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." This distress, doubt and fear, is only known and felt by those who have spiritual life, and who love the appearing of the Savior Jesus Christ. At

times he withdraws his sensible presence from his children, hides his face, to prove to them that they do love him, and are distressed and comfortless when he is not manifestly with them. How often do we fall a prey to the mighty one, the tempter, "the accuser of the brethren," who takes us captive, so that we seem completely under his power. But our Lord says, "Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." Yes, the Lord will rebuke our enemy, and deliver us out of his power, and make us again to know that he is our Savior and Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.

My dear brother, please accept these few hastily written lines as a small token of my fervent love for you in the Spirit. The Lord be with you, and comfort you.

Affectionately yours,

BENTON JENKINS.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Nov. 14, 1894.

MY DEAR BROTHER AARON BENEDICT:—I was glad to read your kind and loving letter of October 31st, and have wanted to write to you ever since; but I have been compelled to work day and night in order to furnish matter for the SIGNS. Never in my life before have I been so hard worked; but I hope after next month to be somewhat relieved.

I have had a great many trials and sorrows to endure in my ministry, but at times they have all been forgotten because of the expressions of love and fellowship I have received from those among whom I have labored. How wonderful it seems to me that I could ever be a comfort to God's dear people. I want to live with them, and die with them, and then be buried with them. But how fearful I am

at times that I may yet do something to destroy their confidence in me. I know how weak the flesh is, and I have no confidence in it. God alone can cause us to stand. Yes, the time of the singing of birds in nature is gone, but it will come again. Well, we also have our seasons of singing, when our hearts are full of melody to the God of our salvation; but the winter season is sure to follow in our souls, and then we do not feel like singing. Well, all our times are in the power of our God, and how glad we are that it is so. He is always good to us, and withholds no good thing from us. He knows that our souls need the cold seasons as well as the warm seasons; and he is glorified in all. May the Lord be precious to your soul, my dear brother, and give you to again meet and mingle with his dear saints at New Vernon. It is a spot on God's footstool that is very dear to my heart. I have had many sweet and precious seasons of communion there. Although the church there is now in a low place, yet I hope the Lord will again revive his work there, and add to her number of such as shall be saved.

Elder Chick is to preach here in Middletown on Wednesday night, one week from to-day. I wish you might be here to hear him. I expect to be in New York next Sunday. I hope the way may be open for me to visit your neighborhood this winter. I will be glad to hear from you whenever you feel like writing.

Yours in love and fellowship,

BENTON JENKINS.

PINSON FORK, Ky., Feb. 15, 1898.

BELOVED EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—I have read the inclosed letter from sister Tilson, of St. Clair's Bottom, Va., with much comfort. I am sure it is a christian experience, and I

have concluded to send it to you, hoping that you will give it a place in the SIGNS, believing that it will be read with interest and comfort by the brethren and sisters generally. I have met with sister Tilson once in my travels. She is a meek and humble sister, and a firm believer in salvation by grace, and sound and consistent in faith and practice. Where she lives there are many precious brethren and sisters. I visited them last November for the first time, and enjoyed my visit among them unusually well, and have them in kind remembrance yet.

As ever, your brother,

WM. J. MAY.

ST. CLAIR'S BOTTOM, Va., Feb. 3, 1898.

ELDER W. J. MAY—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—YOUR very kind and welcome letter came to hand promptly, and I was glad to hear from you again. I was truly glad that you took so much pains to expound the text upon which I asked your views. I do hope that the Lord will bless you at all times. I will try now to write my little experience of grace, if I have any at all. If God has ever quickened me, and convinced me of my sins, it was in January, 1892. It was when I was at home in bed. I was wakened at about two o'clock at night. It was a time that I never can forget, as it seems to me. I awoke in deep distress, and with tears in my eyes. I could not tell what was the matter with me. The first thing that I thought was, I want mother to pray for me. So I mourned and cried the rest of the night. I felt that I was lost, and that forever. There was a protracted meeting of the New School Baptists, at Riverside church, near where we lived. I tried to hide my troubles from the family, but when the time came I went to the meeting. They went on with their meeting,

and when they called for mourners, I went. I thought if there was any chance to get rid of the great burden which was on my heart, I would do anything. So I went to the mourners' bench as they called it. I went three times, and on Sunday my burden left me. If God has ever pardoned my sins, it was for Christ's sake, and on that day on which my burden left me. Yet I was not made happy at that time, I felt to be one of the most miserable creatures that ever lived. I thought that everybody when born again was made happy. I went on for three or four days fearing that I was deceived, but by that time I am glad to believe, that as I hope, I was humbled before the Lord, and made to ask him to bless me. I had not realized a spirit of prayer before this time, but I do humbly hope that at this time the Lord blessed me with a spirit of prayer. Afterwards I went on fearing that I was deceived, but trying to pray to God to show me the right way. I read the Bible every chance I could get. I found this portion of Scripture, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." This was the sweetest thing to me yet. I went on in this way for nearly fourteen months. Some would think strange of these things, but in the fourteen months, with seriousness of the heart, I missed only six nights, trying to pray to God to show me the right way, and at last I believe the Lord blessed me in showing me the good and right way. I went to all the meetings, but none did me any good, but the Old School Baptists. If I am not deceived my heart's desire was to be with them. Thus I went on fearing that I was deceived, but wanting to follow Christ in all his commandments. I had a dream two weeks before I was baptized, (which I will withhold) which did me

good. When I was baptized, and came up out of the water, I was made happy, and the same words came to me as before, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I do have a hope that I have been blessed of the Lord, but yet I often fear that I am deceived. I have written a few things as they have occurred to my mind, concerning my experience, and will now close, asking an interest in your prayers.

This from yours truly,

EUNICE S. TILSON.

COLUMBUS, Ohio, July 8, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—You will find inclosed post-office order for three dollars. Please place the same to my credit on the SIGNS, and accept my thanks for your kindness in continuing to send your valuable paper to me, when I had not paid my subscription. It contains about all the preaching I get. I am well satisfied with it. I feel I could not get along without it. It contains good news from the one family, scattered over the world, and so far apart that they, with few exceptions, ever meet each other. But they all talk one language, and they understand each other. They, the editors and writers, have been taught by one Father, and they ascribe to him all power and glory, in heaven and earth. They believe in foreknowledge and predestination, and salvation by grace alone. Brethren, I believe that this is the new song that is put into the heart of the regenerated sinner, and he cannot help singing it. Whether audibly or not, it will be sung in the renewed heart while time lasts, and will be perfected when they arise in his likeness, and see him as he is. I am often so cast down that I wonder why I ever indulge a hope that the Lord has begun a work in me, who am so vile.

Again, in my darkest hours it appears that words are spoken to me in my heart, with force, which are comforting to my hungry soul. I then can rejoice in the mercies of God, who has through the name of Jesus, given to me to trust in his name. Such seasons are times of feasting, when we by faith recognize him in the breaking of bread. At such times I can say, "Thus far the Lord hath led me on."

Your brother in hope,

JAMES A. SIMPSON.

FARMINGTON, Kentucky, June 15, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I am again favored with the blessed privilege of sending my dear brethren a little letter through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if the brethren shall see fit to publish it. I have many friends and brethren who read the SIGNS. I write that they may know something of one of the poor little servants of God, who feels utterly dependent upon that one who says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." I will not endeavor to talk to-day, from this glorious portion of divine truth, as all Scripture is involved in it. I wish to say to my dear brethren, I am now in the State of Kentucky. I came to Farmington about the first of May, to have my eyes treated, and I feel thankful to the Lord that they are getting better. And now I am so anxious to return to my home and family, which are in Peace Valley, Missouri.

I was at the old church at Harmony, last Saturday and Sunday, and was met by a large and well ordered congregation. I tried to preach from Hebrews viii. 6. I found lovers of the truth. It was a meeting long to be remembered by this poor sinner.

Dear editors, if this is worthy of publication, I shall be glad, if not, all will be well. Your brother,

WILLIAM BARTON.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Is there any Bible authority for the order of worship which generally obtains among us as a people? That is, have we any authority in the Scriptures for any special order in the conduct of our worship? These questions have been frequently asked in our hearing during the past thirty years. We do not know that we have ever seen any full reply to these questions, and our own attention has never until lately been called especially to them. At this time, however, it may be of some profit to speak of these questions, and to present some things which might be suggested by them. First of all, we cannot remember too clearly that all true worship must be in the Spirit and in truth. Neither in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem, shall men worship the Father, but they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. There can be no question as to the force of these words of our Savior. The meaning is, that all worship that will be pleasing to God, and of comfort and profit to men, must be not only sincere and from the heart, but also indited by the Spirit of truth, and according to the truth which God has revealed in his holy word. No

form of worship, however beautiful or imposing it may be, can be acceptable to God, unless the heart be in it. All this we as a people are accustomed to hear presented by those who write and preach among us. This the Scriptures abundantly teach, and there can be no question concerning its truth. All inward emotion, of every kind, will seek to find some method of expression. By words, or actions, or signs of some kind, that which is in the heart will seek to express itself. It is true at all times, that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. So the emotions of love, fear, trust, hope, faith, humility, and all others, which are produced in the heart by divine grace, will seek appropriate expression. David said, "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King." Literally this reads as will be seen in the margin of most large Bibles, "My heart is bubbling up a good matter." It wells forth like a living spring. Now this is what constitutes true and acceptable worship in the sight of God. Yet we must notice that the things which were in the heart of David sought to find some expression. He said, "I speak."

In the Old Testament we find that the religious feelings of men continually sought to find some way of expression. All the sacrifices, all the hymns sung, all the discourses of prophets, back to the time of Moses, the use of instruments of music in the temple and tabernacle service, all were but more or less perfect expressions of the feelings of praise, or prayer, or intercession, or of hope, trust, love or fear, which those who engaged in these exercises, felt in their hearts. In the Scriptures of the New Testament also we find that the very feelings of the hearts of those who believed in and loved

the Lord, compelled them to acts of devotion, such as preaching, prayer, singing and reading the Scriptures in their public devotion. We need not be surprised at this. In fact we ought to be surprised if those who feel the power and sweetness of the love and fear of the Lord in their souls should be satisfied to be silent, and not express what is within them. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." This was meant to cover the time of the gospel dispensation. Not only is it true that in a private capacity do they feel to speak of the glory of the Lord, and to talk of his power, but in the gatherings of the saints there will be an endeavor to present what is the common feeling of their hearts, by some suitable form of expression.

From the beginning of the gospel dispensation, the people who loved the Lord, were commanded to assemble together, and not to cease to thus assemble in the public worship of God. All this will be admitted by all, we do not doubt. Now in such meetings for worship, and for the transaction of business, there must be some form to be followed that will be understood by all, in order to avoid confusion and unseemly disorder in the conduct of the worship and business. "Let all things be done decently and in order," is the apostolic injunction. When the Lord's people are met together, it is to be supposed that they have one heart and one mind, in seeking the glory of God, and the edification of each other. Each one, if led by the spirit of love and peace, will desire that God may be glorified in all that is said and done, and that all who are present shall feel at ease, and at home, with each other. To this end the apostles give very minute directions concerning worship, and as to how it shall be conducted. Each one in a cer-

tain place, it is said, is to speak by himself, and if anything is revealed to one, the other is to hold his peace until the other has spoken. All are not to speak together. All are to speak in the tongue which can be understood by all. If one comes into the assembly, who is of a foreign tongue, he must hold his peace, because for him to speak cannot edify the people, seeing that they know not what he is saying. The Roman church violates this rule at all times, by holding their service all over the world, in the ancient Latin tongue, which cannot be and is not understood by the people, except the very learned. Paul felt, on the other hand, that he would rather speak a few words in a tongue that could be understood, than ten thousand words in a tongue which could not be understood. All these things are clear, and will not be disputed.

In direct response to the questions which stand at the head of this editorial, we will say first of all, there is no specific direction in the New Testament concerning many things belonging to public worship. While it is said that we are to speak one to another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody in our hearts unto the Lord, it is not said how many hymns shall be sung, nor how long they shall be, nor what place they shall occupy in the order of the worship. But that singing is to be a part of our worship is clear, by the text just referred to. Singing is then a great part of public worship. It is for the glory of God, and for the edification of the people. No one who has a heart to worship God at all, will deny that they have often found great comfort, strength, hope, joy, peace, and a stirring up of love in their hearts, by the singing of true and appropriate hymns. We can say

nothing half so good concerning the part which singing is to have in the worship of God, as is found in the preface of Beebe's collection of hymns, which are used in most of our churches. We advise all our readers to turn to that preface, and read it carefully. It is true, as is there said, that worshipers of God have no right to sing untruth any more than to preach it. The worship is not so much in the strains of music, as it is in the truth of the words sung. It is to feel the sentiment of the hymn, and not the correct singing in time, and tune and the melody of the voices, which constitutes worship. It is good and appropriate to sing as well as is possible, but after all, the sentiment of the hymn is the chief thing to be regarded. We have Bible authority then for singing as a part of worship.

Prayer is another part of public worship, for which we have full authority in the word of God. At the organization of the first church at Jerusalem, we are told that they continued, among other things, in prayer. We cannot occupy space here to quote all the places in the Acts, and the epistles, where prayer is spoken of as an act of public devotion. Men were forbidden to pray with the head covered, while women were forbidden to pray with the head uncovered. Upon almost every occasion, when things of importance were attended to, prayer, in a public manner, was spoken of. It would seem that whatever else was omitted in the public devotion of the early brethren and churches, prayer was not; and it is very apparent why prayer should have been thought of such importance, since they were taught their dependence upon God for all things, yea, even for the spirit of prayer itself. For ourself we say that we have ever felt that there was help to us

in engaging in the expression of prayer, before attempting to preach. Often we have found a sort of preparation of mind for the further service in which we were about to engage. Prayer is a solemn thing, and we have ever felt it to be so. We are in prayer, speaking to God, who sees all the secrets of our hearts. Yet we have felt that it was a needful part of worship. It is not said how much of the time of worship shall be taken up in prayer, nor how long or short they shall be, nor how many times prayer shall be offered in our worship, but prayer is a needful part of it.

It would seem also that reading the Scriptures was another part of the worship of the early believers. Indeed it must have been so. One of the things had in view, when they came together, was that they might know the will and word of God. The Scriptures contained the one authoritative declaration of his will. It seems to have been the desire of all that the Scriptures should be expounded to them. Jesus was accustomed to read the Scriptures whenever he went into the Jewish synagogues. The Bereans were commended because they searched the Scriptures daily, to see whether the things declared by the apostles were so. They who love the Lord cannot hear too much read from his word. They will want to hear it again and again. We should not know what to think of one who should consider it out of place to read the Scriptures in the time of public worship. We feel sure that they are right, and contain the truth. What we sing may contain what is untrue, our prayers, poor and feeble as they often seem to us to be, may contain something untrue, or contrary to God's will, our preaching may present many things which are not in harmony with the will

and word of God, but the Scriptures are the unfailing declaration of truth. We have often said that one part of our attempts at preaching we are sure is right and profitable, and that is the text. Sometimes we are not sure that any other part of the services are right, but this we know is the word of that God that cannot lie. Now it is not said how much or how little of the Scriptures shall be read for a text, or for instruction, but it is clear that it was the custom of the early churches to read the Scriptures in their public worship.

Preaching is also another part of the public worship of God. This we need not stop to argue. No one will dissent from this. And it seems that preaching occupies the largest place in the records of early worship. It should occupy the chief place in our worship now. In all the history of the past ages, the times of prominence in the preaching of the word of God, have been the times of purity in doctrine and practice in the church, while the times when prayers and songs, and other rituals, have held chief place, have been the times of declension in all that was true and spiritual in the church. Could but one part of the worship of God be attended to at any given time, we should say, let the word be preached first of all. This is to be the chief object of our gatherings. Saying this does not imply that the other things may be neglected at all. Here also it is not said how long or short shall be the sermons, nor is it said how often shall the preaching of the word be engaged in. Of one thing we feel sure concerning all these things, viz: if the love of God dwell richly in the heart, we shall all desire such privileges as often as it is possible to attend to them. We have noticed that where brethren have been warm

in their love, they have not been given to finding fault with the length or frequency of the sermons. Many of these things must be left to the guidance of the Spirit, and to the circumstances which surround us. The church has the Spirit of God with her, as well as the word, to guide her. Only we must ever remember the Spirit of God never guides us into paths contrary to the revealed testimony. If any thought of our mind be contrary to this testimony, it is because the mind is in darkness. Such things are but imaginations, or figments of the brain.

Still farther, as to the special order which shall be pursued in the conduct of our worship, there is no rule save such as each church may judge best for herself, under all the circumstances which surround her. So far as we have been acquainted, the usual order has been among our churches, to first sing, then engage in prayer, then sing again, then reading the Scriptures or text, and preaching, then sing again, and then close, either with prayer or the benediction, or both. It has been our custom when visiting strange congregations, to ask what has been the usual order pursued by the pastor of the church there, and then to conform as much as possible to that order. This we have done to avoid causing remark concerning new ways among the people. We have thought this to be right and proper at all times. It does not seem to us to matter very much just what the order may be, so that there is order maintained. We would not think it wise, or conducive to edification, to greatly change the order which any church has been accustomed to, by our course, if we should visit among them. As regards the arrangement of the services, however, any order which is most convenient, and which will be in

harmony with the wishes of the people generally, will be not unscriptural, so that some order is established. We have not here entered into a discussion of baptism and the supper, since they did not come under the head of the queries at the head of this article. It seems to us, however, that so far as the supper is concerned, it was the custom in the early days of the church, to break bread whenever the church met together. If this were the custom now, we would say, let this also be attended to in proper order, that is, in a way to avoid confusion. This also we say concerning all else that has been presented. If then any one shall ask what authority we have for singing, and prayer, and reading the Scriptures, and preaching, in the Scriptures? we answer that we have both the precepts and the example of the Savior and apostles. This is all we need in the way of authority. We now leave the subject. Should any other brother desire to write upon this subject, we should be more than glad.

C.

MINUTES.

At this season of the year there are many associations and other meetings that have the Minutes of their proceedings published, but we are sorry to see that most of them are published in local newspaper offices, by parties who understand nothing of the many peculiar expressions used by our people, and consequently many grievous and ludicrous blunders are made in the printing. Besides this, we feel that what patronage there is among our people should be kept within our borders. We have the facilities for printing these Minutes, and to any of our brethren who may send us their work, we guarantee perfect satisfaction, both as to workmanship and price.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

“And I saw a beast arise!”

THE above named Society has issued a general Circular, dated February 6th, 1856, explanatory of their organization, object, power, restriction, *modus operandi*, &c., and have politely addressed a copy of it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. As this favor, like John Gill's doctorate, came to us unsought, unthought and unbought, we may be regarded ungrateful if we pass their kindness in silence. As the circular is somewhat voluminous, and we have but very little space for comment upon its merits or demerits, we are compelled to restrict our remarks to a very few leading features of this document.

I. It claims to be a body corporate, chartered by the State, approved and sustained by the church, and bearing a national and religious title. Consequently it must be, to be what its name and charter imply, a direct church and state establishment.

II. The object is disclosed in the first article, which the circular avers is the fundamental article, viz:

“ARTICLE 1. This Society shall be denominated THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY, the object of which shall be to diffuse a knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of sinners, and to promote the interests of vital godliness and sound morality, by the circulation of religious Tracts calculated to receive the approbation of all evangelical christians.”

As a farther, and perhaps more explicit declaration of the object and principles of the monster institution, the circular says, The desire of all the founders, as unanimously expressed in their constitution and proceedings, was to secure two points:

1. A highly evangelic character in the Society's publications and labors; that it might be consecrated to the one work of honoring Christ, in raising men from sin and death to heaven, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Harmony, both in the Society itself, and among all truly evangelical christians, at home and abroad, wherever its influence should extend, in all its proceedings.

"These principles," says the circular, have been understood and acted upon as fundamental in the Society's constitution, by all committees and executive officers, and all agents and colporteurs employed, from the foundation of the Society to the present hour.

III. The power claimed by which this machinery is to work, is the Holy Spirit.

IV. Its limitations and constitutional restrictions are to do nothing, publish nothing, in which all whom they designate evangelical christians, do not agree. No tract to be published without the unanimous concurrence of all the evangelical. No dead sinner is to be raised from sin and death to heaven by this Society, without the full consent of the evangelical. Christ is not to be honored by having his mediatorial work taken out of his hand, without unanimity among the Society's approved evangelicals.

How truly has the inspired apostle described this man of sin, this son of perdition, in 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, as exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, will appear to the intelligent christian by a careful review of what we have copied from the circular.

1. It exalteth itself above God, the Redeemer, in representing that Christ has redeemed the human family, but thereby secured neither his own honor nor their salvation. That his honor is suspended

on their operations, and to rest upon what they can do in raising men from sin and death to heaven.

2. It exalts itself above God, our Savior, in their implied and direct contradiction of what Christ affirmed, when he said, "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," and in denying the truth of what God has by inspiration said. That there is salvation in no other name given under heaven or among men, and a palpable contradiction of the words of Jehovah, "For I am God, and besides me, there is no Savior."

3. By representing God, the Holy Spirit, as a mere instrument in the hands of the Society, to be used by them as a lever, or a screw, with which they are to raise the dead, and transport sinners to heaven.

It is a common saying, and universally acted upon by all of this description of self-styled evangelicals, that Christ has died for all mankind, and done all that he can to save them, but has failed to save as many as he desires should be saved, and that the Holy Ghost has done all he can do to persuade sinners to be saved, but the Spirit has also failed, and is grieved away, and that the plan of salvation, as provided by the eternal Father, and the grace given in Christ Jesus, and the work of the Holy Ghost, all have failed to save those sinners, and the last chance for them is in the power of the American Tract Society. If this be true, if all that is called God has tried, and failed, and the American Tract Society shall succeed in accomplishing what they represent God as incapable of, will they not exalt the Society above all that is called God, or worshiped?

Our blessed Redeemer has said, "For, as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quick-

eneth whom he will." How, then, does the Father raise up and quicken the dead? Is it through the agency of Tract Societies, or any other intermediate agencies? When our God shall be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire, and when the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God shall be sounded, and the dead shall be raised, will the American Tract Society aid in arousing the slumbering tenants of the grave? If not, then neither have they now any agency in raising men from sin and death to heaven. "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."

It is as impossible that the truth as it is in Jesus, should be disseminated through the agency of the American Tract Society, as it is for a corrupt fountain to send forth pure water. A large number of denominations of professed christians have organized, and are chartered by the State, to be known as the American Tract Society. But in their constitution they bind themselves to publish nothing in which they do not all agree, and there is but one solitary point in which they all do agree, and that is that salvation is of men, that it is not alone by grace, but that Christ is to be honored by a Society whose prominent work is to raise men from sin and death to heaven. No man can unite with, or become a member of the American Tract Society, who does not subscribe to this blasphemous doctrine, as perfect unanimity must mark all their action, and this God-defying blasphemy is fundamental with them. No christian who believes the Scriptures of truth, can relinquish the Bible doctrine that salvation is of the Lord, and of the Lord alone. "God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, even

when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." "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."

All the religious world is divided into but two general classes, believers, and unbelievers. The one class, however subdivided on other points, unite in the sentiment that there is something to be done by men, besides what God has done, to save sinners. They may disagree as to what is to be done, and when, and by whom; but their distinguishing doctrine is salvation by works. The other class are those who are born of God, and taught by the Spirit; and they know that salvation is all of God, from first to last. These can have no place in the Tract Society, for they cannot adopt the fundamental doctrine of it, and therefore they are denounced as unevangelical by the Society.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 15, 1856.

UNION COUNTY, Ark., Jan. 12, 1856.

BROTHER BEEBE—DEAR SIR:—By request of a friend and earnest inquirer after truth, I ask the favor of you, to give your views on Luke vi. 27-30.

W. DAVIS.

R E P L Y .

We feel a pleasure in complying with the requests of our correspondents who desire our views upon the things of the kingdom of God, and as far as we have light given us on the various portions of the Scriptures, we dare not withhold it. But we have many applications for our views on passages on which we are not satisfied that we have any special light, and on other passages on which we have before given our views. We have now

on hand many applications which, so far as we have ability, shall be noticed soon. Like all our brethren, we know but in part, if we indeed know anything of the Spirit of God, certainly we have no spiritual gift or light, that we have not received of the Lord; and we feel and acknowledge our obligation, as we have freely received, so freely to communicate.

The passage proposed by brother Davis, in behalf of his friend, viz: Luke vi. 27-30, was addressed especially to the disciples of our Lord, instructing them in regard to the course which they are to pursue in regard to their enemies. "But I say unto you." Jesus, the King of Zion, speaks, and his own disciples, who then heard him, are addressed. The instruction given, and rule laid down for them to observe and be governed by, is still the rule by which all his disciples are to be governed throughout all time, and it is important that we, as his disciples, should not only listen to, and hear his words, but also understand the import, and that we should conform to them as our infallible rule. "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you." The saints of God have enemies, and there is a sense in which they are to love them, and that sense is very clearly expressed in the text, and it was remarkably exemplified by our Lord when suffering the just for the unjust, upon the cross, when he cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" also by Stephen when being stoned to death he prayed, "Lay not this sin to their charge." The love enjoined in our text, is that which is manifested by us when, instead of avenging ourselves, or returning evil for evil, we are enabled by grace to pity them, and to pray for them. The enemies of the Lord's disciples are those who hate them, who curse them, who despitely use

them, and who smite them. The love enjoined upon the disciples, is that which leads them in return, to do good to them, to bless, or bestow favors on them, to pray the Lord to lay not the sin of their cruel and malicious treatment to their charge, and patiently to suffer all their abuse and robbery without retaliation. Vengeance belongeth not to the saints, it is not for them to launch the thunderbolts, nor indulge a disposition either to seek or desire their injury. If they hunger, feed them; if they thirst, give them drink; if they need apparel, clothe them, administer to their comfort, and imitate, so far as in us lieth, the examples set by our divine Lord and Master, who when he was reviled, reviled not again. Let that mind, that meekness, and that forgiving spirit, which he evinced towards his enemies, when he was here in the flesh, be seen in all our carriage towards those who despitely use and persecute us. "Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." That is, as we understand the instruction, when we as Christ's disciples are wronged, proscribed, defrauded, and robbed, by the enemies or the cross of Christ, for Christ's sake, or because we are his disciples, we are not to appeal to human power or wisdom for retribution. We do not however so understand this instruction as to imply that the saints, as citizens of the world, are to be indifferent to their rights, civil, social or religious. As parents, we are to maintain the rights and interests of our children, as husbands, those of our wives, and as guardians, those of such as are placed under our charge, in any legal way that does not conflict with the spirit and temper of the gospel.

Nor do we so understand this rule, as conflicting with the testimony of the

apostle, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Or the declaration of the Master, that except a man hate his father, and mother, and his own life also, he cannot be his disciple.

Our hatred of the world is not a malicious hatred. We are to honor our father and mother, and strictly to adhere to the instruction of our text, while, in regard to christian love and fellowship, we are separate and distinct from the world. Our affections are to be set on things above, and not on things on the earth.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., Feb. 15, 1856.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At her late residence in Laurel, Del., August 9th, 1898, sister **Martha B. Taylor**, in the 68th year of her age. Her disease was consumption, from which she had been a sufferer for many years, but being of an active, energetic turn, she continued her business of dressmaking until within a year or so of her decease, and kept up an active, useful life, both in the community and the church, when many no worse off than she would have given up. She was baptized by Elder E. Rittenhouse, in the fellowship of the church at Cow Marsh, Kent Co., Del., on the 18th of March, 1860, and married by the same to Edward Taylor, of Laurel, Sussex Co., Del., Nov. 26th, 1866. Her maiden name was Martha Boyce, a sister of Deacon David H. Boyce, of the Broad Creek church, Sussex Co., Del., and was widely known to the Old Baptists by that name up to the time of her marriage. Her life was made up of trials and afflictions, meeting many disappointments of cherished wishes, but her noble christian character shone with brighter lustre because of those things, and she continually grew in the esteem of the brethren. She was the mother of two children, both of whom died in infancy. Her husband also preceded her to the grave about seventeen months. Now the house that was for a long series of years a "Baptist home," is become desolate. The voice that so kindly and heartily gave the cheering welcome to the wayfarer, is stilled, to be heard no more on earth, but we hope that it is now more sweetly tuned to sing the praises of him who loved, and bled, and died, and rose that she, and all his loved ones, may live and reign with him for evermore. She leaves two brothers, three sisters, and numerous nephews and nieces, who may well mourn the loss of a true and faithful friend, and who also may well desire to imitate her many virtues, and noble and amiable qualities. The

church, too, has occasion to mourn the loss of a true and faithful member. Elder Rittenhouse in a letter written to me a few days after her decease, wrote: "She had an abundant entrance into the kingdom, but it was through much tribulation, and while she occupied such an exalted place, she never got entirely out of the tribulation. Was there a Providence in all this? Must so much blessing come to us thus cross handed? There are certainly mysterious depths of Providence in almost every step of that woman's life. Her cup was not all, and all the time bitter; it had its admixtures of sweet. You and I will not be likely to see another Martha Taylor in that church while we live. It is a testimony that cannot be gainsayed of the calling and character of the church in the world, that such material is found in it. Their price is above rubies."

Shortly after her baptism she united by letter with the church at Broad Creek, Sussex Co., Del., where she had been brought up, and continued her membership there till her death. But a few days before her death, I called in to see her, and found her very weak; remarked to her, "Sister Taylor, you have come to the place where no human aid can be given." She said, "Yes, but I feel that I can say, The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want; he leadeth me, and though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil: his rod and his staff they comfort me." She is now at rest. May God grant to all who mourn, the everlasting consolations of the gospel, for his name's sake.

A. B. FRANCIS.

DIED—At the residence of his son-in-law, Mr. C. N. Hess, at Goldendale, Washington, **Beverly W. Gilmore**, August 9th, 1898, aged 75 years, 3 months and 25 days. He was married to Lucinda Clymer, Nov. 10th, 1845, in Des Moines Co., Iowa. He crossed the plains to Oregon, in 1852. Himself and wife were baptized into the fellowship of a Primitive Baptist church, called Little Bethel, located in Linn Co., Oregon, by Elder Joseph Turnidge, on June 9th, 1855. They both remained faithful to the doctrine first espoused, salvation by the free and sovereign grace of God, until the good Lord called them home, mother having passed away May 3d, 1871. Sad indeed was the incident that caused father's death. On the morning of August 7th, an old lady residing with the family, arose first, and attempted to start a fire in the kitchen stove, and set the house on fire. The flame spread rapidly, and soon communicated with father's room. His only daughter, with whom he lived, ran quickly to an outside window and called, father, but he was so overcome by the heat that he could only answer faintly. Other help came, and took him out, but he was so badly burned he only lived 56 hours. He was the third son of the late Elder James L. Gilmore, of Iowa, where he has numerous relatives now.

Elder W. J. Hess preached a comforting discourse on the occasion, from 1 Cor. v. 1, then we sadly bore his remains to the quiet grave, there to await the resurrection, and as we believe he had passed in the first resurrection, on him the second death will have no power. He leaves four sons and one daughter, beside many other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss, which we hope is his eternal gain. May the good Lord give us grace to wait patiently all our appointed days, and finally join with him again in praise to the ever worthy name of Jesus.

His son,

W. H. GILMORE.

NORTH YAKIMA, Washington.

DIED—On Saturday evening, August 20th, 1898, **Harry T. Green**, in the 36th year of his age. Mr. Green was a native of the Smyrna neighborhood, and the son of the late brother Isaac, and sister Eliza Ann Green. His wife was of the Frazier family, at Cow Marsh. That enemy that is continually sundering the most tender and endearing earthly ties, has been making repeated inroads into that family quite recently. Mr. Green, but a few months ago, lost his father, and the widow, now bereaved of her husband, a short while ago lost her father, so that three homes have been made desolate. Mr. Green was a very worthy and upright man, beloved and respected by all who knew him. He resided near Odessa, in about the centre of this County, some miles from me, and from our meetings. He suffered from an attack of the "la grippe," a year ago last February, and never fully recovered. It developed into throat consumption, from which he was a great sufferer for some weeks. In regard to his hope, we knew him as a friend, and his end was peaceful. A sympathizing and sorrowing community attended to the last rites at Old Bryn Zion. If we could have a glimpse of things beyond the veil, we would not probably sorrow as do others, and as we otherwise would. A bereaved mother, wife and child, as well as several brothers and sisters, are left to be subjects of our sympathy, and our pity.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

Miss **Hannah Margaret Wise**, daughter of W. P. and Susan Wise, was born Sept. 18th, 1881, and died August 22d, 1898, aged 16 years, 11 months and 4 days, after an illness of just seven weeks. She had hereditary consumption. She united with the Old Baptist church at Mountain Chapel, Sept. 19th, 1896, and was baptized Oct. 17th, 1896. During her illness I said to her, "You are very bad off, but it does not alarm you to be sick." She answered, "No indeed, pa, I want to get well on your account, but if I do not, I know that I will be in a better world. I put my trust in the Lord. I am not afraid to die." She was laid by the side of her mother, who had preceded her just four years and seven months.

Her funeral was preached at the grave, by Elders M. C. Harris and A. J. Adams.

W. P. WISE.

DIED—At his home in Centerville, Va., August 7th, 1898, **Benjamin T. Spindle**, aged 63 years. He suffered a stroke of paralysis on Thursday morning, and died the following Sunday night. Very soon after the attack he became unconscious, and remained so until the end. Brother Spindle was baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington, I think, in the fellowship of the Bethlehem church, near Manassas, Va. I have known him more than twenty years as a consistent follower of the lowly Jesus, exhibiting his spirit in his walk and conversation, and in his steadfast adherence to the truth. In meekness he quietly filled his place in the church, and in full measure possessed the fellowship and confidence of his brethren. He leaves a wife and several children to mourn their loss.

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va., August 25, 1898.

M E E T I N G S .

The annual meeting with the Cow Marsh Baptist church is appointed the fourth Saturday and Sunday in September, commencing at 2 p. m. on Saturday. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us. Trains will be met on the Delaware R. R. Those coming from the south, at Felton; from the north, at Woodside. Those from Kenton neighborhood can take the Maryland branch to Hartley. All passengers come on the morning mail trains on Saturday.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Jefferson, N. Y., will hold a two days meeting the third Saturday and Sunday in September, (17th and 18th) 1898. A cordial invitation is extended to ministers and other brethren, and all who may desire to come, to meet with us.

JUSTIN DYER.

A yearly meeting is appointed to be held with the Columbia Old School Baptist Church, Jackson Co., Mich., commencing on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, (1st and 2d) 1898. A cordial invitation is extended to all that desire to meet with us.

WM. L. BROWN, Church Clerk.

A YEARLY, or two days meeting, is appointed to be held with the Cammal church, Lycoming Co., Pa., Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 20th and 21st, 1898. Place of meeting only a few rods from Cammal Station, on Fall Brook R. R. We hope to see many lovers of the truth present, ministers included.

D. M. VAIL.

THE annual two days meeting of the Shohola Creek Church, of Predestinarian Baptists, will be held at the Shohola schoolhouse, on Thursday and Friday, September 22d and 23d, 1898. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us, especially ministering brethren. All will be met at Shohola, Tuesday afternoon, and conveyed to place of meeting, commencing 10 a. m. Wednesday.

GIPSON McKEEN, Church Clerk.

THE church at Otego, N. Y., has decided to hold their yearly two days meeting Wednesday and Thursday, September 28th and 29th, 1898, and the monthly meeting for October is to be Saturday and Sunday after the yearly meeting. Any of our dear kindred in Christ who can do so, are cordially invited to attend the meetings. For the benefit of any one who does not know of the location of Otego, I will say, Otego is situated on the D. & H. R. R., ninety miles from Albany, and fifty-three miles from Binghamton, and one hundred and eight miles from Scranton. Also it is fourteen miles from the Ontario & Western R. R., the nearest station of which is Sidney, N. Y., which is also on the D. & H. road.

Done by order of the church.

S. C. F. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, will be held, by divine permission, with the Mt. Zion church, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing Oct. 12th, and continuing three days.

Friends coming by railroad to the meeting, will take the cars on the Southern R. R. at Sixth St. station, Washington, D. C., at 8 o'clock Tuesday morning, for Haymarket, on Manassas Branch of Southern R. R., where they will be met and cared for.

We feel to assure a cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth who may favor us with their presence.

J. N. BADGER.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Juniata Association will convene with Sidling Hill Church, Friday, Oct. 7th, 1898, holding over Sunday. All parties will be met at Hancock Station, on Baltimore & Ohio R. R., Thursday, Oct. 6th. Would request that all come on the first train arriving at Hancock, if possible, as the church is about fifteen miles from station. Any wishing to arrive later please write Elder Ahimaz Mellott, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa. We hope our brethren will come to see us, our ministering brethren especially. Though a long way off, and poor, we appreciate your presence, love and fellowship perhaps the more. Come and see if we do not.

E. V. WHITE.

THE next annual meeting of the Lexington Old School Baptist Association will be held, the Lord

willing, with the Old School Baptist church of Schoharie, N. Y., at their meeting-house on Schoharie Hill, on the third Wednesday and Thursday in September, (21st and 22d) 1898, at 10 a. m. each day. We desire that ministering brethren, and others of our faith and order, of other associations, and all who love the truth, will meet with us.

Those who come by rail will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday previous.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1898. NO. 20.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REVERIES.

ENTWINED about the tendrils of the heart are precious memories of moments spent with Christ the Lord. Short indeed, perhaps a glimpse, no more, but never to be forgotten. A door ajar in the temple of our God, revealing hitherto hidden mysteries, wondrous in beauty, transcendent in loveliness. A joyful sound reaches our ears. It rehearses a pure language, “The song of Moses and the Lamb,” taught in Zion to the inhabitants thereof. Sung in Canaan, with joy and much rejoicing, but silent upon the lips of the captives in Babylon. From within the temple this “joyful sound” comes floating over an atmosphere of God’s love, as the voice of many waters; our soul is bathed in the sweet and solemn anthems; the windows of the soul are opened wide, and with the sound a flood of light comes in; light such as was never seen with mortal eyes, brighter than the noonday sun, its rays mellowed and softened by the angel wings of gospel truth. The sound and light are messengers of love and peace from God the Father, saying, “This is my beloved Son, hear ye

him.” The joyous heart takes up the rhythmic lines, and in sweet unison with the joyful sound and brilliant light, sings in thanksgiving and praise, “All hail the power of Jesus’ name.” Hark! whence comes the echo? ’Tis the voice of angels to the shepherds on the hills about Bethlehem. In sweetest strains we hear them sing, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord.” To which the heavenly host takes up the charming, soul-searching chorus, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” We now glance within the door ajar, and we behold in a lowly manger, the Lord of life and glory, a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes; he that was born King of the Jews. This precious life and light of men has crept into our hearts. There he has taken up his abode. He cherishes it, and delights in it, as a garden of nuts and pleasant fruits. He looks upon his beautiful bride as a rose in Sharon, as a lily of the valley, as a chaste virgin, as the King’s daughter, all glorious within, saying unto her, “Thou art all fair my love, thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee.” While we, ah broken heart, crushed and ground to

powder between the upper and nether millstone of the justice of God, "Black as the tents of Kedar," as the poor publican, "Standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner." But O, the sweet assurance that enters with the light, and with the joyful sound, saying to the sad and doubting heart, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one for another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin." Glorious assurance, even I, the chief of sinners, am not left out. Again the door ajar signals our attention, and again we see him who "was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death," as a lad of twelve years, standing in the temple, among the doctors and lawyers, speaking words of surprising wisdom, and afterwards saying to his mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" What business? To make a way through the dark avenues of a broken law, through sin and confusion, into this frozen heart of mine, and to do his Father's will. Wondrous condescension, willing obedience. Another glance in the heavenly city shows him to us, with the Father's blessing upon five barley loaves and a few little fishes, with which, (being blessed) he satisfies the hunger of five thousand souls, with an abundance to spare. We behold, as our eye of faith wanders here and there over this temple of spiritual treasures, that although the bounteous hand of our heavenly provider is constantly giving out his treasures to all who need, yet the supply is never diminished, nor the garner less empty. Another glimpse, and within view of our awakened heart we see a bleeding, suffering woman, touching the hem of his garments; virtue goes out of

him, and because of her faith she is healed. We keep in mind that in each scene recorded on memory's tablet, that Jesus is the central figure. He is the object of all our hope, and of every fond desire. To all who look for his appearing he is precious. What is this procession we see outside Jerusalem? The whole city is stirred, and in commotion. A rumor cometh to their ears. Jesus rideth into Jerusalem upon an untutored colt. His followers spread their garments, and also branches of trees, in the way, and they shout, saying, Hosanna: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Blessed be the kingdom of our Father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. How my glad heart trembles as it watches him enter the temple of the great city, to find it a den of thieves, with money changers and sellers of doves. Ah, heart, you well remember how you were filled with chaos and confusion, with all manner of sin and depravity before Jesus came. And how, when he did come, and entered into your temple, these enemies were driven out, and thou wert cleansed, swept and garnished of the foul odors prevailing there. Fear no more, faint heart, for thou hast learned the sweet lesson, that thy strength is in Israel's God. "Fear not; [as thou travel along these low grounds of sorrow] 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 he be called." Again we glance into the chamber of ripened fruits, and anon we see Jesus calling little children unto him, and say-

ing, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." May we as little children seek to enter in through the gates into the city. We turn our eyes again to the view of heavenly things, and this time we behold the secret of the stairs by which our heavenly lover ascends unto his Father. For we see him bleeding upon the cruel Roman cross, for the sins of his people—for my sins. His life blood congealed with the cry of anguish upon his lips to his Father, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and with his expiring breath saying, "It is finished." What precious words to helpless, dying mortals! A knowledge of the finished work of Christ, kindles the dying ember of hope in the weary traveler's breast, and such a meal sustains him forty days. To the weary, anxious one, he sweetly says, "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 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." Very precious indeed are the memories of sweet communion with Jesus along the way. Sometimes it is with us as it was with the two who traveled to Emmaus. He talks with us by the way, and our eyes are holden, and we know him not, until such time as he reveals himself, then he is gone. Yet the refreshing left behind in the blessing is soul-cheering. Again we realize his helpful hand and his sure mercies, and his living promises in sickness, in pain, and in all our afflictions. Our memory assures us that in six trials he has been with us, and we have his promise that in the

seventh he will not forsake us. It would require volumes to record the memories of a lifetime in the pilgrim's journey from darkness into the full light of gospel day. While no mortal lips could ever tell the power and sweetness of Jesus' love.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 3, 1898.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., July 14, 1898.

ELDER E. V. WHITE AND WIFE—MY DEAR, PRECIOUS BROTHER AND SISTER:—It always affords me pleasure to receive a letter from the Lord's dear ones whom I love in the truth, so that is one cause of my trying to write you this afternoon, that I may obtain the blessing thereby, and another is, that I might tell you how I was enabled to feast and feed upon the rich and glorious truths of the Lord, and his kingdom, as they were proclaimed by you, my brother. Your coming to us was as a cloud filled with the rain and dew from heaven, and my poor, parched, hungry soul was made once again to eat and drink abundantly of the sweet, rich provision, that was spread upon the table by the hand of the Lord, by sending his faithful sent-servant unto us, to proclaim to us some of those great, grand and unsearchable mysteries of the kingdom of our dear Redeemer, by pointing out to us the source and fountain of all our spiritual comforts and joys. When you read your text at the meeting at New Vernon, I was somewhat surprised, as it was a chapter that had been much on my mind.—Habakkuk ii. 20, especially where it speaks of the vision, in the third verse of the chapter. These words were given me one morning, to meditate upon with much anxious thought, "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it: because it will surely

come, it will not tarry." I was glad the Lord gave you the text, "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." I thought while you were speaking, I knew by a sad and sorrowful experience, something what the words mean, to keep silent, and to walk humbly, and softly, before him, desiring to be made submissive to his will; but O, how weak and helpless I am, without his strong Almighty arm to support and strengthen me in times of trials and grief. His tender love and grace has thus far kept me through all the afflictions and sorrows I have been called to pass through, and his words verified, of a truth, that he will be the widow's God, to sustain and uphold in times of need. Why should I be as distrustful as I am, halting and shrinking at every step, if I realize these things? What a mystery I am to myself, ungrateful for every blessing given, at times questioning some of the purposes of the working of God, asking, How can good come out of all these things? My dear brother, I think I hear you say, keep silent. Yes, I do know the Lord rules not only in the armies of heaven, but also among the inhabitants of earth, and does his will and pleasure in his own time and way. O, that I may be guided and kept by his power and grace in the right way, and lead by his Spirit, to so walk that I may not be a reproach to the cause I so dearly love, for it is there my best friends, my kindred dwell, and there God my Savior reigns. Hymn No. 1046 (Beebe's Collection) expresses the breathings of my mind.

On Sunday afternoon at Middletown I was again given the hearing ear, and how sweet and beautiful the tidings of the gospel sounded, after many months of hungry, weary fasting. When you an-

nounced your text there seemed such a majesty and grandeur in the very reading of the words, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness: and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things." My dear brother, you can never know the joy and gladness of heart that was mine while listening. There was a certain sound I so long to hear. Sorrows had so filled my cup for many months, that I feared I should never again hear as in times past. Perhaps you have sometimes sat under preaching when you felt sure it was food, and true, and yet you could not feed nor feast your soul on it, when the fault was not in the preacher or his preaching, but you had not given you the understanding heart, nor the hearing ear, to hear the word spoken. It is the Lord alone that feeds his little ones, although he may use the lips and tongue of his servants, or ministers, to do it. How well we should remember to whom honor and glory belong. We read, the good Shepherd does and will feed his sheep, and he heareth and careth for them, helpless and depending as they may be. Sometimes want and famine may be theirs to experience, yet in his goodness and mercy he will supply all their needs. How safe and secure all his people are in him; they were given him by the Father, and none can pluck them out of his hand; and what a mercy it is that he knows them that are his. I think I do feel grateful that the Lord sent you to us, and it was blessed to my peace and comfort. How I wish it might abide with me, and dwell in my heart continually; but it is like the manna, it will not feast us to-day what we eat yesterday. So we have to ask of the Father,

"Give us this day our daily bread," or we famish and die to spiritual things.

I find I am writing you too lengthy a letter. Excuse me this time, will try and do better in the future. Sister Pittenger left me this morning, and I am lonely enough, but I must try and endure it. How I wish I could drop in and chat with you both in times of severe loneliness.

Elder Ker has accepted the call to these churches, and may the Lord make him a faithful, kind and loving pastor, to all. He comes to these churches the last of this month. I wish I could talk to you. Pray for me, that I may keep silent, and do whatever is right, by all. Will you not write me soon? It might prove a word in season.

Affectionately your sister in hope,

CELINDA J. JENKINS.

HOTEL BRIGHTON, ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., }
Aug. 24, 1898. }

MRS. CELINDA J. JENKINS—MY VERY PRECIOUS SISTER IN THE LORD:—You will see by the above, where I am. Here by direction. My health is very, very poor. I came Wednesday last, but up to the present time I have received no benefit, that I can see. I shall probably stay ten days or two weeks longer. I have been under the doctor's hands part of the time. I do not feel that I can stand it much longer without a change, but the Lord only knows.

Please do not think I have delayed answering your letter for want of appreciation. Every time I read it, it is a feast to my soul, and I now feel to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." That the Lord sent you a message from heaven, through me, is a double occasion for blessing his holy name. Who am I, that he should send by me? Or you, that he should re-

member with the favor that he beareth his people? Be it known that it is ours to enjoy, it is his to do his sovereign will. "Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives." What little we know fills us with wonder and admiration. More we need not, nor could we contain. To know as we are known, is not for this mortal state. It is ours to live by faith. To be cut off from every earthly refuge, and to live alone in the one true and living God, whom we have not seen, yet believe on, is not human, but divine. That it is not the work of man, but of omnipotence, is the assurance that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. It is indeed making clouds our chariots, and riding upon the wings of the wind. No mortal eye can see how one dare to trust his life in such a chariot, or trust to the wind for wings. No, they want the material, that which reason can comprehend and understand. God's word is a meaningless sound to them, without substance, without reality. They will not, dare not, trust in it. We only mention these things to strengthen the faith that is in us, and not to blame them. It is not ours to condemn; Jesus came not to condemn, but to save. Through faith we are saved. That is to believe through Jesus alone sinners are saved. This is to be saved by faith, and this we do believe with all our heart, strength and mind, nor can we believe differently, for God's work is stronger than man's. This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he has sent. My dear sister, how evidently true are the words of God, "Ye have the witness within you." We have not to search the dusty pages on ancient history, nor untomb the mouldering dust of the fathers, to prove to us the truth and genuineness of God's eternal truth. It is written in your minds, and put in your

hearts, and ye have a witness of it in yourselves. You needed not the persuasion of man, to believe what you heard, either at New Vernon or Middletown. The Spirit itself bore witness with your spirit, and the testimony was with you. You waited (John had to wait) for the vision, and at the end it spoke, and it was, "The just shall live by faith." And when it speaks, such is the awful solemnity, the soul says, Keep silence, O my soul. Shall mortal man be more just than God? O, how you longed to keep silence, to murmur not. The Lord knoweth best, let him do with his own as he pleases. Is it not true, dear sister, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak? "With my mind I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin." The will is present with you, but how to perform you find not. What a blessed thing that the spirit does the performing, for with the spirit we worship God, it is impossible of ourselves, for the natural man is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. You have known this before, but bitter, dreadful, heart-experience, has impressed it as never before, and out of the depths have you been made to cry unto him, and the Lord heard your prayer, and confirmed you that he was God, in his holy mountain, and it became you to keep silence. When that feeling was in you there was silence, and you said before his awful grandeur, Let mountains abase themselves, for great and marvelous are thy ways, Lord God Almighty. Who dare to speak in his presence, or question his judgments? Shall worms teach the "I Am?" He who opened the chambers of the morning, and bid blind darkness flee; who gave to us all that we are and have, who even gave to us his own darling Son, has given us the highest assurance that no other good

gift would he withhold. Had the work of Jesus Christ on earth, as a man, longer been a good work, he would not have taken him away. If this be true, and true it is, must we not know that another one was not taken away before his work was done? Be still, O blind unbelief; let Jesus reign; let faith have her victory. I know this is the sincere desire of your heart, and thank God that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. God seeth that which is in the heart, and he knoweth that we love him.

Lest I weary you I will close, but before closing let me thank you, from my very heart, for the precious letter you wrote me, and let me also ask your permission to have it published, except what is personal, not for your sake, but for your many friends. I know it would do them good. Please look over the imperfections of this letter.

Your devoted brother,

E. V. WHITE.

PORTLAND, Ind., Feb. 10, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I wish to speak of some things found in the third chapter of Paul's letter to the Galatians. In this letter Paul bewails the condition in which he found the brethren. He says, "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." That is, he meant that it was not really another gospel, in the full sense of the word, but he declared to them that there were some that troubled them, and would pervert the gospel of Christ, (meaning, if it were possible). He also said, "Though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Hence I infer that after Paul, and Barnabas, and Timothy, and Titus, had

preached Christ, and him crucified, as the end of the law of righteousness to every one that believes, then some came down from Judah, and taught the brethren that except they become circumcised and keep the law of Moses, they could not be saved. In this epistle, Paul puts to silence all such Judaizing teachers, by saying that the covenant confirmed by God cannot be disannulled, even as is the case with a covenant made by man.

The apostle says to these brethren, that to Abraham and his seed, was the promise made, and that God had not spoken of seeds as of many, but simply of one, and this seed was Christ. Thus he also declares that Christ was the seed of Abraham. Paul has said in different epistles, that not all the children of Abraham are counted for the promised seed, and we learn in harmony with this that the Ishmaelites were not counted in the seed, or allowed to be heirs with Isaac, neither was Esau counted in the promised seed, though he and Jacob were twin brothers. There is much to be considered in this promised seed. One could see no difference in these twin brothers, from a natural standpoint, yet God loved Jacob, and hated Esau. Who is wise enough to explain to the natural reason of man, the justice of all this, that God should hate one, and love the other, neither having done good or evil? These things belong to God. We only know with Paul, that they are so. None but God knows the reason. God had promised to Abraham, even while he had no child, that his seed should inherit the land of Canaan. And Paul says that Abraham believed that what God had promised God was able to perform. This belief, or faith, that he had in the promise of God, was counted to him for righteousness. Thus Paul lays the foundation for his argument for God's

peculiar way of justification, in the beginning of the promise of God to Abraham. Paul shows that in Abraham's case, works were excluded, because his faith was counted to him for righteousness. Paul says that the Lord made a covenant with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law was given, and promised to him the land of Canaan for an inheritance, and that he should be heir of the world. He also declares that this was not to Abraham or his seed through the law, because it was four hundred and thirty years before the law, but it was through the righteousness of faith which he had, and which was counted to him for righteousness, that his seed inherited the promise. Paul also says that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years afterwards, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. No, in no wise, could the law disannul the promise. When the time had come for Israel to pass over Jordan, Moses told the people that it was not for their righteousness that they were to enter the promised land, neither was it for any uprightness of their hearts, for they were the most stiff-necked and rebellious of all people. Moses, in Deuteronomy tells the people that they had not inherited this land by any obedience of theirs whatever, but that they entered alone through the promise which God had made to their father Abraham. The promise made to the seed of Abraham was not inherited upon any conditions of their fulfillment whatever. The promise, when given, had no conditions in it whatever, and when they did enter Moses took them to record that it was not their uprightness or righteousness, which had secured this blessing, but simply the promise of God. Hence Paul said, "If the inheritance be

of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law?" Paul says it was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. This seed was Christ. Hence the law was added because of transgression. Sin was in the world until the law, but sin could in no way be imputed, where there was no law, but after the law came, sin could be imputed. Now Paul says that the law entered that the offense might abound, and by the law is the knowledge of sin. If the first law interfered in no way with the earthly inheritance of God's children, it is sure that the second law written in their hearts cannot interfere with their eternal inheritance. Now if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. And they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. Then Paul asks, Is the law then against the promise? No, he says, in no wise, for if there had been a law given, which could have given life, then verily righteousness should have been by the law. But no law given could give life. Law was only intended to bring death, but justification is of faith, that it might be of grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed. Glorious truth! What a joyful sound! It was counted to faith that the promise might be sure to all the seed. Those who are of faith, are the seed of Abraham. If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and the promise is sure to all the seed. Israel entered Canaan under a direct accusation of Moses, that they were the most wicked people, and void of good works. Their whole life, from the time when they received the law, had been one of wickedness; yet they inherited the

promise all the same. Paul said that it was not by works of righteousness which we have done, but that it was according to his purpose, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. He also said, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ." "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Take notice that it can go no further than the flesh. It spends its force in the flesh and then stops, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. But now the righteousness of God without the law (glorious truth) is manifest, and it is witnessed both by the law and the prophets (this surely ought to be witness enough). Even the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Like Israel of old, though we have all sinned, yet we inherit the promise through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. Paul says, "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." But Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness, and not his works. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith [alone] is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose in-

iquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Paul says, that it was not written that Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness, for his sake alone, but for those to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. Hence, though the law written within discovers all the inbred corruption of our hearts, yet it cannot interfere with those who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. The Spirit given is the earnest of our inheritance by promise.

As ever, your brother,

NEWTON PETERS.

HERRICK, Pa., Sept. 16, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS:—It has occurred to me that among the scattered household who read the SIGNS, there may be some on beds of languishing to whom the following letters would be a comfort; some who may have had the same trials as this dear, suffering sister, who would find encouragement in her words. She can only write with pencil, and at intervals, as she is ill in bed. I have her consent to publish any portion of her letters that I think best.

What a blessing is an interchange of thought among those who are united in the bonds of love and fellowship, and how often we sweetly realize it, while enjoying what their pens have traced.

Last evening, while reading the experience of sister T. R. Pittman, I felt that it must be that he who revealed himself to her so clearly, and brought her into the fold of his love, inclined her to tell it to her kindred, that they may rejoice with her, and sing praises to him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Your sister in hope,

BESSIE DURAND.

OWENSBYVILLE, Ga., Sept. 12, 1897.

MISS BESSIE DURAND—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—You spoke of wishing to know more of my inner life. Would that I could express to you what I have passed through during the nine years that I have been prostrated, but I am powerless to do so. If I could give to you a picture of my life, it would be no beautiful landscape, with flower-decked meadows, and silvery lakes, but it would be a storm-tossed bark upon a mighty ocean, where surging billows rise and fall. But while such, my sister, is but a pen picture of my inner life, I feel to hope that the blessed Savior is my Captain, and will at last cast anchor for me in the port of eternal glory. Then, feeling this to be true, I am willing to suffer on, and can "rejoice in tribulation." I have sweetly realized that my afflictions have been a blessing to me, although it was a long time before I could see them in that light, and spent most of my time in tears, and in prayers for my recovery. O what a miserable creature I was. It seemed that the mental agony I underwent, in wishing for health, was more than I could bear. Yes, I begged the Lord to restore me, promising I would consecrate my whole life to him. But one day the thought was presented to me, "Why not pray for resignation, and for grace to bear your afflictions?" Right then I began to pray for the Lord to reconcile me to his will, and I must say I believe he heard the voice of my supplication, for most of the time I feel perfectly resigned, and I know no power on earth could have wrought this in me. My greatest trials now are, that I cannot live the life that I desire. I know there is no perfection this side the grave, but O how I do long to live a perfect life. I want to live nearer to him who died for me. I want to trust in him

at all times. I want that religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father. I want to fear him, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. I want to be always ready to give a reason of the hope that I have. I want to be kept at the foot of the cross, and if it takes years of continual suffering, I am willing to bear it all, "for I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us." I want to be always ready to talk about Jesus, and to point to him as the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world; for I have fully realized that "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." And last but not least, I do trust that when the summons comes for me, I may feel that Jesus is near, and that "though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Sometimes I shudder at the thought of death, fearing I am deceived, then again, there is a sweetness in the thought of being free from the trials and temptations of this life; and to be with the blessed Savior, where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. Then,

"Rise my soul, and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portions trace;
Rise from transitory things,
To heaven thy native place.

Sun and moon and stars decay;
Time shall soon this earth remove.

Rise my soul, and haste away,
To seats prepared above."

Please write to me again, and remember me in your prayers.

Yours in tribulation,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

OWENSBYVILLE, Ga., March 24, 1898.

MY PRECIOUS SISTER IN JESUS:—

Would that I could express to you the joy that filled my soul yesterday afternoon, when our mail came and brought to me the beautiful token of remembrance from you. To tender my thanks to you for such a treasure, would but feebly express my sentiments in regard to the same. It was the first copy of "Reminiscence" I had ever seen. But O how often had I longed to have a copy of that dear book, yet our expenses were such that I was never able to order one. Now, when I read your letter you have no idea how unworthy I felt of being so kindly remembered. It is more than I deserve.

Well, I spent yesterday in reading the beautiful history of Mary Parker, and it seemed that every word was written for me. How vividly did I trace the kind hand of providence in all she wrote. While reading, my thoughts were blended with joy and sorrow. I would weep over her sorrowful life, and then rejoice that the blessed Savior was ever by her side. What a comfort it will be to me in my severe afflictions. Surely she was a companion in tribulation.

You wish to know how I am getting along. I have suffered more for the last four months than ever before. All through the winter season it seemed that every day would be my last. It has grieved me so much that I was not able to reply to the precious letter I received from you in January. I thought I would never hear from you again. But how good our Lord is, to put it into your heart to write me, even if I cannot respond. You said in your letter that you trusted I might realize the precious promise, "At evening time it shall be light." When I read that, my mind went back to a dark

and gloomy night, three years ago, when I was suffering so with heart-weakness, and it did not seem that I could live through the night. I begged the Lord, if it was his will, not to let me die in such a restless and gloomy state of mind. While passing through this darkness, the beautiful words "At evening time it shall be light," came sweetly and forcibly into my mind, giving me such comfort that I have all along trusted in that precious promise. It seems like the blessed Lord spoke through you, to remind me again of the sweet promise. If I can just realize this when I come to die, I know that all will be well with me, and I feel to say that I am waiting its fulfillment. Yes,

"Waiting, hoping, trusting ever,
For a home of boundless love;
Like a pilgrim looking forward
To the land of bliss above."

Sometimes when I think of the "better land," it seems a long way off, and I feel so sinful and imperfect I fear it is not for me; then an intense gloom settles over me like a pall, causing me to dread the thought of dying. Then again, the veil becomes so thin that I can almost pierce through and see what awaits me. Then death loses its terror, and I feel that I will never doubt again.

What a mysterious life is that of the christian. What changing scenes through which we are called to pass. What a desolate life without the presence of Jesus, and how peaceful when we can realize his presence. When I look back over the long years that I have been confined to the bed, the question arises, "How have I borne it?" But the response comes, "The Savior has been with you." Yes, with me. Right here I wish to tell you of one of the sweetest seasons I ever realized. On last Christmas Eve, after the family had retired, while meditating on spiritual things, I felt the

presence of the Savior most clearly, never more in my life. I know he was with me, for I felt him near. He is always with us, and will be with us even to the end, but it is not always that we can feel his presence the same. The next day we had many callers, and I suffered all day, but I could rejoice that the Savior had also suffered, and had so plainly manifested himself to me. * * * One lady who called had a face nearly a fac-simile of Mary Parker, especially the eyes, which are so expressive of the beautiful soul within.

In speaking of sister Mary Parker, I wish to say to you again, that you cannot imagine how I value her book. To me it is "a thing of beauty, and a joy forever." How truly is it verified in her case, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

"So when a christian dies
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the paths of men."

I know, I have written some things that will not be interesting to you, but it is said there are epochs in life that lie upon the heart forever, marking the past like stones placed for retrospect; so it is with every expression of love and sympathy that I have received during my affliction. They are locked up in my memory, to be recalled as long as life shall last.

Will you please throw a mantle of charity over all imperfections in this letter? I have had to lay it down so many times to be able to finish it, that it seems unsavory, and sounds like a tinkling cymbal to me.

I have a great desire to see you, and tell you verbally how very near and dear you seem to me. I love even the sound of your name, and I hope you will always

remember me. I am glad you enjoyed my poor verses; like all I do, they are imperfect. I wrote them just as they were presented to me.

Hoping to hear from you again, I am ever your unworthy and much afflicted sister,

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

JOHN XVII. 4.

"I HAVE finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

It has been a long time since I have written anything for the SIGNS. A deep heart-felt sense of my weakness and unworthiness has caused me to be still. My soul has almost dwelt in silence. It is a question in my mind now, as to the propriety of my writing. I cannot decide to my satisfaction what will be the better way, but after hours of serious meditation I have resolved to draw the bow at a venture, hoping that God will direct the arrow, or in other words, direct my mind while I suggest a few thoughts upon the above portion of Scripture. This text is the language of Jesus when praying to his Father. "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." This text is very conclusive. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." This demonstrates the fact that the Father gave his Son a work to do, and that the Son finished the work which the Father gave him to do. He completed every jot and tittle of it, and cried out in the agonies of death, "It is finished." Not the plan of salvation finished, but the work which his Father gave him to do. A plan of salvation is something that I know nothing

about. I do not understand that in the finished work of Christ, he just opened a way of life and salvation, but he saved us. Christ is himself our salvation. 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. And according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"I have finished the work." This is a positive declaration of Jesus, in the solemn moment of prayer. Did he tell the truth? He most certainly did, for it was impossible for him to lie. "God is not man that he should lie, neither the Son of man that he should repent." Again, "The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent." Christ is certainly the strength of Israel, even Israel's eternity. Hence no one can deny that Jesus finished the work that the Father gave him to do. This is a settled question. Then, as this point is settled beyond dispute, we will now inquire of the oracles of God the Father, What was the work which he was given to do? To the law and to the testimony. Let the Bible settle the question. The work that the Father gave his Son to do was to save sinners. Paul says, "This a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." This text proves, as clear as the sun at noonday, what this work was, and it was to save sinners. Forasmuch then as the work which Jesus came to do, was to save sinners, and he completely finished that work, it follows that sinners are saved. A way is not made possible whereby sinners can save themselves, or can come to Jesus. Jesus

Christ came into the world to save sinners, and he saved them. He died for us, "The just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." Therefore sinners are saved, but not all sinners, for this would involve a universal salvation, since all men are sinners, but all men are not saved-sinners. A definite number are saved. They are absolutely saved by Christ, who died for them, and that definite number consists of all whom the Father gave to him in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.

The second verse of this seventeenth chapter tells us that the Father had given Jesus power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as were given him. This many he died for, and saved. He gave his life a ransom for many. This definite number for whom Christ died, and whom he saved, and which no man can number, were sanctified, (set apart) by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. They were called to be saints; they were 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. Paul says of these justified and saved sinners, God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. This text proves conclusively that all for whom Christ died were appointed to salvation through Christ, who died for them, and the number who were ordained to eternal life was the exact number for whom Christ died. As the word appoint, means to name, it follows that Christ died for all that the Father had named, or set apart to him,

in the covenant of redemption. As it is said, Lo, I come 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, once for all. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." The word sanctify, here means set apart, and so it is shown plainly that Jesus Christ by that one offering, when he offered himself without spot to God, perfected, or completely saved, all the heirs of promise, or all the elect vessels of mercy, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and that they were all named or set apart in the will of God the Father; and it is said, This is the Father's will, that of all which the Father gave him, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. Then Jesus Christ came into the world to save these Adam sinners which God the Father had given to him in the covenant of redemption. And as an obedient Son, faithful to him that appointed him, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. He died for them; he was delivered for their offenses and raised again for their justification. He saved his people from their sins. He said, "I must be about my Father's business." He said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is yet day. The night cometh when no man can work." He said again, "For the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." This text is like all the rest of the Scriptures; there is nothing in it for the conditionalist. There are no propositions or conditional salvation, but all is certainty. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. This was the work that the Father gave him to do; he

finished the work; he saved sinners, and he saved as many as the Father gave him to save. These are all saved, completely saved, in Christ. In all this glorious work he glorified his Father on the earth. Then as sure as God is true, the work of saving sinners is finished; it is done. He is the Alpha and Omega of every sinner's salvation. I have saved them; I have finished the work. May God be praised.

WM. J. MAY.

PINSON FORK, Ky., Aug. 9, 1898.

NORTH WHITEFIELD, Maine, March, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—I often think of you, and desire to see you, and hear you speak once more of the things which are not of this world, still I do not feel as much like writing as I used to, and have not for a long time. I have heard of natural trouble causing death, and often ask, Is this the cause of my being dull so long? I remember how I once enjoyed the company of the Lord's people, and their conversation as well, beside being fond of reading, and spending much time in that way, while now I am so dull, and if I read at all, it is but seldom. My cares have been more of late, but still I could and do have time, if I were only in the right frame of mind to do so. When I do take my Bible and read it, it seems a sealed book, and after reading a few verses I put it down. I sometimes remember what you once said to me when I told you that the Bible was, or seemed to be, a sealed book at times, so that I went for days, and sometimes weeks, without reading it. Your reply was something like this, you read it at such times just the same, and was glad that you had. I do not use just your words. I have thought that I would read the Bible whether I felt to or not, so that when I was brought out of this cold, lifeless state,

it would cause me to be glad, but I fail to do this, as I do many other things. I have so much care, yet I do some thinking, and long to be more with my brethren. The last time I saw any of them was last fall. Our meeting was at Paul King's schoolhouse. I went all day. Elder Beal preached two sermons, and we had the supper. It was the first time I ever sat with the people of God in communion. I have not been able to go to the meeting since. It has been a hard winter, with much stormy weather, and deep snows, and none of the brethren have got to see me. It has been a long, lonesome winter. As soon as it is fitting I shall try to go down to the meeting. I have gone through, in thought, some of my past troubles, as well as enjoyments, this winter. I could not, should I try, tell you about it all, still my hope is the same, and I am satisfied and rejoice with and in a finished salvation. My trust is in that God who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can hinder. He does all things well. Yet why am I so unmindful of his mercies, past and present, to unworthy me? How much he has done for me, in bringing me up out of that horrible pit of miry clay, as well as blessing me in many other ways, both temporally and spiritually. I who am worthy of nothing, still look and long for the blessings and privileges of mingling with those whom I love for the truth's sake. I cannot feel to murmur when I remember how greatly I have been blessed in that way, yet I feel alone and lonesome at times, now that these privileges are withholden from me for a season, but, if the Lord will, I hope in a year or two to live nearer to these things. As far as I know the brethren in Whitefield are about as usual. I have not been well, but hope as warm weather comes I

shall feel better. I must close. I hope that you will write me again.

I remain your sister in Christ,
MARTHA E. GLIDDEN.

PLETA, Ala., August 28, 1898.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—For some time I have desired to write a short article for your priceless paper. Being deprived of the privilege of meeting the brethren and sisters, I could think of nothing I wanted and needed, like I did the SIGNS. I sent for it, and it came. Words would fail to express the value of it. I was a subscriber in my youth; in fact I have been a reader of it all my life, since I learned to read. My father took it. I do not know a time that I did not feel myself a sinner, but now I feel that the mountain of sin is insurmountable. Brother B. F. Coulter has expressed my feelings so much better than I could. I will try to leave self, and look forward to brighter prospects. I have had a double portion of sorrow of late. The dark clouds, and heavy rainfalls, that are blighting our bright prospects, temporarily, is typical of our spiritual prospects. We have no pastoral supply at our church, Mt. Pleasant, situated at Sprague Junction, Ala. The enemy is rejoicing, they say the old ship is sinking. Alas! I feel that it is too true. If God does not have mercy, and send one of his ministers, there can be no salvation for her. If I propose to ask a preacher to come, I am met with, "It will cost so much." O, is there not one that will come for the sake of Christ? I have prayed that the Lord would send a laborer in his vineyard, here. I want to do all I can to circulate the SIGNS. I have a promise of several subscribers. I have been at work for your paper. I think it the best we have.

Pray for

L. E. SELLERS.

MILL CREEK, Ind. Ter., April 1, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to ask you, or any one who may read this scribble, Why, after God has been pleased to manifest himself to one in the pardon of their sins, and impress them with a call to the work of the ministry, so many doubts and fears arise? If ever I had an evidence that the Lord was gracious to me, in the pardon of my sins, it was in 1875. If I was ever called or impressed to engage in the ministry of the word, or to declare the goodness of God to the dear saints, it was right in connection with my faint hope. I moved from place to place, and fought this impression for a little over seven years, but at last I had to yield, which was in the year eighty-two, and in eighty-four I was ordained, and ever since then I have been trying to preach, and to serve churches. As I grow older the heavier the cross, and the greater the burden. I seem to want to quit, and yet I cannot. Now I want to know whether there is any one like me? I fully indorse the SIGNS, and the late editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe on predestination. Do as you think best with this scribble.

Yours unworthily,

INQUIRER.

[We do not wish to hinder any one who may feel impressed to reply to the inquiry of our brother, but will say briefly we have not been able to find in the Scriptures any standard of the amount of trials and "Ups and downs," which shall fall to the lot of the servants of the Lord. In our observation some have had more trials than others, yet all have felt their unworthiness, and insufficiency for these things. We are told that an inspired apostle felt his weakness so that he said, "And who is sufficient for these things?"

Any one who feels his poverty and weakness, and the greatness of the work, will as it seems to us have many serious questionings concerning the matter. We are not surprised that our brother feels as he does. For ourself we would say, that we have never felt that we were worthy to speak at all in the name of the Lord. Who are we that we should be favored to convey a cup of cold water to a disciple? Yet we have rejoiced in the work, and have felt that we desired above all things to preach Christ, and him crucified. God forbid that any of us should ever preach ourselves.—C.]

[THAT those who are truly called of the Lord, to the work of the gospel ministry, are tempted with many doubts and fears, we have not the slightest doubt, but we have never been able to gain the evidence that the Lord has called one to this work, so much from impressions and exercises of their own mind, as from the evidence they may give to the church that they possessed the gift to expound the word of God, to the comfort and edification of the brethren. In the daily christian experience of every child of God there are so many exercises of the mind, and emotions, that it is impossible for them to discern whether they are of the Spirit or of the flesh, that he is constantly in doubt, as to whether he has any spiritual exercises or not. In fact he has never been able to decide this doubtful question to his own satisfaction, nor will he ever be able to gain the positive evidence he is so anxiously seeking, for he is not to be his own judge; his brethren are to judge for him, and they do not gain the evidence upon which their decision is based, so much from the mere exercises of the mind which the brother may relate, as they do by the effect they see the exercises have had upon the brother him-

self, and the spirit he manifests in relating them. If one should come before the church and relate a most marvelous experience, and at the same time it was clearly visible to the brethren, that he felt an exalted and proud spirit, because he had so eloquently related a brilliant experience, it would not gain the fellowship that a few stammering, broken sentences would, from one whose very fear and trembling proved their appreciation of their own unworthiness to be numbered among the people of God.

Now if this be true in regard to deciding upon the spirituality of the exercises of a private member, it does seem to us, that in rendering her judgment in so solemn a matter as the call of a brother to the work of the ministry, the church should be very cautious to not be too much influenced by the relation of the exercises of the brother's mind in regard to being called to the work. We know we are very ignorant in the things pertaining to the kingdom, but we have never been able to find the least authority for licensing or ordaining a brother simply because he has been so wrought upon to preach, that he cannot rest, either day nor night.

Every member of the church, from the least to the greatest, is possessed of a gift, and the church herself is the judge as to what is the gift of each of her members, but no member is the judge of his own gift. "A man's gift maketh room for him." The best evidence to us that a man is called to preach, is that he does preach. If the Lord bestows the gift upon one of his children to expound the Scriptures, that one cannot speak without doing it, and where he bestows this gift on the one, he also bestows the gift of the hearing ear, to hear the word with comfort and edification, and they will

not need to call upon the brother to know if his mind has been seriously burdened on the subject of preaching, to assist them in deciding upon his gift. In short, it is the impression upon the mind of the church, more than upon the mind of the brother, that is the evidence of his gift, or call to the work of the gospel ministry.

We have not the slightest idea who "Inquirer" is, therefore can have no personal reference to him, but we have seen so much confusion and distress among churches, arise from hastily ordaining brethren to the work of the gospel ministry, without due consideration of their qualifications for the work, that we have long felt that it was a subject that should be written upon, but as no one has done so, we make this feeble effort to call the attention of the brethren to the matter. We appreciate the delicacy the brethren in the ministry may feel in writing upon this subject, but as we are not in the ministry, and as there is no danger of our ever being, we are relieved of that embarrassment.

As to the brother who has had such serious impressions that the Lord has called him to "preach the word," if he is not able to give to the church the satisfactory evidence that he has the gift, he should feel perfectly willing to leave the responsibility with the church. But if instead of feeling to submit to her judgment, he feels that he has been unjustly dealt with, and to resent and defy her decision, he may rest assured his impressions are all of the flesh. We are alone responsible for the foregoing remarks, and if they are entirely wrong, we beg the forgiveness and forbearance of our brethren, but if they shall be of any profit, we know that the thanksgiving is unto the Lord.—B.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1898.

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ATONEMENT.

THE doctrine of the atonement lies at the very centre of the gospel. Without it there would be no gospel worth calling the name. It has been said that unless a man has a right view of the atonement, he cannot be right in his view of any other principle of the truth; and it is sure that he who is right in his view of the atonement, cannot be far wrong in anything else that pertains to the gospel. As is our view of the atonement, so will be our view of the justice of God, of the righteousness of his law, of the condition of man in the sight of the law of God since the fall, of the position of those who are redeemed, and who have come to believe in Jesus, and of the doctrine of final salvation. With regard to some other things, one may not see clearly, and yet their faith in the Lord as their Savior may not be greatly affected; but with regard to the atonement this cannot be true.

There have been two general views of the atonement of the Lord, held among those who profess to believe in him. These views have been opposite, and the fact that what has been stated above is true, is at once apparent, when we con-

sider that those who have differed with regard to the doctrine of the atonement, have also been equally far apart with regard to nearly every other principle of the truth. Those who have believed in a general indefinite atonement, which was not of itself effectual in saving any one, have also not believed in the total depravity and just condemnation of man, through the fall of our first father Adam; they have not believed in the predestination of God, and in personal election, and in effectual calling, and in the final perseverance of the saints, as it is commonly called, while they have believed that in the matter of salvation, the final choice has been left to man himself, so that all that Christ has done results in no good, unless the man himself applies the remedy. Now all this is perfectly consistent with the theory of the atonement referred to above.

On the other hand, those who have believed in a particular and definite atonement, have also believed in the doctrine of predestination, election, total depravity, the just condemnation of all men before God, in effectual calling, in the final perseverance of the saints, and they have not believed that the final choice is in man, but that the whole choice is of God, who must not only provide the atonement, but must also confer its benefits upon all who receive it, by his own holy Spirit. All this is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of a special, definite and effectual atonement. It would be impossible for one who believed that Christ only died to emphasize the anger of God against sin, and not for individuals of the race of man, to hold to the doctrine of predestination and election, of effectual calling by grace, and of final perseverance, and in the doctrine of the total depravity of the race of man. For

each one of these principles are in direct opposition to the theory alluded to. On the contrary, it would be impossible for one who holds to the doctrine of a personal, limited atonement, not to believe these other principles of truth, seeing that they are in full harmony with it, and grow out of it, as necessary deductions from it. Now, seeing that so much is involved, it certainly becomes vastly important that we know what the Bible doctrine of the atonement is. We feel that though we can at this time present but a small portion of their testimony, yet if we may make a few suggestions bearing upon this matter, it will not be entirely profitless. It seems to us that both the glory of God, and the comfort and hope of his people, are involved in the right or wrong understanding which we may hold with regard to this matter. The glory of God is involved, because he sent his Son into the world, that he should die for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; and as this is the special work upon which our Lord came, the glory of God must be involved in its success or failure. If it should fail in any way, the wisdom and power of God would be at once impeached; but if it be not a failure, then his wisdom and power is magnified. It is for the comfort of the people of God, for if the atonement be indefinite and general, and has accomplished nothing definite for any poor sinner, then no one can rest in security, and hope must often die.

Leaving out the special portions of the Scripture, which distinctly teach that the atonement was for a special people, and was effectual for their redemption, there could be no such thing as an indefinite atonement. That which might be called by that name, would not really be an

atonement. It might be an attempt at an atonement, but the name atonement would not belong to it. Atonement simply means bringing together that which has been put asunder, or which has been asunder. It signifies an accomplished agreement. The word itself has that meaning. It is therefore manifest that any system of doctrine which does not present man as being completely reconciled to God, does not really contain an atonement. Paul speaks of his brethren who believed, as having received through Christ, the atonement. If the death of Christ, which is the atonement of his people, did not fully bring us to God, in the sense of justification, then it is not a real atonement. The word itself divided up presents this, at-one-ment. In addition to this, the Scriptures themselves say that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son. We are reconciled. Nothing now stands in the way between us and God, in any legal sense. By the atonement all that was between us and God is put away. If it be put away, then we are one with God. If anything remains between us and God, then the atonement has not been accomplished. Our sins then are not atoned for. We are not redeemed unto God.

On the other hand, if the work of Christ upon the cross was for a special purpose, and a special people, then the sins of that people were put away, and that people are brought near to God, and are justified in his sight from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, or for that matter, by any other law. This view of the atonement presents sure and solid ground for the poor sinner to stand upon. It seals his eternal destiny, and seals it upon the side of salvation. This view of the atonement declares that Christ died for persons,

and not for sin in the abstract. There never was a greater absurdity than the theory that Christ made an atonement for sin in the abstract. Such a thing was never heard of in heaven nor earth, outside of Arminian theology. If there be an atonement at all, it must have been for persons. To this all the testimony of the word agrees. The doctrine of the atonement, as presented in the types, was all personal. The sacrifice was, all the time, for a people distinguished from all other people. Individual offerings were for the person who offered them. National offerings were for the people of that nation, and for all of them. These offerings, under the type were all effectual. The state of mind of the people did not effect the completion of the full purpose of the offering. No Israelite was told that the benefit to him of the offering depended upon whether he applied it to himself or not. The offering was made, and it was effectual to the accomplishment of its purposes, whatever his state of mind might be. The offerings were not for the mass of the sins of Israel without regard to the persons of Israel. The people were always contemplated. Surely this is too plain to all who read the Bible, to need further statement. The ram caught in the thicket was for the release of Isaac personally. Every sacrifice was personal. Of what value are the types as teachers of the truth, unless the antitype is also after the same pattern? The types then teach that the atonement of Christ was personal.

The atonement to be an atonement at all, must have been effectual. It must have accomplished the salvation of the people of God from their sins. If not, then the types do not tell the truth. All typical sacrifices, when made according to the law of God, were effectual; they

accomplished the deliverance of the person or persons, for whom they were intended. Isaac was delivered. All who belonged to national Israel, at the time of the great yearly sacrifices, were delivered from all their ceremonial uncleanness, and when each individual brought his sin offering, or trespass offering, and it was accepted, he went forth cleansed from all his sins or trespasses. This is clear testimony to the efficacy of the atonement of Christ. What great reason has a poor, convicted sinner, to rejoice at this clear and definite testimony of the types. Any other view of the atonement than that it was effectual, that is, that all for whom the atonement was made, do fully receive the benefit of it, destroys the testimony of the types, and makes them valueless as a part of the testimony of inspiration. The plain testimony of the Scripture also declares all that these types present. Read the whole of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. It would swell the length of this editorial too much to quote it. To this the testimony of the angel to Mary agreed, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Here both the effectual nature of his work, and the doctrine of its being for a special people, are fully declared. They shall be saved, and it is his people who shall be saved. A definite people, and a certain salvation. These two things are certainly in this short text. Every portion of the New Testament which treats of the atonement at all, declares the same thing. The atonement is for a specified people, and that people are the sure recipients of the salvation. He gave himself, "The just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." In this language of Peter, again we have the whole truth summed up. He gave himself for the unjust, and the object

was, that these unjust ones should be made just, and thus brought to God. The one thing which separated between them and God, was sin, their sin. There must then be a putting away of sin. For this end he came in the flesh. The apostle says, that he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He did not put away his sin, for he had no sin, and no guile was found in his mouth, he was holy, harmless and undefiled, and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. But he put away our sin, by his great sacrifice. These Scriptures present the substance of all that is testified to in the word.

Another truth follows from all that has been said, viz: man could not atone for his own sins. Neither by suffering, nor by righteous living, could he satisfy divine justice. The righteous living of the future could not atone for the sins of the past. This surely needs no argument. If pain, or loss, or death, be considered, neither was it possible that they should avail. Any view of the atonement that would give man any place in his own redemption, save that of a recipient, is necessarily unscriptural. Emphatically, Christ died for, or instead of, us. He gave himself for, or instead of, the unjust. In none of the types did the recipient of the atonement have any part in the work of the atonement, nor in the offering of it. The life of the beast or bird was taken, and not his forfeited life, and the priest, and not the sinner, offered the blood. Christ's blood, and not our blood, avails. Christ's work, and not our work, is meritorious. Christ's intercession, and not ours, avails for us. Our only part in the whole matter, is to receive. We do not insist upon the use of any particular word, to express the fact that Christ died for us, and not we for

ourselves, but the fact itself we do insist upon. We have never seen the objection to the words vicarious, or substitutionary, which has appeared to some, except that neither word is used in the Scriptures, and neither word does fully express the truth, but these objections would lie against any other words which might be used, which do not occur in the Scriptures. Still we do not care to insist upon the use of either word. The truth is amply expressed in the types when we see beasts and birds take the place of ceremonially unclean and guilty men, and when we read such Scriptures as we have just quoted. There is not one of those who have hope in the Savior now, who do not feel to praise God for the gift of his Son, who died that we might live. There is not one who in the hour of his first faith in Christ did not rejoice that a ransom had been found, that he might be delivered from going down into the pit. Jesus atoned for our sins. We did not assist in this work; we did not atone for our own sins, either in whole or in part. This is all we insist upon with regard to this matter. We most certainly shall have no quarrel with any who believe this truth, even though we might not consider that the best words had been used to express the truth. No one has a right to make a brother an offender for a word, when he receives the truth gladly, and rejoices in it. The words vicarious, and substitutionary, may not be wise words to use, yet we do not feel to especially object to them if it be understood that they have limitations, and do not express the whole truth. Neither would we quarrel with those who may not care to use these words, so that they believe the great truth, that in Jesus alone is salvation, and not in our own work or suffering. It is sure that no one

who had felt his sins forgiven, ever came before God with the thought in his heart that he had helped atone for his sins. If any one claims such a thing, he certainly cannot sing, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be blessing, and honor, and power, and glory, forever and ever. Only those who rest in the atonement of the Lord alone, can ascribe salvation to the Lord alone. It has long seemed to us, that the song of redemption which the Lord places in the hearts and mouths of his little children, when they first believe, comes as near the testimony of the truth, as we ever attain to in this world. This is the simple song of Moses, the servant of God, and the Lamb. Afterwards, when the time of temptation has come, the language may not always be clear, but now in the first love, there is clearness. So Paul said to his brethren at Galatia, when he wrote them concerning their departure from the simplicity of the gospel, "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" In other words, he would have them recall their first experience. Let us often do this for ourselves. It will preserve us from much speculation, and from many hurtful errors. In our first experience it is sure that we sang praise to Jesus alone, for his great work in our redemption through the atonement.

C.

TO OUR AGENTS.

WE are daily in receipt of a number of answers to our appeal to paid up subscribers, to assist us in collecting from delinquents, offering to accept agencies for us, and we will forward them the accounts to collect for us, as fast as we can make them out; but as we have to go over nearly ten thousand names to collect

and classify the delinquents for each agent, we shall not be able to supply the statements to all for some time. We shall press the work as rapidly as possible, and hope none will think us tardy or careless, if they do not receive the accounts just at present.

LIBERAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

NOTWITHSTANDING our remarks appended to brother B. F. Butler's letter, on page 552, current volume, we have received from the brethren and friends of the SIGNS, a number of very liberal contributions to assist in liquidating the debt against the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

It is with considerable apprehension that we receive these magnanimous donations to the paper, lest some may say that we are actuated by that motive which is the "root of all evil." But if we are competent to judge in this matter, this is not the incentive by which we are governed. It is very embarrassing to decide what to do. We feel that for us to absolutely refuse the liberality of the patrons of the SIGNS would seem very ungrateful on our part, and appear as though we had not a proper appreciation of the sacrifices made by the lovers of the SIGNS, in its behalf. To consider these contributions as made to us personally would so overwhelm us with a sense of our own unworthiness of such kindness, that we could but feel that we were a deception, and a fraud, while on the other hand, to receive them as sent to the SIGNS, proves that the publication is so highly esteemed for the truth's sake, that the feeling of the responsibility of our position is so greatly increased that we tremble with fear lest we shall betray the trust. We know that unless the Lord is our helper, we shall entirely fail,

and trusting alone in the Lord to sustain us in conducting the publication of the paper, to the glory and honor of his name, and to the comfort of the saints, we will say, if the brethren and friends of the SIGNS, after what we have written, still feel that they wish to assist in discharging the debt against the SIGNS, we shall be most thankful for their liberality, and in this issue we publish a list of names and amounts thus far received, and should any further amounts be received, they will be acknowledged in subsequent numbers.

Now, brethren and friends, please do not think we are indifferent, or lacking in appreciation of your great liberality, for we are humbled by such a deep sense of your goodness and love, that we know not how to express our feelings, and therefore will not attempt to say anything more than we sincerely thank you.
B.

ANSWERING CORRESPONDENTS.

DURING the last month our health has been so poor that we have been confined to the house a large portion of the time, and to the bed for about a week. In consequence of this illness we have got so far behind with our work in the office, that we are obliged to devote every hour we can to office work, and this has obliged us to neglect answering many precious, personal letters. We make this explanation, and beg our brethren and friends, whose letters have not been answered, to bear with us, as it is not through indifference that their letters remain unanswered. We have always been painfully aware of our inability to satisfactorily express ourself in writing, and often feel that we would be more favorably considered by our brethren and friends if we did not write them at all.

B.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

HEBREWS I. 3.

"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."

Without professing to have any extraordinary light on this very sublime and expressive text, we will, in compliance with the desire of a brother, offer a few reflections on the subject.

In the preceding verses of this chapter, the inspired writer calls the attention of the "holy brethren" addressed, to the inspiration of God, by which the Scriptures of both the Testaments have been presented. God spake to our fathers by the prophets, and that same God has spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and by whom also he made the worlds. Peter informs us that the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets testifying, is the Spirit by which Christ himself spake, or by which he reveals eternal things to his children. Of him it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek." That Spirit, in his anointing which was on him as the Head, without measure in all its boundless and eternal fullness and infinity, is, in a measure, upon all the members of his mystical body; for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. As the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets, so it is also in the apostles; and, in their measure, in all the children of the living God; for a measure of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit with all. God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and God has spoken to us by, and in the person of his Son. As in his Sonship, which we understand to relate to

his Mediatorial character or identity, he is the only begotten Son of God, so he is by birthright the legitimate heir of all things, and the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. As he is the unspeakable gift of God to the church, with all his fullness, so the apostle says to the church, All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. By whom also he made the world; for "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

Who being the brightness of his Father's glory. All the glory of the invisible Godhead centers in him; there is not an attribute of eternal Deity, or a perfection of the eternal Father, that is not found in him. This also agrees with what God has revealed to his people in their experience, as stated by the great apostle to the Gentiles. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The same power which God displayed in creating the world, is required to shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Light makes manifest, and this light alone can manifest to us the knowledge of the glory of God; and all the knowledge of the glory of God that he has ever manifested to us, has been in the face of Jesus Christ. There is no other medium through which God's glory, or his eternal perfections, are or can be made known to us. This light which reveals it is life; for in him was life, and the life was the light of men. "And this is life eternal that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Hence, it is that in an unregenerated state none can see the

kingdom of God; all are in darkness, and under the power of darkness, until translated into this marvelous light. Such is the darkness of the natural mind, 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. All who are quickened by the Holy Spirit, are made to see the glory of God in Christ; but when God shines in the hearts of his children, they not only behold that God is glorious in Christ, but the brightness of the glory of God shines in the face of our adorable Redeemer. The brightness of his glory expresses to us the full and eternal radiance, which the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, and of which the heart of man has no adequate conception. This knowledge of his glory can never enter the human mind by the natural avenues which convey intelligence to the natural man. It is a pure revelation by the Spirit, and can never be learned as a science. But when this revelation is made, then all the perfections of the eternal Godhead beam forth with heavenly refulgence in the face of Jesus Christ. Not an attribute or perfection of the uncreated Godhead is known to us anywhere else, for as he is the Mediator between God and men, there is no other medium through which divine knowledge or spiritual communication is made to men. The holiness, truth, love, justice, immutability, power, omniscience and eternity of God, all shine resplendent in his face. Hence the prophetic description of his advent, by Isaiah, to the church, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." But here is not only the brightness of his Father's glory; but he is the express image of his person. An image is something perceptible, to the

children of men. Christ in his manifestation to the church is called the image of the invisible God, and in our text he is called the express image. No man hath seen the Father at any time; that is, as we understand, only as he is revealed or manifested in Christ. But he who hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he and the Father are one. Men are forbidden to make to themselves any image of the invisible God, for it is the exclusive prerogative of Christ to reveal him. Great indeed is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily; and the church is complete in him.

"And upholding all things by the word of his power." In the broadest sense of the terms, all things in heaven and in earth, whether they be principalities or powers, thrones or dominions, things visible or invisible, all were made by him, and for him, and by him they all consist. As without him there was not anything made that was made, so without him nothing is sustained, supported or upheld. As no power of men or angels was required to assist him in creating the worlds, so neither is their agency required to uphold the worlds that he has made. Our text assures us that they are upheld in the same manner in which they were made, namely, by the word of his power. He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Thus the word of his power was manifested in creation; and in upholding all things he speaks the word, and it stands fast. He commands, and it is done. Such exhibitions of the word of his power, and of the power of his word, were made by him when here in the flesh,

when he called Lazarus from the dead, raised up the widow's son, silenced the raging tempest, and even when on the cross, at the sound of his voice, the rocks were rent, the graves were opened, the dead were raised, and earthquakes literally rocked the world. That voice is still omnipotent. The dead hear it, and they that hear do live; his sheep hear his voice, and he gives to them eternal life. Saul of Tarsus, though breathing out slaughter against the saints, heard it, and felt its omnipotence. Its power is often felt and witnessed by his saints in speaking comfort and peace to them, and in causing their hearts to burn while he communes with them by the way. They are born again of an incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever. The word of his power may also indicate his supreme authority, having all power in heaven and in earth, to reign as well in providence as in grace. He is the King of kings, as well as the King of saints. All things are put under him, and he has power, in his Mediatorial supremacy, over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given unto him.

In full possession of all this power and might and majesty, he came down from heaven to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work. This work was to save his people from their sins; for this, he said, is the will of the Father, that of all he hath given me, I should lose nothing. In the execution of this work, the purging the sins of his people was involved. He came not to save them in their sins, but from their sins. Hence, he must needs purge them, and in doing this, his blood must be shed, for nothing short of his blood can purge our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. The inefficiency of all other blood to ac-

complish this work had been abundantly demonstrated. It was found to be impossible that the blood of bulls and goats, those victims which under the law and by divine authority had been shed continually upon the altars of Israel, could take away sin; therefore, of necessity, he must give himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Therefore, he did, through the eternal Spirit, offer himself without spot to God, and by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified. When he had done all this, when he had by himself purged our sins, for it could not be done by proxy, or by another, to him alone as the nearest of kin did the right of redemption belong, when by himself he had purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. The great work of redemption being accomplished, and the salvation of his people finished and complete, he has set down. Thus when the work of creation was accomplished, God rested from all the works that he had made; so, salvation being finished, Christ has set down. But his seat is on the right hand of Majesty. He has set down with his Father on his throne, showing that his mediatorial work is approved, ratified and effectual. As evidence that he is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins, the Holy Spirit is sent down from heaven, to abide forever with the saints. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.

We have thus expressed our views on the text proposed, as clearly as, in so small a space, we are capable of doing. Let those who read, carefully compare what we have written with the Scriptures

of truth, and if in their judgment we are not sustained by the standard of truth, let them not rail upon us; but in a kind and brotherly manner point out whatever of error they may detect.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., March 1, 1856.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Licking Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the church at Salt River, Anderson Co., Ky., Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1858, to the churches of which she is composed, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It is our custom to set forth in our annual Circular Letter, the principles of our faith.

We have been taught by our own weakness, that if we were dealt with according to our own merits, that long ago we would have been cut off from the land of the living, and our souls instead of resting in the sweet hope of a blissful immortality beyond the grave, would now be consigned to the regions of the lost, forever to suffer the vengeance of a powerful and just God. But as he has seen fit in his mercy to spare us, even though rebellious as we are, and to manifest to us the forgiveness of our sins through the sufferings and death of his Son Jesus Christ, and to make us to rejoice in his love, we know of no other subject that we need to consider together so much as charity toward the brotherhood of faith.

Through the power of the carnal nature we are often exalted in our own opinions, and sometimes concerning religious things, especially some point of doctrine that we have carried beyond the bounds of that which is written, and forgetting that God and his way of salvation are known only by revelation, we begin trying to establish others in our opinions, by carnal reasonings, and failing to do

so, are often offended because they cannot agree with us. Then if the point is urged, the other brother is led to meet the question by using carnal reasoning to defend his side. Thus begins a controversy, which generally grows by others taking sides with one or the other, neither of whom is right in his theory, or acting in the right spirit, and without the spirit of meekness or forbearance, and forgetting that they are enlisted in the cause of Prince Immanuel, who alone is judge of his household, and the ruler of his kingdom. They go on devouring each other, and as many more as may be persuaded to join in, and each boasting in the end, only in the number of followers he has secured. These things cause confusion and discord among the brotherhood, and the enemies of our faith look on with delight and amusement, and often rejoice in the evil results of such things. Brethren, these things ought not to be, but in charity, out of a pure heart, rebuke all things that tend to evil and discord. Ministers, remember that he who would be great in the kingdom of God, must be the servant of all, and not the master over God's heritage. Then in the admonition of Paul to Timothy, "Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace." "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. 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," knowing that God must give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. Let no man forget himself, and rebuke a brother for not holding to precisely the same opinions that he does, for what have any of us that we have not received? and if it is given us, why blame or upbraid others for not seeing as we

see? We need more of that charity, which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, but suffereth long, and is kind, seeketh not her own, and in the exercise of this charity, all the household of faith may live together in the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace; strifes, discords and divisions would be unknown, and everything done, would be done with an eye single to the honor and glory of God.

Brethren, let us pray that more of this charity may abound, that our lives may be so consecrated to the work and will of our Master, that men may see our good works, and glorify our Father in heaven.

SMITH HAWKINS, Moderator.

J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.

C. W. BOND, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTER.

Licking Association of Old School Baptists, convened with the church at Salt River, Anderson Co., Ky., Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1898, to the Associations in correspondence.

DEAR BRETHREN:—According to our appointment we are met together again, and we trust it is with a desire to worship him in Spirit and in truth. It is by his power and manifested love that his children are gathered together in any sense, and especially do we believe that without this almighty power his chosen in Christ Jesus could not be turned about from the things of the world, and gathered together in the kingdom set up by our Lord and Master. We trust we are grateful for this continued care over us, and for having been brought together again where we enjoy the fellowship of the brethren. Many of us, if not all, have been favored to hear and know the joyful sound that is clearly spoken by his serv-

ants with us, and in our hearts. We are glad when God sends chosen brethren unto us, to speak of that perfect way of salvation so blessedly revealed in the hearts of the little children, manifestly born of God. We have in this, our annual meeting, been blessed with the company of several ministers of the word who we believe preached the glad tidings to poor sinners. And we are made to rejoice with them, when Jesus is manifestly present, for then the loved absent ones, and those present with us, all the chosen of God, are by the eye of faith seen gathered in the presence of God, where as a perfect body they sit together in his banqueting-house, under the banner of love, and partake of the things that a loving Father provided for his children. May you, our brethren, enjoy these fat things, and realize that you, too, are still the objects of his care. Our meeting has been pleasant, and though many loved ones are absent, still when the doctrine drops as the rain, and his speech distills as the dew in our hearts, we are made to feel that God will soon call us where we shall ever be together with the Lord. May God keep us all humbly at his feet, manifestly wash away our sins, and give us the robe of righteousness the Savior wrought, is our prayer, for his name's sake.

SMITH HAWKINS, Mod.

J. T. McCOUN, Clerk.

C. W. BOND, Assistant Clerk.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

B. F. Butler, N. D., \$50; W. D. Thompson, Ky., \$50; Mattie S. Bowen, Ill., \$10; Mrs. W. T. Clark, Ill., \$8; Mrs. E. J. Hurst, Ark., \$6; J. F., N. J., \$5; Henry James, Minn., \$5; Eliza Newman, Ohio, \$5; Ann Ivey, Ga., \$5; David Kinnard, Cal., \$2.75; John G. Morgan, Mo., \$2; Frances Fuller, Ohio, \$.75.—Total, \$149.50.

CHURCH LETTER.

{ Written by brother James Hubbard, and published }
 { by special request of several friends. }

*The Whitefield Old School Baptist Church,
 to the churches composing the Maine Old
 School Baptist Association, sends greeting.*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Another year of our earthly pilgrimage has rolled away, and it becomes our duty and privilege to again inform you of our welfare. We are not aware that there has been any change in our belief and practice during the past year. We believe in the God of the Old and New Testaments, and in his dear Son Jesus Christ, who came on earth to seek and to save that which was lost, and who is the foundation of our hope. We can go back in our experience to a time when we were without God and without hope in the world. What did we do? Did we then set to work to perform some great and good work, that thus we might bring our Creator under obligations to rescue us from that horrible pit into which we had fallen? Nay, nay, we had already tried all that, but to no purpose. We had exhausted all of our own resources, and we were compelled to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

“Jesus sought me when a stranger,
 Wandering from the fold of God;
 He to save my soul from danger,
 Interposed his precious blood.”

He brought us up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, he placed our feet upon a rock, he put a new song in our mouth, even praise to his great and holy name. His is the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved. Had it not been the determinate counsel of our God, before the foundation of the world, that we should know and love the truth as it is in Jesus, we should never have known anything about it. By nature we were the children of wrath,

even as others. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord has laid upon him the iniquity of us all. Our finite minds cannot understand the wonderful goodness, mercy and love, of our adorable God, in raising poor, sinful, erring mortals to an inheritance 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. They are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ to all the incorruptible glories of our heavenly Father's kingdom.

With one or two exceptions, the church has held her appointed meetings throughout the year, and we have been made to feel many times that the Lord was in our midst, and we know that unless he is with us, it is in vain that we assemble ourselves together. The attendance has been as good as the circumstances of our number would admit. Peace and love have been abundantly manifest at all our meetings. Our beloved brother, Elder Z. M. Beal, has visited us from time to time as circumstances would permit, and has preached the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Elder Keene has also visited us, and we believe that his visit was profitable to us.

Done by order of the church.

SEPTEMBER, 1898.

[THIS church, our heart has always held in dear remembrance, both because of the personal love which we have born to all its members, and because at this church, thirty-six years ago, we first heard a gospel sermon preached. It was by the late Elder William Quint, who was for many years pastor at North Berwick, Me. It was upon the subject of the new birth.—C.]

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Silas H. Durand, at his residence in Southampton, Pa., Sept. 22d, 1898, Mr. Thomas L. Tomlinson, of Churchville, and Miss Maggie B. Fetter, of Southampton.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—February 2d, 1898, of consumption, **J. T. Lumpkins**, of Neva, Va.

On the third day of this month, our only dear little boy, **Johnie Angus**, was called away from this world of sorrow, aged one year, eleven months and five days. He was taken ill on Friday morning, July 15th. Since this bereavement our affections are more upon heavenly things, and we desire to have the reading of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, trusting we may find comfort and consolation to cheer us in our loneliness, while traveling through this vale of tears.

JOHN C. McALPINE.

STE ANNE DE PRESCOTT, Ont., August 27, 1898.

DIED—On Thursday morning, June 23d, 1898, sister **Martha Varnes**, aged 52 years, 11 months and 15 days. Sister Varnes fell from a wagon, on the second Sunday in June, from which she sustained injuries which rendered her almost entirely helpless, but the doctor thought she was getting along very well. Her death was very unexpected. I was present, and was talking to her. She appeared to be cheerful, and all of a sudden she spoke quite loudly, "O, I am so sick." I asked, Are you sick at the stomach? She said, "Yes, so sick, so sick," and closed her eyes, and I do not think it was over fifteen minutes till she was dead. Sister Varnes was a good neighbor, a consistent christian, a faithful wife, and a kind provider, kind to those that needed help. The church will miss her very much, as her seat was seldom vacant, but none will miss her so much as her sorrowing husband. She was married to brother Isaac Varnes about eighteen years ago. She was baptized about five or six years ago, by Elder A. B. Francis, into the fellowship of the Sidling Hill church. She leaves her husband, two children, an aged mother, one brother and three sisters, to mourn their loss, which is her eternal gain. I tried to talk on the occasion from the words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

Famah Peters was born in Franklin Co., Ohio, May 13th, 1809, and died August 17th, 1898, aged 89 years, 3 months and 4 days. Her maiden name was Famah Swisher, daughter of Deacon John Swisher, of Franklin Co., Ohio. She united in marriage to Absalom A. Peters, Sept. 14th, 1826. They lived a happy and devoted life to each other until January 24th, 1885, when the death angel called him to his everlasting home. They both were worthy and beloved members

of the Turkey Run Primitive Baptist Church, and died as they lived, in peace with God, and beloved by all who knew them. "Grandmother," as she was called by all, leaves to grieve her departure, nine children, seven daughters and two sons, seventy-four grandchildren, fifty-six great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild, also almost an innumerable number of relatives and friends. "Grandmother" lived a long, noble, generous and christian life. She comforted herself in her lonely hours in reading her Bible, and the SIGNS. It can be but a tribute of sincerest respect to say that her life, from its dawn, to its evening close, was full of deeds of love and charity. Since the death of her husband her home has principally been with her son, A. A. Peters, at her old home, and frequently visiting among her children. They were her comfort in her declining years, and they with children's love cared for her, that she might be spared to nobly end her useful life.

Her funeral was very largely attended, which was evidence of appreciation of her noble standing in the community, on the 19th, and the writer spoke words of gospel comfort to the large audience and sorrowing friends at the Turkey Run Baptist meeting-house, after which the remains were interred in the Reber Cemetery, to await the resurrection of the just, when the mortal tabernacle shall be resurrected immortal, and made like and in the image of the blest resurrection.

G. N. TUSING.

DIED—At the home of her mother, in Logan Co., Ky., **Mrs. Sarah Ann Wood**, July 19th, 1898. She was a daughter of the late George and Frances Ann Herndon, and was born June 2d, 1848. One daughter survives her. She suffered many years from disease of the spinal cord. She was a consistent Primitive Baptist for many years.

ALSO,

In the same neighborhood, on the same day, **Lawler Burnett**, son of Elder T. C. Herndon, of diphtheria. He was 2 years and 7 months old.

ALSO,

At her home in Logan Co., Ky., August 29th, 1898, my mother, **Mrs. Frances Ann Herndon**, in the 80th year of her age. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church in early womanhood, and adorned her profession by an "upright walk and a godly conversation," never failing to give all the glory of her salvation to the Lord. The writer was with her in her last sickness, and she seemed perfectly reconciled to death, saying she feared it no more than going to sleep. She leaves two sons and three daughters, who are all Primitive Baptists, one being a minister of the gospel, Elder T. C. Herndon. Thus death visited our homes three times in less than six weeks.

They cannot come to us, but we hope to go to them.

MRS. E. C. PHELPS.

HOPKINSVILLE, Ky.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Juniata Association will convene with Sidling Hill Church, Friday, Oct. 7th, 1898, holding over Sunday. All parties will be met at Hancock Station, on Baltimore & Ohio R. R., Thursday, Oct. 6th. Would request that all come on the first train arriving at Hancock, if possible, as the church is about fifteen miles from station. Any wishing to arrive later please write Elder Ahimaaz Mellott, Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa. We hope our brethren will come to see us, our ministering brethren especially. Though a long way off, and poor, we appreciate your presence, love and fellowship perhaps the more. Come and see if we do not.

E. V. WHITE.

THE Salisbury Primitive Baptist Association will be held this year with the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., commencing on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, (19th) and continue three days. The place of meeting is about two miles from the railroad, Hallwood being the station. We extend a cordial invitation to brethren, sisters and friends, to come and see us, ministering brethren in particular. We purpose to spare no pains in making the occasion one of comfort and satisfaction. We are few in number, but we hope that our hearts are in the matter.

All will get tickets for Hallwood, on the New York, Philadelphia and Norfolk Railroad. Will any of the ministering brethren, that contemplate coming, please drop me a few lines at Massey, Accomac Co., Va., as there seems to be quite an inquiry as to what may be expected. When you get tickets, inquire for the train that goes through to Cape Charles.

T. M. POULSON, Pastor.

MEETINGS.

THE Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, will be held, by divine permission, with the Mt. Zion church, Loudoun Co., Va., commencing Oct. 12th, and continuing three days.

Friends coming by railroad to the meeting, will take the cars on the Southern R. R. at Sixth St. station, Washington, D. C., at 8 o'clock Tuesday morning, for Haymarket, on Manassas Branch of Southern R. R., where they will be met and cared for.

We feel to assure a cordial welcome to all lovers of the truth who may favor us with their presence.

J. N. BADGER.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa, has appointed a yearly meeting to be held in their meeting-house, October 12th and 13th. We hope the brethren and friends will be given a will to come and worship with us. The meeting is to commence at 10 a. m. each day.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Church Clerk.

A TWO days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the First church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday, November 2d and 3d, 1898, to begin at 10:30 a. m. on Wednesday. Brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited, ministers especially. Trains will be met at Roxbury, on Tuesday before the meeting.

J. D. HUBBELL.

THE Old School Baptist church of Ingleside, N. Y., will hold a two days meeting on Friday and Saturday before the fifth Sunday in October (28th and 29th). A cordial invitation is extended to all that desire to meet with us.

Trains will be met at Atlanta, N. Y., on the D., L. & W. and Erie R. R., on Thursday previous.

By order of the church.

GEORGE WELD, Clerk.

THERE will be a yearly meeting at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., if the Lord will, commencing on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, (15th) at 2 p. m., to continue the two following days. All lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, are cordially invited to attend.

All who come by rail will come to Newark, Del., on either the B. & O. or P., W. & B. trains, on Saturday morning, and call at Mr. Jas. Hossinger's. They will take train leaving Newark Centre at 1:25 p. m., on the Pomeroy branch, for Yeatman, where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting.

A. B. FRANCIS, Pastor.

POETRY.

HELP US LORD.

SAVIOR of sinners, merciful and holy,
Made higher than the heavens, yet dwelling with the lowly,

In contrite hearts who tremble at thy word,
And whom thy love and greatness make afraid.

We come to thee, poor, needy, wretched, sinful,
Knowing thy bounteous hand holds all things needful,
And though thou oft has helped us heretofore,
O turn not now away, our needs are sore.

Satan, the world, the flesh, with all their powers,
Conspire to tempt these wandering hearts of ours,
Which are deceitful all things else above,
Desperately wicked, and void of love.

O, who can know the power of inbred sin,
Save those who feel its leprosy within?
Have pity, Lord, upon our mournful case,
And grant us rich supplies of thy free grace.

O visit us with thy salvation, Lord,
So shall we taste the sweets of joy restored;
Remember, with the favor thou dost bear,
The people of thine own peculiar care.

Although unworthy of the smallest crumb,
Hungry, and well nigh famished, Lord, we come,
And though we know e'en crumbs are undeserved,
Yet still we crave the bread to children served.

ABBIE G. CLARK.

MARCH, 1898.

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(ESTABLISHED 1832.)

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1898. NO. 21.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ROYALTON, Ohio, Sept. 8, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Of late I have thought somewhat of the words found in Deuteronomy viii. 2, “And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness.” Antecedently to this they were in a miraculous manner led out of the land of Egypt, affording them a deliverance never to be forgotten. Being a stiff-necked people, they were afterwards subjected to sore chastenings from time to time, as a man chasteneth his sons, to prove them, and do them good at their latter end. The above is paralleled in the life of the spiritual Jew. First, in his deliverance from the power of darkness, which none but God could effect, in which deliverance the fundamental principles of salvation are taught, as man does not and cannot teach. And should said Jew afterwards become puffed up with pride, or be led aside by giving heed to false teachers, he has a never failing directory within, as is shown when Paul appealed to the Galatian brethren, saying, “Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” And again, John said,

“Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. * * * And ye need not that any man teach you: but as that same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie,” &c. But I wished to speak of some things as they have appeared to me as I have traveled life’s journey. I am now nearing my three score years and ten. I can distinctly call to mind (and I shall never forget) some things presented to me sixty years ago, though in visions of the night. Nor shall I forget those of ten years later. These outlined all my after life, though I did not then understand them. But later in life, one day I was struck as with a lightning bolt, and made to know that I was a justly condemned sinner. Right here I cannot make myself understood, except by those who have the same experience. For about two years I carried this dreadful load, when it disappeared, but how or where it went I could never tell, though I have often tried to find it. How lovely did the saints appear in those days. How amiable were the tabernacles of the Lord in my sight. I viewed the saints then as being as pure and as sinless as the angels. I was millions of leagues behind them. I would have given

a universe of diamonds, had they been mine, to have been equal to the poorest of them. When importuned to go to the church, I could not think of it, because of the wide gulf between us. I knew myself, and they did not know me. And I never did offer myself to the church. But to set myself in a true light before them I thought was my duty, and accordingly in August, 1858, I ventured to tell them what a poor sinner I was, that I knew nothing as I ought to know it, and was not fit to be associated with God's people. I was then asked if I would leave my case with the church? I had to say yes, for I must not set up my judgment against theirs. I was unexpectedly received, and was baptized on the first Sunday in August, 1858. How little did I then know of myself, or in fact of anybody else. Foolishness bound up in the heart of a child. For some time after this I still viewed the saints as perfection itself, but I was far behind. I have never caught up with them, but I find by Scripture, by observation, by contact, that they do not all live in the air castles which I built for them. Every one of them is a compound being, like the Shulamite, made up of two armies. Hence the warfare within. The Spirit strives against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit. Happy would it be if the warfare was confined to each individual, and that when christians meet and converse, they each could always say, Of sinners I am the chief. But in studying our neighbors' anatomy, we are apt to forget our own, and wars and fightings result. Diotrephes loves to have the pre-eminence. How pleasing to the flesh to have some under our control, or to think we have. Such an one does not view himself as being less than the least of all saints, nor does he esteem others

better than himself. Such an one should remember that "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Within the past thirty years I have seen cases where members of the church have not communed for years, and upon investigation it was found that the trouble started from a very little misunderstanding. Upon its confession, forgiveness followed, and many tears were shed, and all have been rejoicing ever since. I have known churches to live in confusion for many years, which no doubt might all have been avoided had the rule of Christ been followed, and promptly applied. Favoritism, blood relationship, sometimes prolongs troubles. We are commanded to know no man after the flesh. A dear sister told me once she voted to exclude her husband, though she was as devoted a wife as I ever knew; but she told me that she acted from a sense of duty to her God. Such instances are rare. I once knew of a glaring heresy sustained by some members, not that they believed it, but because the person who did hold it was a relation. It is needless to say that the church did not prosper until exclusions took place. In our imperfect state we often fail to express our ideas perfectly, especially when we attempt to wade in deep waters, and often trouble follows. I will cite a case. About twenty years ago I was present at an ordination. The subject of eternal vital union was then much talked about, and an aged minister was present, who was adverse to the idea. Also an intelligent, worthy sister, who advocated the idea. The candidate was asked to define his views upon the union between Christ and his church. The definition which he gave suited all around; no more questions were asked upon that subject. The sister afterwards highly congratulated

lated the candidate upon so completely silencing the Elder named, when the truth was, both believed the same thing, when they understood each other.

The doctrine of predestination is much talked about of late. Who, either saint or sinner, does not believe in predestination as appertaining to all sane minds? No human enterprises could be carried on without predestination. Though God gives not an account of any of his matters, yet a predestinating mind is behind all his doings. But some would give an account of his matters, and by the use of philosophy they endeavor to prove that God, in whom is no darkness at all, is a fountain of darkness, as well as light, the author of sin as well as of good; that he compels men to sin; that sin is not the cause of any man's condemnation, but that predestination alone is concerned in it, and other positions analogous to these. It is strange that such positions can be taken, but it is only through philosophy and vain deceit, or carnal reasoning from certain plausible positions, that such ideas can be arrived at. Even some writers who repudiate such conclusions, leave the subject open to such inferences, which are seized upon as being witnesses in their favor. At present I know of but few who would openly take the above positions. I have witnessed many painful scenes of biting and devouring one another, and apparently consuming one another. When brethren fall out by the way, they often unchristianize one another, though they once walked together as dear brethren. The subject of the new birth is used by some in some places as a wedge to divide the children of God, and yet in the experience of all, there appears evidently a oneness of sentiment. To the teachings of the Spirit let us yield, and inquire of God for wisdom to

keep us in the straight and narrow way which leadeth unto life.

Yours in gospel bonds,

THOMAS COLE.

[WE highly commend to the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS, many things suggested by brother Cole. They are well worthy of our earnest and prayerful thought. It is still true that we are all yet in the flesh, and that the motions of sins still work in our members. We all therefore need to watch unto prayer, lest we enter into temptation. Those who are spiritual love to be warned and reproved by the word. We once heard a dear brother say, "I love to hear preaching which tells me my faults." He did not of course mean that he wanted the minister to say before his congregation, Brother B. is guilty of so and so, but he meant that he loved reproof and rebuke, when it was in the word presented. Those on the other hand who are not spiritual, will object to heart-searching preaching. They like the theory of the doctrine, but not the living word. We are sorry to learn through brother Cole's letter, that there are any who believe that God is the author of sin; that he compels men to sin, &c. We have often heard these things alleged against the doctrine of predestination, by those who hated and denied it, but we have never met one who believed the doctrine of predestination, who attached to it these conclusions. We are sorry to learn that any do.—ED.]

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Sept. 24, 1898.

MY DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—A few days ago I looked over some old letters of special interest, and now I have copied one from dear old Elder Thomas Threlkeld, written to me more than thirty-seven years ago, and the experience of

my daughter, written to me more than twenty-seven years ago, when I was on a visit to the churches in your country, with an extract from a letter she sent to me nine years later, when I was on a visit among the churches in the south, and they are herewith submitted to you for publication in the SIGNS, if approved. I trust that they would be comforting to many of your dear readers. They come to me now with a new and precious comfort, for the letter of my beloved brother Threlkeld (who was as a loving father to me in the early part of my ministry) shows how entirely our fathers relied alone upon the grace of God, in all their work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope; and the testimony of my daughter, not only in her first experience of salvation through Christ, but after nine years continued experience, though then a member of a denomination holding to conditional salvation, yet shows that grace alone was sufficient to save her. These testimonies come to me as the teaching of the Spirit of God, written in the heart, and they comfort me in faith and hope in Jesus and his grace.

The few who yet remain, who were favored to sit under the ministry of our beloved Elder Threlkeld, would all witness with me how sound and faithful, comforting and able, he was, and so fatherly and gentle. His letter will show the excellence of his christian character, and his entire and childlike trust in the Lord. He ever attributed all his untiring and devoted labors in his Master's loving service to the grace of God that was with him, and thus followed Paul, even as he also followed Christ. Now in the evening of my life, his name is as a sweet psalm to me, and his precious memory is affectionately cherished. With sadness I feel to say, "The fathers!

where are they?" "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" We trust that "God will not leave himself without witness."

Yours in Jesus and his love,

D. BARTLEY.

MATTOON, Ill., March 25, 1861.

MY DEAR BROTHER BARTLEY:—This morning I received your kind letter, and was glad to hear from you, and that you still remember me, but was sorry to hear of your embarrassment and discouragements. I know how to sympathize with you, for I have been in similar circumstances; but I beseech you not to be cast down, but remember that we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom, and we should endeavor to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. I hope the brethren will remember you in your discouragements, and help you to bear your burden. The Old School Baptists are sometimes remiss in holding up the hands of their ministers, and leave them to bear the burden alone, and they are liable to faint under their load. In all probability the Lord's witnesses, when they have finished their testimony, will perish by neglect. The church will neglect the minister, and he, through necessity, must neglect them, and thus a famine will come on them; and so, in their official capacity, they will perish. Satan has tried killing with the sword, and has found it an ineffectual method, and he may now be at his tricks, prejudicing the minds of the saints against helping the ministry, and glory when he has accomplished his design. You know antichrist, through his policy, is to cause craft to prosper, and I have thought that by the Missionary craft, in prejudicing the minds of the saints, he will cause them to neglect the ministry, that some

of them at least, will fail. Dear brethren, think on these things.

For the most of my time I am so dark, so cold and lifeless, and so much under the influence of the carnal mind, that I fear my visit will be of no benefit to you; but that matter I must leave with the Lord, as I have done for the last forty-two years. It is no wonder that my eyes should become dim, and my memory fail, but the Lord has been so kind and gracious to me for these forty-nine years, since I have put my trust in him, that I often say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name: who forgiveth all thy sins." And I feel desirous still to serve him. I think I know what Paul meant when he said, "To abide in the flesh is more needful for you." When I see the destitute situation of the brethren, I feel desirous to remain in this world of sin and sorrow, that I may serve them to the best of my ability. I am determined to spend the remnant of my days in the service of the saints, although I often fear I am not one myself.

"I am so vile, so prone to sin,
I fear I am not born again."

But when I see the love, the grace and goodness of God in Christ Jesus, towards poor sinners, I still have a desire to declare it to others, and sometimes I think I do love him, and if this is the case, all is well. I know I love the Old School Baptists, and if they are the children of God, then, according to the gospel rule, I am safe. And, "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." This is all my hope, and all my expectation, although sometimes I think he makes it not to grow. Once I thought to grow in grace was to feel better, wiser, and my confi-

dence increase, but how sadly I have been disappointed. But my confidence in myself diminishes; my goodness has passed away, and I know that in my fleshly nature there is no good, and my only dependence for salvation is in God's eternal, free favor in Christ, and if I get to heaven, I think I will sing free grace louder than the rest, for I am surely the greatest sinner.

The brethren are well. My wife is very feeble. My own health is good. Give my love to all the dear brethren, and, if you wish, you may read this letter to them. God bless you.

THOMAS THRELKELD.

BROCKVILLE, ILL., March 6, 1871.

DEAR FATHER:—I have not written to you since you have been gone, but it has been because I have had nothing of importance to write. Mother has written all the news so far, but I now have something to tell you that no person else can tell but myself. I feel and know that God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins. Yes, blessed be his holy name, he has taken my feet from the mire and the clay, and placed them upon the Rock of ages; he has put a new song in my mouth, even praise to him, the true and the living God.

I will try, in my weak manner, to tell you some of the Lord's dealings with me. I have had serious thoughts, at times, for a long time, but they would wear off in a short time. There was a protracted meeting held here by the New Lights, this past winter, and I think it was at that meeting that the Lord showed me my need of a Savior. Before this time, I think it was only the thoughts of hell that terrified me, but I then felt that I needed an interest in the blood of Christ. On Christmas, Elder Graves (a New Light

preacher) preached here. It did seem to me that I could hardly live. I tried to pray, but I felt myself so vile, that it seemed as if God would strike me dead, if I took his holy name between my polluted lips. I tried to drive these thoughts away, and at times it seemed as if I had succeeded, but they would return with redoubled force. I tried to keep it hid, but it had been noticed. I was ashamed for anybody to know that I cared for such things.

Two weeks ago yesterday the Methodists commenced a meeting here. I was told, by way of a joke, "that they were going to protract the meeting to catch me." I laughed, and resolved in my heart that I would defy them, and God. But I felt very restless and uneasy. I knew that I was a poor, miserable, wretched sinner, "having no hope, and without God in the world." The meeting progressed, and I still kept feeling worse. I would go out by myself to pray, and utter a few words, when my sinfulness, my vileness, my utter nothingness, would rise up before me, and it would seem as if God would surely kill me for daring to come before him.

On last Tuesday night I came home from church, feeling that if I did not do something for myself that I would be lost. I felt that I could do nothing, but thought I must try. I concluded that I would join the church, thinking that maybe God would bless me for it. I went to mother on Wednesday, and asked her if she was willing. She asked me how I felt. I told her as well as I could. She was not at all willing, but said she would not stand in my way; to do what I felt to be my duty. I went to meeting that night, resolved to join the church. An invitation was given for mourners. I went, thinking that perhaps that would

do some good. But it did not. I was afraid that I had done wrong in going, and resolved that I would go no more. There was no meeting on Thursday night, but on Friday night I went, fully determined to join the church, as the last thing I could do. After I went, my heart seemed as hard as a rock, until they began to sing the song beginning,

"There is a spot to me more dear
Than native vale or mountain."

I began to shake; I felt that I would surely sink. They called for mourners. I could not stay away. I hardly knew how I got there. I there tried to plead with God for mercy, but it did no good. At last it seemed to me as if I was sinking down to endless woe. I felt as if my breath was going, when, blessed be God, I beheld Jesus on the tree, and I was then and there shown that his blood was spilt for me. I was made to see that through him I might come to God, that my sins were washed away, that Jesus had made an ample atonement for me. For a minute or two I could not realize my great joy. I could hardly believe that God would be so good to such a poor, miserable outcast. I breathed to God a prayer, to give to me a little clearer evidence of my acceptance with him, when it seemed as if I could almost dip my hands in the blood of Jesus, and I knew that his blood was freely given for the remission of my sins. O, I cannot tell you anything about it.

It seems to me that I have only given you a hint of what I passed through. But, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." I know that he has brought me from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of God's dear children. "I know that I have passed from death unto life, because I love the brethren." And it has only

been his goodness and mercy that has done all for me.

Your daughter in hope of eternal life,
MARY.

My daughter wrote to me January 21st, 1880, nine years after her experience was written, in answer to my request to tell me the reason of her hope of eternal life, and said:

"Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed."

"If I am saved, it will be through grace, and grace alone. I have never done anything to merit God's favor, nor could I do anything that would merit salvation. Every day I realize that, were it not that Jesus died for sinners, I should be lost. But I desire a stronger faith."

"O! for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by many a foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe."

"Do you think that, because I am a New Light, that I expect to work my way to heaven?"

Many years ago Mary withdrew from the New Lights, and has never again united with any so-called church. But in the deep waters of tribulation, and in all the many earthly woes, which have gone over her soul, and so severely tried her faith in Jesus, it still abides as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. And now, though she is walking through the valley of the shadow of death, she fears no evil, for the Lord is with her, and she is hopeful, trustful and peaceful.

DAVID BARTLEY.

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind., Sept. 24, 1898.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Oct. 4, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—The inclosed letter from our dear brother, Elder L. H. Hardy, ought not (in my opinion) be

kept from the brethren. It was very precious to me. The subject is an important one, and we cannot hear too much about it. If in your judgment it would be profitable, please publish it, and oblige

Yours affectionately,

B. F. COULTER.

ROXBORO, N. C., Sept. 28, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER COULTER:—Since reading your letter to brother Varnes, I have had a great desire to write to you, but do not know why, unless you so beautifully expressed my own views when you spoke of Christ as a sacrifice, and not a substitute. How weak and insufficient is a substitute. He is never known at all until after the principal has been called to service. How sure would our condemnation be if no provision for our life was made prior to our actual existence. Satan would have held the title to the whole church, and redemption would have been an impossibility. I do not wish to believe in the doctrine of substitution, it is too short; as a bridge reaching neither shore, the traveler would be helpless to get on it. Christ is a real sacrifice. The law pointed him out, and our sins were laid on him, and he carried us and bare us all the days of old. His members suffered with the Head on the cross. We are the members of his body in particular. In the Song it is said, "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the Rock, * * * let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Away in the pierced hands and feet, and wounded side of Jesus, our sacrifice, (the clefts of the Rock) the church of God is hidden, and from thence she shines forth and speaks to the praise of him who gave himself for her, that he

might present her to his Father, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; holy and blameless before God in love. She has his word that she shall be separated from her sins as the east is separated from the west. This separation actually took place there upon the tree. When the clefts were opened, and the crimson tide flowed forth, all the sins of the church, both inherited and committed sins, sins of the past, and sins of the future, sins before our pardon comes, and sins after we are born again, all, all manner of sins, blasphemies and iniquities of every type against our Lord, were washed away in that fountain that was then open for sin and uncleanness. As that precious blood went down at the foot of the cross, and sank away in the earth, never to rise again, all the sins of all God's people sank down forever, and cannot rise again, because they are so deeply buried, so fully washed away in that precious blood that even God cannot remember them any more forever. But where is the bride, the members of his body? There they are upon the tree in the clefts of the Rock. Jesus, Head and body together, both at the same time are taken down from the cross, and by his loving friends, Joseph and Nicodemus, laid in the tomb. There in silent slumber, and perfect, quiet rest, he awaits the appointed time of his Father. We in our sins have compelled him to go with us into death, the one mile; he will not stop there, but will go with us into life, the twain.

On the morning of the third day the heavens are bowed, the angel of the Lord comes down and rolls back the stone, and sits upon it, (an emblem of victory) and the Lord comes forth from the dead. Both Head and body comes. We are the members of his body in particular. Thus

the whole church rises, quickened together with Christ. Thus it was the sepulchre he visited with the power of his resurrection, but the cross never. The body arose, but the blood is still there in its silent grave, and will never rise. Thus the separation is complete; the blood goes down into death, to remain there forever; the body enters into life, to remain there eternally. To get our sins to count against us, life and death must be reconciled and made to dwell together; the blood and body must again unite, and the sacrifice once offered for sin must be made of none effect. O, what a great reason the poor, tempest-tossed children of God have to rejoice. This is the only thing that is sure unto us. All things of time are subject to destruction and decay, but this salvation in Jesus Christ is sure. The heavens and the earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. Again, the word of the Lord endureth forever. God may and does send on us his sore judgments, but he does not take away his blessed word. He only afflicts us thus to humble us, and show to us that without him we are nothing. I feel that I have had some sore trials of this kind of late, failures in my undertakings to support myself and family, and only last night we were visited by a fire, in which we lost more than a hundred dollars worth of property. I think that I have never in my life felt more humbled before the Lord than I do to-day, and I feel that any blessing he gives me is a mercy far too rich and great for me to receive, and any punishment he sees fit to inflict on me is but the Righteous smiting me. How strange these afflictions of our God come; we must know he has a wise purpose in them, and yet we know of no real reason why we should have been thus

punished. Last night I lay on my bed, and sleep was refused me for nearly the whole night; no tears could burst forth, but I was as a fountain dried up, or a cistern with no water, and the worst of all I had a heart that was entirely shut out from prayer, and even now all those fountains are closed to me, and I feel so lonely. The Lord has done wisely I know. I do desire to give him praise in my losses, as well as in my increase, for I know not which is for my good, but I am sure both are sent by the same merciful and unerring hand. One thing in which I rejoice, let me go down never so low, let poverty stare me in the face, let darkness overshadow me, and the depths threaten to swallow me up, yet there is still lingering in my breast a little hope that Jesus is mine, and I am his; that when he died upon the tree, his blood was spilt for me.

Adam's love carried him down with her who, though she had sinned, was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh; but he had not the power, when he had gone down, to bring up either himself or his bride; therefore he must of necessity remain there with her. Christ's love to his bride carried him down with her, and in the midst of life he had power to die, and in the midst of death he had power to live, and to give her life in himself, so that as is his life, so is her life for evermore. How blessed is our Head, and me in him.

Dear brother, I did not think to say so much, but in my poor, desolate feeling I could not quit, and so what does not edify you will please excuse. Remember my love to your family.

Your brother in distress,

L. H. HARDY.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., August 25, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—How could I abstain from writing to you, when you make the suggestion in such an unanswerable way? Besides as my desires are that way inclined it does not need much stimulation. Sometimes we are apt to think that those who are manifestly richly blessed of the Lord, do not need any encouragement in expressions of fellowship and love from their brethren. None but the possessor of the heart knows anything about the bitterness, and achings, and sorrow of that heart. Neither can we know, at all times, of the weariness of the servants of the Lord who are constantly employed in their Master's service. I am just now reminded of Moses, who stood upon the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand, while Joshua and his followers fought with Amalek. "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." I am often made to feel sorry and ashamed, when I realize how remiss I have been so many, many times in neglecting the sweet privilege of holding up my brother's hands, when I discover how weary he has become in his faithfulness. Yet I find that I am ever blind to my brother's necessities so long as I do not feel to be in need myself. But when my own arms drop because they are heavy, then do I realize how much we depend upon one another. I firmly believe, brother Chick, that the

messenger of mercy came direct from the source and fountain of divine mercy, and put it in your heart to pen the very words which you sent to me. They were full of marrow and fatness to me, and were richly blessed to my comfort and consolation in the Lord, and I hope will prove conducive to my future faithfulness and watchfulness. And could I speak with you, I would ask you, If the same word did not administer comfort to you? I am not vain enough (though I am filled with vanity) to think that I can hold up your weary hands, in anything that I may write to you, but the Lord can bless you, and strengthen you, not only in what he has already administered unto you in the desires of your heart, but also in the knowledge (not that I have conveyed it to you in words) of the sweet fellowship which is in my heart for you, obtained by you out of the depths of a rich and gracious experience, where only is the fellowship of the saints brought into manifestation. When you said in your letter that you needed cheering up, and that you thought a word of fellowship from me would cheer you up as quickly as anything, you came right down where I am, and to the very same needs, and the very same longings. We breathe the same atmosphere, we travel hand in hand, the same pathway. Together we go with bowed hearts, and halting footsteps, which tells us that we are Jacob. We find here no continuing city. We look beyond this vale of tears for the things that satisfy. The faith by which we are guided points out a city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God. But the way is long; our feet and hands become weary; the enemies are legion; our weakness and frailty become more and more apparent. It looks sometimes as though the struggle would end in our utter destruction.

My dear brother, what a sweet and lasting fellowship does all this tribulation work in us for one another. Then do our hearts sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, in which we can truly say, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation," &c. Oft-times our ministering brethren visit us, and when the meeting is over, my mouth seems sealed, and although I desire to express to him the truth that a precious crumb has been given me, yet he goes away, perhaps, without a word from any one to encourage him in the hope that he has that day delivered a message from the Lord. Have we held up his heavy hands? No indeed. None but the lowly followers of the Lamb of God can know anything about the heartaches and groanings of a sinner, conscious of his sins. I mostly feel that none of my brethren can feel so much the need of grace and mercy, and the tender forbearance of our heavenly Father, as I do; for none go so far astray, nor neglect our great salvation, as do I. I often am as you expressed yourself in your letter to be. You say, "Sometimes I am reduced to just this one thought, as being all that I can think about, or that can meet my need, viz: salvation is of the Lord."

Your brother,

B. F. COULTER.

ALLEN TOWN, Pa., Sept., 1898.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—As you so kindly invited me to write whenever I felt like it, I will embrace the present opportunity to say a few words to the readers of the SIGNS, but unless the Lord guides my pen, I know that I can say nothing that will be of interest to the Lord's people. It is a great privilege to be allowed any place in the SIGNS for what I may write. Its pages are sacred because the

Lord's servant and children write there, and anything belonging to him is sacred. I find so much comfort and enjoyment in perusing its pages, and feel so thankful that I have a heart to appreciate the teachings it sets forth, that I feel constrained to cast in my mite however poor it is. The poor widow's mite was commended of the Lord, because he gave her the heart to cast into the treasury all that she had, and so I hope it is with me, that he has given me the heart to cast in my mite, but yet I tremble, dear friends. The SIGNS contains all the preaching that I receive, and they come to me like cold water in a desert land. I find in its columns, the heavenly manna for which my soul longs, and which is sweet to my taste. Since I have been led to find this precious paper, I have also found that all its contributors confess that they are poor sinners, and so are fellow-travelers of mine. It is such a comfort to find that there are other sinners, and that I am not the only one. As a rule, members of other denominations do not come under the cognomen of sinner, but are so self-righteous that they do not see the depravity of their own hearts. I was once such an one, my dear friends, but now feel that I am the vilest sinner upon the face of the earth. To me the most wonderful things in the Bible, are the passages of the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," and the words of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." No one can be able to effectually pray the prayer of the publican, unless God gives them a glimpse of their own hearts. I have often, in past years, mumbled that prayer over, before I knew what a sinner was. Then what mockery it is to invite others to come to Christ when they do not know the plague of their own heart. I have often, before I found the better

way, been reprov'd because I did not bring others to Christ. I was told that I would have no stars in my crown if I brought no one to the Savior. That troubled me, because I wanted some stars in my crown also. I thought that I must do some work if I was to have any; so I looked about me to see who were fit subjects for me to tackle. I, however, felt so powerless and unworthy that it was a tremendous undertaking, but I thought if I were to have any stars I must do it. So I spoke to two of my friends about their condition, and was silenced by the reply that they would seek the Lord when they got ready. That was the beginning and the end of my trying to save souls.

How wonderful are the words of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Only a few words, but so much is contained in them. Whoever can say this truly must know that they are redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, and so can look up and call God, their Father, and Jesus, Savior, and the Holy Spirit, Comforter. O, dear fellow-pilgrims, those of you who know that your Redeemer lives, how blest you are. It seems to me that I could ask for nothing more than to know this. I did boldly say this once in a Methodist protracted meeting. The minister gave the invitation for those who loved Jesus to rise up and speak a word for him. He put it in such a way that I could not sit still. I do not recall his words now, but I was led to think from what he said that I would be denying Christ if I sat still. I rose up not knowing what to say, and so repeated those words of Job. O, how blind and presumptuous I was. To-day I feel no better prepared to say those words than I was then. I know that I deserve no favor at his hands, but with that knowledge, and my sins staring me in the face,

I still desire, with strong desire, to know that my Redeemer lives. O, if I could only meet some poor old fellow-sinner, I think it would comfort me to just hold their hand for a little while. There seems to be no sinners where I live, and so I feel very lonely as I journey, if I really am journeying, to the better land. I have not heard a word about Zion since I attended the Association at Hopewell, except what I read in the precious SIGNS. The Lord knows what is good for me, and so I leave it all in his hands, and hope that my sentiments are with the poet, as he sings,

"He leadeth me, O, blessed thought,
O words with heavenly comfort fraught;
Where'er I go, where'er I be,
Still 'tis his hand that leadeth me.

Sometimes mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's flowers bloom;
By waters still or troubled sea,
Still 'tis his hand that leadeth me."

Affectionately yours,

MARY E. FISHER.

PASADENA, Cal., Jan. 18, 1897.

ELDER F. W. KEENE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I would like to write something about God's goodness and mercy to me, but I feel myself to be so destitute in spiritual things. All I can say is, I am poor and needy, in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; to will indeed is present, but how to perform that which is good I find not. The longer I live, the more I see the depravity of my old nature. If it were not for the Lord's grace and mercy, I would have no hope, but because his mercy faileth not, we are not consumed. Salvation is all of God's grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. In this salvation is all my hope and trust. There is plenty of worldly religion here. This place has about ten thousand inhabitants, and there

are eighteen or twenty places of worship. I went to hear the New School Baptist preacher yesterday; he said a great deal about what man could do for Christ, and how much it depended on the churches, so called, to advance and build up Christ's kingdom, and win souls to Christ. But he said nothing about what Christ had done for his church and people. Such preaching is of no comfort to the Lord's poor people. It is Christ, and him crucified, that can comfort them. How good and comforting it is that the Scriptures assure us how much the Lord has done for us poor, unworthy creatures. He has promised to keep us in his love, and save us from all our sins, and bring us off more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Your brother, in christian love to you and sister Keene, and all your children,

B. F. FLAGG.

WATSON, Illinois, Sept., 1898.

DEAR BRETHERN EDITORS:—I am a stranger to you in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit. I have been a member of the Old Baptist church for over thirty years, and I have often thought I would write to you, but it seems that I am poor and feeble, and a poor old sinner, but I hope that I am saved by grace, and grace alone. I have just finished reading the editorial in reply to the letter that was written by brother Holt, and I have studied about it a great deal. I will soon be sixty years of age, and I live almost alone. I have sweet communion and fellowship with the word here alone. It is sufficient for me. For he said, by the apostle, that unto them that look for him, he shall appear the second time, without sin unto salvation. I hope that I am one of these. But I must wait until God's appointed time. Excuse my bothering you with my views.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,

JANE HENDERSON

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, in session with the Olive & Hurley Church, Ulster Co., N. Y., September 14th and 15th, 1898, to the several churches of which she is composed, sendeth christian love and fellowship.

BELoved BRETHREN :—The great Head of the church in his all-wise providence has blessed us with another privilege of meeting, and joining in songs of praise and adoration to him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Now, brethren, let us stop for a moment and look a little at the position that we were placed in by the transgression of our first parents. When the Lord said unto Adam, "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." For this cause our first parents were driven out of the garden of Eden, that land of purity, because of sin. From that dark and dreary day, we as their offsprings, have been wandering over the plains of earth, and in sin and corruption, where thorns and thistles have continued to grow, as evidence to us that we are sinners.

Dear brethren and sisters, while here below we have no abiding place, no city of refuge unto which we, by our natural powers, can flee from the awful consequences of sin. But, dear brethren and sisters, we hope, trust and believe, that you by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, have been brought into a knowledge of the awful depravity of your sinful nature, and have been enabled by grace to behold him of whom the apostle speaks, saying, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in

him."—2 Cor. v. 21. It is by faith that you have been enabled to behold him who of God is made unto you wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The apostle says, "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." "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Brethren, what shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who shall be against us? The people of God have nothing to fear, he has all power in heaven and in earth; he doeth the work. Jesus says, "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." It takes the same power to call a dead sinner from the grave of sin and condemnation in which he is enveloped, that it did to raise a dead Lazarus from the grave in which he lay. Jesus died for your sins, and arose for your justification. Brethren, 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."

J. D. HUBBELL, Mod.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

The Elders and messengers of the Lexington Association, in session with the church of Schoharie, September 21st and 22d, 1898, unto the elect lady and her children, sends greeting :

DEAR BRETHREN :—In this, our annual epistle of love and fellowship of this Association, we desire to call your attention to the second epistle of John 4, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." The apostle rejoiced with the elect lady, the churches, which expresses the love for each other in fellowship for the truth. The truth is that which binds the children of God together, keeps, holds, and preserves the church of Christ from error, and every false way. And have we not great reason to rejoice that while some of the branches of our Association have passed to their eternal abode, and others nearing that time, that the truth has preserved and kept the children together, and manifested to us that he has blessed us with all spiritual blessings according as he hath chosen us in Christ? And have we not great reason to continue in the same truth? Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life, and we trust it has been given us to believe and know the truth. And we can say with the apostle, "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." And now, dear children of grace, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught neither by word or our epistle.

JOHN CLARK, Mod.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

JOHN A. MORSE, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Maine Old School Baptist Association assembled with the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church, Sept. 9th, 10th and 11th, 1898, to the churches of which she is composed, and the Associations and meetings with which we correspond, Greeting :

BELOVED BRETHREN :—Another year has passed, and the time has arrived that we should address you our annual letter of love and fellowship. We feel at this time, brethren, to call your attention to the Lord's poor people, whom we believe he has reserved unto himself. Our blessed Savior said, Matthew v. 3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The Lord was pleased to speak these words in his sermon on the Mount, and they are the first of a number of blessings which he spake at that time, showing that if those that he was talking to at that time, were really the poor in Spirit, they were also blessed with all the blessings which he spake at that time, to the same people, viz: his disciples. He did not say that his disciples were the poor in spirit which he meant, but they that are poor in spirit are the ones that are blessed, showing that they cannot make themselves poor in spirit. But it is a blessing given them from above, for James tells us that "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."—James i. 17. And it is given his people to know that they are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, and everything good is from God. For Jesus said, There is none good but one, that is God. It is also given these people to know that they are poor in spirit, and if you are where they are you

will hear them lamenting their poverty and leanness, and they wonder how the Lord can have mercy on such poor, miserable sinners as they know themselves to be.

In fact these people bear in their body the marks of the Lord Jesus, (Galatians vi. 17,) and the Lord tells them that theirs is the kingdom of heaven, and that is just what they want. O, if they could see themselves cleansed from all sin, so as to be fit subjects of that kingdom, what joy it would give them, for they know that kingdom is not of this world. They are sick of this world, and the things of the world, for they love Jesus and his people, and they know that where the love of the world is, the love of the Father is not. Finally, brethren, these people are not of this world, for they are chosen out of the world, and Paul in writing to the Romans of these precious things, says, Romans viii. 31, 32, "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?" As they are too poor to keep themselves, they are "Kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

Finally, brethren, farewell: may this God, who never slumbers nor sleeps, keep you poor and humble for his name's sake.

Your messengers have come among us laden with the blessed gospel of the Son of God, and by hearing it we have been made to rejoice in Christ, having no confidence in the flesh. We desire a continuance of your correspondence. The time appointed for our next meeting is on Friday before the second Monday in September, 1899. (The place will be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES,)

when we desire to see your messengers again.

Z. M. BEAL, Mod.

J. H. LOWELL, Clerk.

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, assembled with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, to the Associations with whom she corresponds.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed since we last addressed you. The Lord reigneth. This is a rock of strength to Zion, and our comfort amidst all the changing scenes of life.

"Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown,
Hang on his firm decrees;
He sits on no precarious throne,
Nor borrows leave to be."

The manifold vicissitudes that are the portion of the called of God, might bring us at times to despair, but we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to believe that God who is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them who are afar off upon the sea, is our almighty God, and the salvation of us poor sinners. "Alleluia; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

The times that went over David, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries, (1 Chron. xxix. 30,) were only such as proceeded from the Lord. David amidst his sore troubles found hope in his God, and looking up to him could say: "But I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God. My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake."—Psalm xxxi. 14-16. All events, all the seasons, the day of prosperity and the day of adversity, sickness and health, poverty and wealth, joy and tribulation, that happeneth unto all, are such as the God of heaven hath ordained. Believing

this we can in sweet confidence sing, "All my times shall ever be, ordered by his wise decree." To those who love God, all will end well. "The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower." Whatsoever trying things the churches are being vexed with, no matter how proudly the powers of evil behave against the elect of God, God is above them. (Exod. xviii. 11.) The Lord reigneth! We are assured from the mouth of God that "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."

"Soon shall the cup of glory wash down earth's bitterest woes,

Soon shall the desert's briar, break into Eden's rose."

The glorious hope of the gospel bids us be of good cheer. Jesus has overcome. He is risen from the grave, and has ascended on high, and we shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us. May the God of our salvation grant us that abiding trust in himself that we in the confidence of faith may exclaim, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we 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."

We desire, dear brethren, a continuance of your correspondence, and hope to see your messengers with us at our next yearly conference, which we have appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, before the first Monday in September, 1899.

FRED. W. KEENE, Mod.

JOSEPH F. HALL, Clerk.

The Lexington Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Schoharie Church, situated at Schoharie, Schoharie Co., N. Y., September 21st and 22d, 1898, to the associations and churches with which we are in correspondence, sends christian love and salutation:

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—We feel to praise God for this privilege of again meeting with you, and receiving your messages of love and fellowship, which indeed have been sweet food to our hungry souls, yea, wine on the lees, well refined, salvation by grace. Love and fellowship has been the theme set forth by all who have handled the word of God. In this is our only hope of salvation, either in this world or the world to come.

Dear brethren, we feel if it is the pleasure of him who rules all things, we would say a few words in the spirit on love. The children of God are taught in his word, that "love is the fulfilling of the law," that "God is love," that his love to his people is inexpressible, inconceivable, everlasting, sovereign, free and undeserved, immutable, unbounded, or boundless and infinite. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son for the redemption of his people. He was called Jesus, (meaning Savior) for he was to save his people from their sins. When we are led to contemplate the goodness and mercy of our God, and the sacrifice he made for us, we are reminded of what we should be to our brethren; forasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it to me, yea, unto him who hath loved us and washed us and made us white in the blood of the Lamb.

Dear brethren, let us examine ourselves each for himself, and see if we possess that humility, love and meekness,

that we believe a child of grace should manifest. If we cannot forgive and love them that trespass against us, how can we expect forgiveness and love shown us? "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matthew vi. 15. Brethren, let us love in deed, and not in word only. We feel to thank God for past mercies, and his watchful care over us; let us take courage and go on.

Your messengers have come to us in the love of the truth, which has been proclaimed with no uncertain sound. We feel to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This one thing we would do, forget the things that are behind, and reach forth unto those things that are before.

We desire a continuance of your correspondence, and messengers, and Minutes, and hope to receive them in love for the truth's sake.

Our next meeting is to be held with the Lexington church, at Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., commencing on the first Wednesday in October, 1899, at 10 o'clock a. m., where we hope, if the Lord will, to receive your messengers and letters of love again.

JOHN CLARK, Mod.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

JOHN A. MORSE, Assistant Clerk.

To the several Associations with which the Roxbury Old School or Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the church of Olive & Hurley, in the State of New York, is in correspondence, addresses this following letter.

DEARLY BELOVED:—We are in reception of Minutes from all of you, and messengers from some few, but all appear to be of one heart, and manifesting a oneness

of aim in striving together for the faith of the gospel, and the order appertaining to the house of God. The stand has been occupied by a number of preachers, and not a jarring note has been heard. The attendance and attention to the preached word has shown more than usual interest, quiet, order and much solemnity. It has been one of those seasons that we call heavenly, and we are made to feel that the Lord has not left us without some seasons now and then of refreshing by the way. We send you Minutes in return, and will with pleasure make such returns by messengers as we may be able to do. In that respect our resources are limited, and we hope that the brethren of our correspondence will exercise a measure of forbearance toward us.

Our next session is appointed with the First church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the second Wednesday and Thursday in September, 1899, to commence at 10 o'clock a. m.

J. D. HUBBELL, Mod.

WILLIAM BALLARD, Clerk.

The Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Sulphur Fork Church, Henry Co., Ky., Sept 14th, 15th and 16th, 1898, to the several Associations and meetings with whom she corresponds, sendeth greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It has been the pleasure of our God to again permit us, a few of his professed followers, to assemble in this our annual Association, and we rejoice to receive your messengers, all striving together for the faith of the gospel, and the order of his house. As clouds full of water have they come, refreshing the thirsty ground, to hear from one another of the things of Jesus, and of the glorious work of a finished salvation. It has

made our hearts glad, and we rejoice at the coming of your messengers and messages of love. Your correspondence we still hope to receive.

The churches of the Mount Pleasant Association report as living in peace, and some enlarging the borders of Zion, by those made willing in the day of the Lord's power, for all power is given into his hand. He brings his sons from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth. In them shall the praise of the glory of his grace be displayed.

Our next Association has been appointed to meet with the Mount Pleasant Church, Henry Co., Ky., (at Pleasureville) on Wednesday after the second Saturday in September, 1899, when we hope to meet you again in christian love and fellowship.

P. W. SAWIN, Mod.

E. F. RANSDALL, Clerk.

MINISTERS PRESENT.

Elder R. W. Thompson, Greenfield, Ind.

Elder Isaac Sawin, Moulton, Iowa.

Elder D. M. Vail, Waverly, Pa.

Elder Wm. Lively, Opelika, Ala.

Elder P. G. Lester, Floyd, Va.

Elder J. G. Eubanks, Campbellsburg, Ky.

Elder P. W. Sawin, New Castle, Ky.

Any one of the above named brethren, or any one whose name appears upon our Minutes, is by the order of the Association authorized to act as our messenger to corresponding associations and meetings.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1898.

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EDITORS:

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

JOHN XIV. 28.

"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."

Among the many things said by the dear Savior in this last extended discourse to his disciples before he was betrayed into the hands of sinners, none, of late, have seemed more precious to us than the words recorded in this text. Many thoughts have seemed to cluster around it, and some of them we feel like giving expression to in this way. It does not seem to us needful that we should speak at length of the occasion and circumstances attending this discourse of the Master, because all are familiar with all this, and it is often spoken of. As we may be led to speak of some things which, as it seems to us, this text means, it may be that some other things which are recorded in this discourse, will come up for consideration.

It seemed very difficult for even the disciples to understand that the purpose for which Jesus came into the world was not to establish a worldly kingdom similar to all the other kingdoms of the world, only greater in power, and might, and majesty, and to be governed with absolute righteousness. Until after the crucifixion of all their vain hopes, as Jesus

bowed his head and died upon Calvary, they could not seem to put away from their minds the vision of a visible reign upon earth, when Jesus should reign at Jerusalem, and the law go out from thence to all nations. Until they were endowed with power from on high, as the Spirit was poured out upon them at the day of pentecost, they had not seemed to understand any of the great mysteries of redemption, and that it must needs be that he should die for the redemption of his people. When he, in the days of his flesh, had spoken of going up to Jerusalem, and there suffering many things, and finally being put to death, and rising again the third day, Peter had rebuked him for so saying, and had said, "Far be it from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee," but after his resurrection he had said to his disciples, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Again he said, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, the third day. It was not until they were illuminated with divine wisdom, through the Spirit which testified of Jesus, and that should take of the things of Jesus, and show them unto the disciples, did they understand that without the death of the Son of God, they could not be redeemed, but must perish forever. Then they understood that when Peter had said this should not be unto his Lord, although he spoke out of the fullness of the love which he bore to his Master, yet he was putting himself in opposition to the will of God, and was an adversary, as the Master said to him, instead of being a true friend to him, and to his cause. And then they could understand that when he said to Peter just afterward, What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or

what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? he was not urging upon men to save themselves, but was showing Peter and the rest that even if their dreams of worldly ambition could be realized in the kingdom which they were looking for, it would yet profit them nothing, seeing that in this there could be no redemption for the soul. They might attain to a seat at his right hand, in such a kingdom as this, but yet unless he should die, they should still be lost forever. Unless he should die upon Calvary, their sins should still lie upon them, and moreover there could be no experience of the new birth, by which all must enter the kingdom, if they enter there at all.

In the text he said, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father." It has not seemed to us that the Savior intended to convey to their minds any doubt as to their love to him, in the use of the word "if." He knew that they loved him. And after his resurrection, Peter who had denied him, could under the heart-searching questioning of the Master, reply, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." As it has seemed to us, he intended to present rather the difference between the earthly, natural love, which they could feel for him, as they could have done for any other teacher, and that love of God which acquiesces in the will of God in all things, as that which is best, and which will redound to his glory, and the real good of his servants. The spirit of true, heaven-born love, also dwelt in their hearts, but it was then as it is now, in all the people of God; there was a warfare between the two. They must be taught the vast difference between the two. They could be taught this difference only as we all must learn it, by bitter and salutary experience. Human

love, as in the case before mentioned of Peter, would stand in the way of the accomplishment of the will of God, and in the way of one's own salvation, while the love of God shed abroad in the heart, would say, the will of God be done. Now in view of these reflections, which seem to us to be scriptural and right, we have understood the Savior in these words to mean, that if they loved him, as he loved his Father, knowing no will but his, as he knew no will but his Father's, they would rejoice at the accomplishment of that for which he came into the world, which would be clearly witnessed by his going to his Father. That love, which is the best thing that the flesh can know, would say, Thou shalt not be crucified, and shall not go away from us, but the love of God would say, The will of God be done. Afterwards the Holy Spirit showed them these things, and then they did rejoice that he had gone to his Father. He went unto his Father because it was needful for them. He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come." And again he said, "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." It was needful for the atonement which must be made for their sins, and for the true spiritual life and comfort of their souls, that he should go to the Father. Knowing him after the flesh was not of any true avail in spiritual things; they must come to know him after the Spirit. And so Paul, when exhorting his brethren to know no man after the flesh, says, that henceforth we know Jesus no more after the flesh. Perhaps many of the true, tried and humble children of God, have thought that it would have been so

great a blessing, could they have lived and walked with Jesus in Judea. It was a great blessing to his disciples in many ways, but how much greater is the blessing of living and walking with Jesus in the Spirit; and this all the saints enjoy. But few could accompany him in his human pilgrimage, but all may and do accompany him in the Spirit. And then to know the flesh of Jesus was of no benefit to those who did not, at times, see glimpses of the divine glory. Multitudes of the unbelieving Jews saw him in the flesh, but it conferred no blessing upon them. Only as the disciples saw revealed in his flesh, the Son of the living God, could it be said of them that they were blessed. And those who now see in this wonderful Savior, the Christ of God, are blessed.

There are some reflections connected with this Scripture to which we will call attention.

First, if they loved him they would rejoice that he had reached the end of all his labor and suffering. They had seen in him nothing but sorrow and humiliation in all the days of his flesh. In their sight all that Isaiah had written of him as the suffering Savior, had been fulfilled. Considered then solely with reference to this, they should rejoice at the end of it all, and the ushering in for him of glory and blessedness forever.

Second, as they came to understand what vast issues depended upon the death of Jesus, they would come to rejoice with exceeding great joy, because he went to his Father. In this was the completion of the atonement, and the work of Christ in our redemption. It is in this view of the matter that we have found our chiefest delight. A finished salvation is set forth in this one fact, that he went to his Father. We will call at-

tention to this fact for a few moments. It is written that he was put to death for our sins, and raised again for our justification. Both of these expressions are involved in the words of the text. He came forth from the Father to do his will. Until that will was finished he could not return to his Father. Returning to God was the full witness to every child of God that the work was finished. In this is the only hope of all who believe. As the truth that he would return to his Father is apprehended in its real meaning, by any of the redeemed, it must be that they will rejoice. What poor sinner would not rejoice at such an assurance that his salvation is completed. This assurance we have, and as we love him we will rejoice that he is exalted and glorified at the right hand of God. All who truly believe desire to bring forth the royal diadem, and crown him Lord of all. We must rejoice that our once humiliated and crucified, but now risen Savior, is at the right hand of God, exalted above all principalities and powers, and above every name that is named in earth or heaven. Each believer, in view of these things, will at times be constrained to say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." To all who have come to see that their redemption depended solely upon the death and resurrection of the Savior, no more sorrowful news could have been announced, than that Jesus had not gone to his Father. Could Jesus have remained upon the earth in his flesh, or had he not after his crucifixion been raised from the dead, then would it have been known that there was no atonement, nor any justification for the sinner. And then would it have been known that we were yet in our sins, and exposed to endless wrath. Therefore we rejoice that

Jesus died, but still more abundantly do we rejoice that he arose from the dead, for his resurrection was the undeniable witness that his work of atonement was accepted in our behalf, by the Father, and that henceforth no sin could be laid to our charge. Believing this, Paul could boldly challenge the universe to lay anything to the charge of God's elect. He asserts that nothing can be laid to their charge. No wonder that Paul so earnestly contended for the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Our justification before God was in it. Without it there could be no experience of salvation, either here or hereafter. Have not we who believe then, full warrant for rejoicing that he went to his Father?

Third. Although he went to his Father, he did not go away from his disciples. On the contrary he came nearer to them, the nearer he went to God. And so he had said in the beginning of this chapter, "If I go away I will come again, and receive you unto myself." It cannot be too often repeated or thought upon, that our fellowship with him is in the Spirit, and not in the flesh. He goes away from us in the flesh, but he comes nearer to us in the Spirit. In the flesh he wrought miracles of bodily healing, but in the Spirit, he heals the sins of his people. In the flesh, he spoke so that all could understand his words with the outward ear, but in the Spirit, he comes to his own, and they see and hear him as the world never can. Men might, and did, hear the discourses of the Master, in the days of his flesh, and derive no benefit from them, but in the Spirit he never speaks in vain. He speaks no longer to the outward ear, but he does speak continually to the Spirit within us. He speaks as never man could speak. Jesus, in the flesh, must pass from place to place, and from

one to another, but in the Spirit, he abides with us forever. Having died, he now lives, and lives forever. And he says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." From this point of view then, we must rejoice that he has gone to his Father.

Now, in conclusion, may we not well say the same of all who pass away from earth, in the faith of Christ? If we loved them, should not we rejoice that they go to the Father? As was the case with the Master, so is it true of them, that they have passed on beyond all sorrow, pain and sin. They, like him, live and reign at the right hand of God forever. Like him they are free from the flesh, and live henceforth in the Spirit. It has been a pleasing thought to us, when we have been called to contemplate the death of a believer, that they are not really gone from us in the Spirit, but are with God, and with us, as we come into fellowship with the Father and the Son, more completely than they could be while they were here in the flesh. The fellowship of all who believe, is in the Lord, and through him, who is a Spirit, they are in communion with each other. But the flesh mars and hinders our communion with each other, and with God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Shall we not then rejoice when it is said of one such believer, he has gone to his Father? In this, as it seems to us, is our true comfort, when those whom we have loved in the Lord are called away.

We leave these thoughts. They are but poorly expressed. The theme has seemed to us one that passes all human words to utter.

We have not been able to put the comfort of the text, as it has been administered to our own heart, into the words which we have here written. May they comfort some other one, as they have our own heart.

C.

REPLIES TO INQUIRIES.

BROTHER H. M. Pitts, of Gate City, Alabama, has written us that brother Templeman, of New Orleans, desires some thoughts from us upon the words found in 1 Samuel xiv. 4. He adds, that brother Templeman has made this request twice, and that he hopes that we may now comply.

It would give us great pleasure could we have sufficient understanding of the Scriptures, and sufficient time, to reply to all requests for views upon different portions of the word of God. Nothing is more commendable than a disposition to search the Scriptures, and to understand their meaning, and nothing is more profitable than to talk of the things which are written there; but we must confess that our understanding of the word is limited, and we cannot claim ability to expound but very little, if any of them.

We desire to comply with the request of our brother as far as possible, but can say but little concerning the text to which he calls attention. In the text two sharp rocks are mentioned as lying between the camp of the Philistines and Johnathan, who was minded, as we are told in the connection, to attack the foes of Israel with his armorbearer. The name of one was Bozez, and the name of the other was Seneh. The first name means shining, and the second name means crag, thorn, rock. Why these rocks were given these names we are not told. It is likely that the names were given them because of some peculiarity in the rocks themselves. Israel was at this time oppressed by the Philistines. They were not allowed by their enemies to have any smith, or worker in metals, in all the land, lest they should be able to arm themselves, and so make trouble for their enemies. The Philistines had a

standing garrison in the land. Now Johnathan was moved for Israel, to go over single handed, and fight the host of the enemies. The chapter tells us all about the sign which he had fixed upon as an evidence of the approval of God in their enterprise, and then of the result, which was a great victory for the hosts of the Lord. Briefly, we feel to say concerning this whole narrative, that it seems to teach the following things. First, that the people of God, of whom literal Israel was a type, will always be surrounded by many foes which shall be too strong for them, as were the foes of Israel. Second, it seems to teach that the victory of the people of God over their foes must not be expected from their own might or wisdom. Third, that sometimes God makes use of very feeble instruments to accomplish his purpose, as in this case, and as when David overthrew Goliath, the giant of Gath, a little before this victory of Johnathan. Paul declares that out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he has ordained strength; and all this that the power and glory may be seen to be his. Fourth, it seems to teach that like these great rocks which lie in the way of Jehnathan, many difficulties will meet the servant of the Lord, as he goes forth to contend against the enemies of God and truth. Fifth, and lastly, that the victory is sure when the Lord bids us go forward. The whole narrative is interesting, and sets forth these truths plainly. We would be glad if all who may read this would turn to the chapter named and read it for themselves.

A correspondent whose letter is post-marked Arkville, N. Y., writes as follows: "Dear friend, I would like to see your views in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES upon communion. I am permitted by a friend

to read them. I heard a professed preacher say not long ago that no church member had any right to leave the communion for any cause whatever, and that he would not leave the communion, if the devil himself sat at the table.

Yours in love,

A SEEKER AFTER TRUTH."

Quite recently we gave some views upon the subject of the Lord's supper, in response to a request from a brother. Of course we do not expect to go over that subject again in this reply, but our friend has suggested a question which has seemed to us to be very important in the past, and we feel like calling attention to the matter in a few words. In the first place, it has long seemed to us that for any one member to set up his individual judgment as to when he should stay away from the Lord's supper, because of something which does not seem to him right in another member, is presumptuous in the last degree. It is saying that he is wiser and holier, and has more regard for the truth, than has the rest of the church. Much is said in the Scriptures of the New Testament concerning the proper course to be pursued when a brother or sister has departed from the truth, but we do not recall a single instance where it is said to be the duty of one member to remain away from the supper because another member has done wrong. We do not recall any instance where the hand is told to depart from the body because it possesses an unsound foot. For ourself, we have ever believed that nothing could excuse us in going away from the church in any of her meetings and ordinances so long as that church remained a church of Jesus Christ. If the Lord can bear with it, and, what is more to the point, can bear with our own folly, who are we that we should

say that we cannot any longer bear with the church, though there may be things which would and do grieve us, and that ought to wound us, and cause us sorrow? We are sure that no church of Jesus Christ to-day possesses more that is disorderly and contrary to the truth, than the churches to whom Paul wrote his epistles. And Paul did not intimate at any time that he would feel called upon to depart from them, and have no more to do with them. On the contrary, he came nearer, if possible, to them in his faithful care over them, and spoke earnestly and lovingly to them of their folly. We think that if one who loved the truth, and had felt the grace of God in his heart, could remain in communion with the church of Corinth, there could be no excuse for any child of God to forsake the supper in the bounds of our churches to-day. There were those among them who denied the resurrection, who divided themselves into parties against each other, who were guilty of fornication, and they had turned the Lord's supper into the semblance of a heathen feast, and yet Paul never once in his epistles to them, intimates that he would not sit at the supper with them, but he does warn them against these things, and urge them to put such evils away.

The Scriptures lay down full directions as to how to proceed when any wrong thing appears in the churches of the saints. When any one has seen evil in another which amounts to a sin, either against himself personally, or against the body of the church, the course is plain. First, he must try to gain his brother from his evil ways, and so save a soul from death, and hide the multitude of sins. If he shall fail in this good endeavor, he must call in help, and if they shall fail, and not till then, he must tell it to the

church, not that the brother may be cut off, but that if possible the whole church may save him. After the matter is laid before the church, the one who makes the accusation has no more to do with it, save as one of the members of the church. The responsibility is no longer his personally. It now rests upon the whole body of the church. Whatever the church may decide, he is now no more responsible than is any other member. If the church shall decide that the charge is a mistaken one, or that sufficient satisfaction is given by the offending member, that is the decision of the church, and each individual member must abide by the decision. It is sure that the whole church wants to do right, and as the law of the Lord requires, as well as the one who has seen the wrong. If the charge be true, and yet the church is not convinced of its truth, still all must wait upon her decision. And if the decision is now wrong, time will show the matter in its true light. The brother who knows of the guilt, can rest, knowing that he has done what the law of the gospel requires in the matter, and that now he is absolved from his responsibility. Let him then continue to walk with the church, and to show brotherly love even to the wrong doer, peradventure the Lord has thus given him space for repentance. A fleshly principle is reigning in the heart of a brother when he goes away from the church, if her decision differs from his upon some matter of discipline. He ought to remember that the Lord is with them, as well as with him, and that they are as likely to have the Spirit of Christ, as is he, and that they desire to glorify God, as well as he. The Lord has promised to be with his people, and he will guide them to right decisions, as they shall wait upon him. Therefore each member ought to be willing to wait for the Lord to give light

to his church, if he has not yet done so in the way that seems to that one right. Let us remember the words of the apostle, "If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

This covers all the grounds of offense which may come before us. If we think that a brother has treated us badly, or that he has so behaved himself that we can have no confidence in him as a believer any longer, still we have no right to deprive ourselves of our privileges in the house of God, nor have we any right to give any occasion for each and every member in the church to ask, Why does such an one stay away from the supper? Has that one anything against me? Perhaps in such a case the one who has done the wrong would be the last one to be hurt, or to care in any way, that we should so do. Those, on the other hand, who are really and truly spiritual would be the first to be troubled; and to think, perhaps that brother has something against me. We certainly have no right to pursue a course that might give rise to such anxiety upon the part of those who are spiritual.

As far as the expression which the professed minister used, to which our friend refers, we should consider it an uncalled for expression. Yet we question much whether it is not true, that every child of God, who comes with humble and broken heart to the supper of the Lord's house, does not often feel that Satan has come there with him. We have never seen so much trouble as to whether he might come there in the heart of some one else, as we have over the question whether he has not come there with ourself.

In conclusion we will say, as long as one is a member of any church, unless providentially hindered, he has no right to absent himself from the supper for any cause whatever. Two wrongs will never

make a thing right. The wrong in staying away from the supper of the Lord will not make the brother's wrong which we have seen right. Even our own doubts, and fears, and feelings of unworthiness, cannot excuse us from the obligations and privileges of the Lord's house.

C.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

IN the preceding number of the SIGNS, sister Gentry asked for our opinion and for the views, of others, on the subject of prayer. The subject of prayer has occasioned us much reflection at times, for the last forty-five years, and yet we have been so dull a scholar in the school of Christ, if indeed we are a pupil of his school, that after almost half a century's tuition on the subject, we have now to confess the humiliating truth, that we often ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and to this day we know not how to pray as we ought. In the year 1811, when but young in our profession, we resolved to be much engaged in prayer, and, as we had read somewhere that,

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees,"

we were fully resolved to make him tremble continually. We supposed then that prayer consisted in periodical forms, in which we were required to humble ourselves before God, and ask of him whatever we were in need of. To our inexperienced mind there was much virtue in prayer, that is, in the form and language of prayer, and it was our impression that the poet was right when he said,

"Restraining prayer we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the christian's armor bright,"

And we verily thought, by our constant praying, we should avoid temptation, and live above doubts and fears. We should keep the old tempter so terrified with our devotions, that he would not dare assail us with any wicked suggestions. But we soon learned that our prayers were not the right kind to keep Satan at bay, for it was not long before it really appeared to us that we were much more annoyed with his company when performing our solemn devotions, than at any other time. Often, when the hour of prayer, which we had set, came, we were either inflated with pride that we were so devout, or crushed down with such a sense of our sinfulness that it seemed wicked and presumptuous to call upon the name of the Lord. Sometimes, when about to rush into the presence of the Lord like the unthinking horse into battle, we found our thoughts, like the fool's eyes, were wandering to the ends of the earth, and we have been unable sometimes to utter one word of supplication. Self-abased before the Lord, we have risen up from our knees, and left the place, concluding that we could not pray, and perhaps in reality praying, or breathing forth the heart-felt and heaven-inspired desire of our inmost soul, that God would manifest himself as our God and portion, and give us grace whereby we might serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

These earnest desires breathed forth to God, we hardly dared to call them prayer, for we had imbibed the idea that prayer must have more formality about it, that we must go into some closet, or secret place, literally, and fall on our knees, or prostrate our body before the Lord, and then and there utter our prayers in an appropriate utterance of words. Often like sister Gentry, we have been in great heaviness, because we could not pray, or

rather because we were unable to satisfy ourself that we had prayed. But we are now led to believe that the most fervent prayers we have ever offered to God, were indited by groanings which we could not utter. There have been times when it has really seemed to us that the Spirit truly helped our infirmities, and made intercession for us in that way, and we were made more sensible of our entire dependence on God, than we could have been if we had believed that we had ability to pray when and as we pleased.

Volumes might be written in reply to the inquiry of our sister, "What is prayer?" without exhausting the subject. But in this short article, we can only touch briefly upon the subject. Secret prayer, or that prayer of the saint which is poured forth as a communion between God and the individual worshiper, we believe is often made when we may be in the open field, on the public highway, or when lying upon our bed, but it is always when none but God, who seeth in secret, knows the emotions of the suppliant's heart. And this is what we understand to be entering into our closet and shutting the door; here it becomes a matter between the God of heaven and that saint on whom God has graciously poured the spirit of prayer and of supplication.

Social prayer is that in which a number of christians are led by the same spirit to call upon the name of the Lord, and in which one is mouth for them all; such praying must necessarily be audibly uttered, so that all who are present may understandingly unite in the prayer. This public or social devotion is as important in its place as the secret aspirations of the praying saint in the closet. But all vain show, and ostentatious parade should be avoided. We are to remember that God is in heaven, and we are on his footstool,

and it is becoming that our words should be few, for his people are not heard for their much speaking, nor for their loud speaking, nor for the sanctimonious tone in which the words of prayer are uttered. In the public assemblies of the saints, we do not find that every praying soul has been distinguished with the gift to be mouth for the church, but all the saints are blessed with the gift of prayer, whereby they may unite in the petitions offered, so far as they are indited by the Spirit of God.

In regard to the answers of prayer, we are not to expect that there is either power, merit or efficacy in our prayers, in themselves considered, to entitle us to the things which we pray for. God, who has all things needful for us, either for time or eternity, in store, gives the spirit of prayer to his children, and that spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God; it knoweth what is the will of God, and it indites within us the desire for what God designs to bestow in answer to prayer. So, instead of our bringing the Lord under obligation to bestow blessings on us for our prayers, here is an additional dependence on God, not only for the things that we need, but also for the spirit to ask him for them. And when we speak of our children and neighbors being quickened and born of God, in answer to our prayers, we mean to be understood that God has not only made bare his holy arm, and revealed his salvation in the conversion of sinners, and in reviving his church, but that he has made his children desire, and by the spirit of supplication, has led them to pray for the accomplishment of all these things. There are many things connected with this subject, on which, at this time, we cannot dwell. Among others, faith is indispensable. Not a faith of human origin, that

we can create or exercise, but that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God; that faith of which Christ is the author and the finisher, and which is called the faith of Jesus Christ, by which we live spiritually, and that faith which is of the operation of God. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is. How can we devoutly pray to a God, the existence of whom we doubt or disbelieve? And if we believe there is a God, how can we ask of him for blessings, unless we have faith to assure us that God has them in store for us, and that he will freely bestow them upon us through Jesus Christ our Lord? Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith lays hold on his promises, and gives us confidence that they shall all be fulfilled. Faith looks to Jesus as the only medium through whom we may approach the Father; for he says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is also the only medium through which spiritual blessings are sent down from heaven upon the saints. God has blessed his children with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; so we have no reason to expect any spiritual blessing out of Christ, or in any other way than according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1856.

I PETER III. 21.

"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."

Baptism, according to this text, has a figurative import, and as a figure of our salvation, Peter classifies it with the figure of the temporal salvation of Noah and his family in the ark; the former

figure is like the latter figure. Hence we understand that both figures refer to and set forth a spiritual reality in reference to the manner of the everlasting salvation of the church of God. The Spirit of Christ was in Noah as in other patriarchs and prophets of the Lord. And Noah, as a patriarch, a preacher of righteousness, the representative of a family and progeny to be saved from the deluge, and as a builder of the ark which was to contain all that God had ordained to that temporal salvation, was an eminent type of Christ. Christ is the builder of the spiritual ark, the church, which contains all that God has from the beginning chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. He is also their spiritual progenitor, and they are accounted to him for a generation. And with him, in the church, they shall outride all the storms and floods, which shall sweep away the ungodly, and rest forever on the mount of God. Salvation by grace was clearly set forth in the figure of Noah's deliverance. And as also is the ordinance of christian baptism an expressive figure of the same salvation of the people of God. It is not, like the Jewish purifications, designed for the putting away the filth of the flesh, but it is the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christian baptism, as instituted by our Lord, and practiced by the primitive saints, sets forth a death, burial and resurrection, and is applicable to, first, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; second, to the experience of saints, who are slain by the law, and raised up from condemnation and wrath by the application of the blood and righteousness of the now risen and glorified Redeemer; and third, it sets forth the dissolution, burial and ultimate resurrec-

tion of the bodies of all the saints of God.

1. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ is called a baptism. "I have," said he, "a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" The sons of Zebudee were to be baptized also with that baptism wherewith Christ was to be baptized. Paul says the saints addressed in his epistle to the Romans, were also buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so they should walk in newness of life. Hence it is our understanding that the whole church of God was represented in Christ, as to her spiritual identity, when he died on the cross, slumbered in the tomb, and when he arose from the dead, and ascended up on high. When he died for all, then were all dead, and they were quickened together with him, raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. In this baptism we are truly saved. "The law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth." Romans viii. 1. Christ as the embodiment of the church, takes our law place, and that lawfully, not making void the law, but establishing it; for in him the law finds the church, and makes its stern demand. He asks for no abatement of the demand, but promptly meets and completely cancels it. The sword awakes against the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. Deep waters come into his soul, and all the billows pass over him. Immersed in death, the law can ask no more; the dreadful debt is paid. The yawning grave receives the slaughtered body, and closes its doors upon him, recognizing in his person all for whom he died. This is baptism, but it is not all. His flesh must see no corruption. The pains of death cannot hold

him long. As in baptism the body is immersed but also raised up to make the figure complete, so Christ must arise from the dead, and bring immortality into light in his resurrection. Under the law he dies, but quickened by the Spirit he rises, and brings up from the dead all his sheaves with him. As except a corn of wheat falleth into the earth and dieth, it abideth alone, and the germ of its production remaineth undeveloped, but if it die it will bring forth much fruit, simply by developing that which was in it, so in the death and resurrection of Christ, his people are buried with him by baptism into death, wherein the extreme penalty of the law being executed, the law can henceforth have no more dominion over them. Now, quickened by the Spirit, they arise, not to a legal bondage state again, but they arise to walk in newness of life, and are married to, and become one with him who is raised from the dead, and are no more under the law, but under grace. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."—Romans viii. 4.

2. Christian baptism sets forth the experience of the saints. When the commandment comes, sin revives, and they die. They are slain, and all their legal hopes are cast off, and they are buried from their former element, and raised up from the horrible pit, and out of the mry clay, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Dead to, and buried from, the rudiments of the law, and the beggarly elements of the world, they are crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to them; they are raised up to participate in all the privileges of the church of God.

3. The ultimate resurrection of our bodies from their graves, and ascension to glory, is also embraced in the figurative import of gospel baptism. One of the strong arguments of Paul, in proving the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints, is presented in these words: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"—1 Cor. xv. 29. Baptism was evidently designed to signify a resurrection, and would be divested of its doctrinal import if there is to be no final resurrection of the bodies of the saints from the dead.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 1, 1856.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

A. McInturff, Kan., \$2.00; A Friend, N. Y., \$3.65.
—Total, \$5.65.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder Wm. L. Beebe, Sept. 23, 1898, in Fishkill, N. Y., Mr. Seneca Gardner Benjamin and Miss Anna May, daughter of Mr. Charles E. Bowen, both of Fishkill village.

At his residence in New Church, Va., Sept. 14th, 1898, Mr. George H. Bunting and Miss Attie B. Chesler, by Elder T. M. Poulson, of Massey, Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At his home in Logan Co., Ky., after a short illness, **Elder T. C. Herndon**, in the 52d year of his age. His family, consisting of a wife and seven children, have sustained an irreparable loss; the church of which he was pastor loses an able defender of the truth, and the community a good citizen. He spent much of his time traveling and preaching to the churches in various parts of the country, visiting the brethren in several States. His is the fourth death in our family since the 19th of July, when our sister, Mrs. Sarah A. Wood, and one of Elder Herndon's children died. Then the summons came to our mother, Mrs. F. A. Herndon, now our brother. Truly we feel deeply bereaved, but we are confident our loss is their gain.

E. C. PHELPS.

HOPKINSVILLE, Ky., Oct. 6, 1898.

Elder Jeremiah Matthews, the subject of this notice, was the son of Stephen and Sophia Ann Osborn, born June 23d, 1827. He was united in marriage with Angeline Philips, May 27th, 1849; died Oct. 10th, 1897. Of this union three sons and one daughter were born. Three sons and a sorrowful companion, besides many friends, survive him.

Brother Matthews was brought to a knowledge of the truth at an early age, and united with the Old School Baptist church of Olive & Hurley, Feb. 22d, 1845, and remained a worthy, consistent member, until called to his rest. He served the church in the office of deacon for a number of years with satisfaction. Discovering a gift to the work of the ministry, he was given liberty to speak, and being proved, a counsel was called, and he was unanimously ordained to the work which proved to the edification of the body, and a portion of the time served the church in the pastoral care. His labor in words and precept, were blessed by example and practice, to the peace and union of the church. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." In his death his companion is bereft of a kind husband, his children a wise counselor, the church a faithful watchman, ready to give the trumpet the true and certain sound, but we trust that their loss is his eternal gain. As a citizen, he was called to fill many offices of trust.

His funeral was held at Olive, with a large concourse of brethren and friends in attendance. The writer spoke from 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8, "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." Elders James Miller and R. W. Sanford followed with appropriate remarks.

He from the grave my dust will raise;
I in the heavens will sing his praise,
And when in glory I appear,
He'll be my sanctuary there.

JOHN CLARK.

HALCOTTSVILLE, N. Y.

J. H. Barton and **Ollie Johnson** were married Nov. 28th, 1839. They joined the Old School Baptist Church called Mt. Zion, in Graves Co., Ky., soon after their marriage, and was baptized by Elder Cox. To this union six children were born, two sons and four daughters, all saved by grace. Brother and sister Barton were faithful members of the church till death, nearly fifty-nine years. They were both members of the church near Weiser, Idaho, when they were called to the church triumphant.

Brother Barton was born April 18th, 1821, and sister Ollie Jan. 16th, 1820. He departed this life May 11th, 1898, and his wife July 21st, 1898. I was

with our brother and sister several times while they were sick, and talked to them on the subject of religion, and their hope, and they were still strong in the faith, and said that they were willing, if it was the will of the Lord, to go. I asked brother Barton, not more than forty minutes before he passed away, If he still trusted in that little hope that had been a comfort to him so long? He looked me in the face and said, "Yes, I do, and now I know that it is all right." He was in his right mind, and talked freely of his departure, and said he was ready. Our sister bare her loss with great patience. She came to the church only a few days before her death, and seemed strong in the faith. She stayed with me on Saturday night. I asked her if she enjoyed the meeting? "O yes," she said, "the older I get, the stronger I believe that salvation is of the Lord." The children have lost a good, kind father and mother, and the church has lost two of their good and faithful members, and we do greatly miss them; but we desire to be reconciled to the will of the Lord.

The writer tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved friends and acquaintances, from 1 Cor xv. 54. May the Lord enable us to walk and not stumble, and be resigned to his will.

G. B. BARTON.

WEISER, Idaho, Oct., 1898.

M E E T I N G S .

A two days meeting will be held, the Lord willing, with the First church of Roxbury, on Wednesday and Thursday, November 2d and 3d, 1898, to begin at 10:30 a. m. on Wednesday. Brethren, sisters and friends are cordially invited, ministers especially. Trains will be met at Roxbury, on Tuesday before the meeting.

J. D. HUBBELL.

THE Old School Baptist church of Ingleside, N. Y., will hold a two days meeting on Friday and Saturday before the fifth Sunday in October (28th and 29th). A cordial invitation is extended to all that desire to meet with us.

Trains will be met at Atlanta, N. Y., on the D., L. & W. and Erie R. R., on Thursday previous.

By order of the church.

GEORGE WELD, Clerk.

BOOK NOTICES.

I HAVE some of the Mary Parker books yet on hand which I will send by mail for 55 cents each. I have about two hundred, and wish to save myself from much loss if I can. I also have some of my Meditations, which I will send for \$1.00.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTAMPTON, Pa.

THE
"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

A pamphlet containing the following articles, viz:
First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28th, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School, and the New School Baptists.

Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England.

Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fourth. "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion, of the same title.

Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Will be mailed to any address on receipt of price.

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“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1898. NO. 22.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Aug. 24, 1897.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—In venturing to send the thoughts that follow, let me say that my wish at all times is that you should use your own discretion in accepting or rejecting. For you have a serious responsibility. More and more, am I convinced that none but the living can feed. Nevertheless the spiritual stomach, by reason of sin, is not always in condition, even when there has been evidence that such an organ does exist. So while with a good intention meats may be prepared, both the spreader and the feeder need the benign influence of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus to guide into its wholesome truths. Just why I write now is because of an article upon the passage in Revelation xx. 5, 6, by brother May, beginning, “But the rest of the dead lived not again.” Although not in all points, yet the current of his thoughts flowed so like my own little stream, that it comforted me. I almost felt as if I might be charged with copying, in some ideas. The book of Revelation is a wonderful one to me, however little I may grasp of its wonders, I am satisfied that the gross and literal understanding of its

images, as also of most of the Lord's parables, has indeed darkened understanding instead of unfolding the Spirit's meaning. As I read I remembered that many years ago Elder Chick had written on the resurrection, opening up most beautifully the twenty-fifth verse of the fifth chapter of John, but taking the usual view of the subject. On the spur of the moment I wrote out some scattered thoughts, but I voted them not worth sending either to him or to the editors. Yet I did not destroy them, thinking that at some future time I would read them to myself again, and if then their blaze should have vanished, I would know that it was a false light. Brother May's writing so refreshed me that I have hunted them up, and poor as they are, I would like to send them to your paper. A fragment is lost, but I will copy what is left, supplying only the necessary connection. I send them, with sincere wishes that they were better, and an apology to Elder Chick, whose writings are so good, and have watered me so many times.

COPY OF AN OLD MEDITATION ON JOHN
XXV. 5, AND ONWARD.

Reading with much profit the letter of Elder F. A. Chick, in the SIGNS, I have

no controversy with his views concerning the resurrection of believers. It is when he brings in the wicked that I disagree with him. I will therefore take up the two passages which he sights as proving the resurrection of the wicked, because they are the strongholds upon which that teaching is built. Before expounding from my standpoint, let me say that my conviction is that the Scripture is written only for the righteous; the ungodly, as Esau, only forming a needful third party, or background. Hence we must understand all the main teachings to apply to Jacob, as he walks upon earth, sometimes in the mind and power of the Spirit, but more manifestly, alas, in the mind and power of the flesh.

Now concerning the whole of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, it omits the wicked entirely, saving in the clause, or clauses, "For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet." But it will be wise here to turn to the twelfth chapter of Daniel, which is universally held to set forth that righteous and wicked shall rise to receive the reward or punishment of their works on earth. I know of only one man who thinks these verses do not mean so, and he gave me the first simple thoughts upon them, which afterward widened in my mind, and folded in their embrace others which had before puzzled me so much. Now for the statement in Daniel. It is evident that the whole of the first clause of the first verse affects or defines the words, "And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. [Translated in the margin, others to reproach, to see it always]. And they that

be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Now is the prophet discussing the resurrection after the natural death of mankind, or are the time, scene and subjects thereof, limited to earth? Remember the Scripture has been written for our instruction while dwelling on the earth, that we may walk as becometh sons of God, in this far country, the earth; and they only hint at the future glories of our sinless state, in such form as this, "For we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." What then is the time specified? Chronologically I leave the question, but descriptively we are brought to a certain point in Jewish history. "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Matthew adds, in referring to the same period, the words, "Nor ever shall be." This period, to my mind, only meets its fulfillment during the history of natural Israel, especially from the point where the cry of John rang out through the wilderness of Judea, culminating in the final raising of the temple, and total destruction of the Jewish power. The intensely luminous points of this, are the midnight darkness of the cross, and the glories of the resurrection morning. No such sorrow, nor any such victory, has, nor ever can be in the world's history, the soothsayers to the contrary. "Thy people," Daniel was a captive in Babylon, of the seed royal. He was more than that. The wisdom of God was in his heart. He was a representative of both the literal and spiritual seed, and the event to be accomplished was the deliverance of the

people of Daniel. This salvation is limited to specified subjects, every one written in the book. But the following verse, which is generally held to relate to the uprising of the dead, presents the picture of two companies, not of the world, but of the people of the prophet, only one of whom are delivered.

Now just here let me glance at the Jewish history, as it was at the time when Michael appeared, from the close of the prophecy of Malachi, till the cry of John. The nation of Israel, figuratively, was dead, or sleeping, under the curse of the law. The blood of slain beasts could not wash away sin; the eyes of those who watched the promises had grown heavy with waiting, and the Prince, who was to contend for the body of Moses, delayed his coming. The whole nation, described in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, slumbered and slept. Now the resurrection here spoken of, is limited by the words, "many that sleep," and these again came forth, some to behold their own shame and contempt, and some to the turning of many to righteousness. Can this set forth any period save that of the midnight cry, the setting aside of the natural Israel (the five foolish virgins) and the manifesting of the spiritual (the five wise) who, going to the wedding supper with the king himself, were afterwards fitted by a special renewal of oil (the pentecostal effusion of the Spirit) to preach deliverance from the righteousness of carnal ceremonials, and the earthly pomp of a natural religion, by the quickening and enlivenment of the divine nature? Notice just here, that we always behold two companies in the natural history of Israel, one which manifests the clear guidance of the Spirit, and others who went to the grave of ceremonial death. Nor can we conclude that all who

perish bodily under the law of works, were excluded from eternal salvation, as witness Moses himself, and all who like him, perished in the wilderness, while Joshua and Caleb, with the younger people (figurative of the spiritual seed) entered the promised land. In like manner, coming down to the time of Daniel, and with Daniel to the time of the end, (of Jewish history) which immediately precedes the uprising of the great resurrection day of our Lord, the two companies still existed. In the first chapter of the gospel of John we read, "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 flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Here then was a company born, (alive or quick) under the ceremonials of the law. They were feeble, it is true, for they all slumbered, yet they had sufficient light to discern their Lord, and this knowledge was to be increased, as Daniel predicted, to the full glow of spiritual brightness, after the resurrection of Christ, causing them to shine forth in his gospel kingdom, as sons more than servants, each, by his increased light, pointing, turning, many to the more full revelation of the righteousness of God, found in the perfect work of Jesus. To the other company, Jesus plainly speaks in John v. 37, "Ye have neither heard the Father's voice at any time, nor seen his shape, and ye have not his word abiding in you, for whom he hath sent him ye believe not." This is evidently that company, who were roused by the startling occurrences, enfolding the life of Jesus. They came forth from under their legal and ceremonial wrappings, in a partial sense, like men in a dream, only to ask the man who claimed

to be their Messiah, puzzling questions, or to persuade him to become a puppet in their hands, for the advancement of Jewish national power. Failing and baffled in both these points, they retired under the shadows of a carnal service again, the natural knowledge which they possessed of scriptural prophecy being made a trap to them, and whatever mercy was in store for them as individuals, according to God's election, they were the company, in a national sense, which were to pass through this judgment of total destruction as to power, yet not of existence. Hence, the reproach, shame and suffering, entailed by the name of Jew, has endured from that time to this. This, I have no doubt, is the coming forth to judgment out of the graves of that hopeless national system of slain beasts, which was only a type, which is therefore the continuous stamp of death, instead of the power of an endless life. Of this event Jesus is really discoursing in John v., beginning at least at the seventeenth verse of that chapter, and coming to a point in the closing clause of the twenty-ninth verse, "Unto the resurrection of damnation."

Now a few thoughts upon the subject as presented by John. The main truth that Jesus was setting forth before the Jews was, the equality and unity of the Father and the Son, both in power and purpose. His healing the impotent man on the Sabbath day gave rise to their bitter opposition, but instead of withdrawing from the position involved in that two-fold act of healing, first of the body, and then of the giving the command to sin no more, which his condemners perfectly understood, as an assumption of divine power, he goes on to assert it, verse twenty-one, "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them,

even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Most readers will, I think, admit that he was here referring to the case in hand, and not to a future resurrection of the body. This man was not dead, but under the legal dispensation suffering a bodily chastisement for sin, which is implied in the words of the Savior, Lest a worse thing come upon thee, sin no more. The healing and the benediction pronounced on this sufferer, was equivalent to a raising up from under that law, and the blessing, "Thou art made whole," was deeply significant of the quickening power. Now to this Jesus adds the claim of judging also, the great prerogative of the Godhead, which he declares the Father has committed to him. From this he goes on to show that belief in the word is an evidence of everlasting life within the soul, and then declares that already that wonderful hour (period of time) had set in, and will continue its coming, till the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

The peculiar wording of this twenty-fifth verse, convinces us that this hearing is not followed by the same result in each case. The idea conveyed is of a sound passing over a dead multitude, and the uprising of some, while others remain as before. The two following verses explain the metaphor. Not only had the Son life in himself, by which he raised whom he would, but he had authority likewise by which he should execute judgment, and leave unquickeneth whom he chose. Most expositors think this first description refers to the gospel message and its results, as manifested by the reception it meets, and I surely believe it does, in its primary sense; but when they come to these twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth verses, they leave the spiritual, and pass on to the literal resurrection. From

this understanding of these two verses has grown that vague, indefinite picture of the judgment day, with its assembled multitudes, divided into right and left; the one receiving the reward of their good deeds, the other of their evil ones. I would fain dwell on that judgment day, but must now only remind thinkers how unscriptural that teaching is, for we are saved by grace, if we are saved at all. My own conviction is that Jesus is simply widening out the truths of the gospel plan, not only to the Jews (who by the coming death and resurrection of their true Lamb, Jesus, were by that act freed from the yoke of a tiresome ritual) was the gospel of salvation by one perfect high priest preached, but all should hear the same voice, that is, to the Gentiles also should the jubilee trumpet sound its message. The constant use of the future tense is in strict accordance with the facts, for until the visible outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, the work of Jesus as Mediator remained unsealed by the Father, and then it seems to me the true resurrection day commenced. Here let us behold in part the wisdom of God. To the Jew had been given a written law, and ceremonial helps, testifying in figure to the various attributes of the great Creator of the universe, while the Gentiles had been left to the darkness of their natural minds. (Acts xvii. 30.) Yet both, according to Paul, in Romans iii. 12, had proven themselves unprofitable (in the matter of salvation). Thus under law, and outside of the law, there was no deliverance nationally from Sinai's curse till Jesus came. Yet spiritually, in each case we find the elect seed waiting their deliverance. This seed or company was first manifested according to law among the natural descendants of Abraham, while among the Gentiles it apparently

begins with Cornelius and his household. (Acts x.) And thus to the whole world was the promise fulfilled. (Acts xvii. 31.) "Because God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Now concerning the resurrection, the gospel day (when by the preaching of salvation, sealed upon individual hearers, whether Jews or Gentiles, by the outpoured spirit, forming the great multitude, whom no man can number) is its real and true exponent, the resurrection body and perfected state following after. And this same gospel day becomes the judgment day to the heirs of death, who by the hearing of the words of truth, and failing to understand their meaning, appear to retire into a second death. Nor is it necessary that they should hear a literal voice, for the fact that the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ, and show them to whom the Father will, has passed over and left them unquickened, is evidence that the Holy God, by his own prerogative, has appointed them as his natural creation, to die in their sins.

Before closing I would like to say, many claim the last verses of Matthew xxv. as undeniable proof of the great judgment day after the resurrection, but at the same time the thoughtful ones admit that the righteous having been judged in Christ, cannot be judged again; but to fix this, they picture those on the right serenely contemplating the justice of God to those on the left, the apparently awful feelings which such a scene would create, to be toned down by their perfect acquiescence in the will of God. But the parable itself has at least one striking internal evidence that it is a judgment in

time, though its results extend to eternity. The righteous and the wicked alike, give substantially the same answer to the King, that is, the righteous are amazed to find themselves possessed of a righteousness they never merited, and the ungodly equally amazed at being judged for neglect they never felt guilty of. This scene therefore can never transpire beyond the period of the resurrection of the saints, because the very fact of having received their glorified bodies would have dispelled all doubts at least from their minds. It all plainly sets forth what is silently going on from age to age. Though unseen to mortal eyes, the invisible but ever present King, seated on the throne of his special glory, that is, the throne of his mediatorial and redemptive atonement, sends forth unto all nations the word of truth by his chosen messengers, and their words silently divide to the right and to the left. To the King's judgment experience ever agrees. The Pharisee standing there sees himself perfect till the quickened law of God smites him down, while the publican in spirit feels to have nothing to pay, but must say, God be merciful to me, a sinner. This is a throne set in clouds, some of sorrow, some of joy. The shadows which wrap as with a mantle his providential dealings with poor sinners here below, will all be scattered in that hallowed eternity of bliss. Neither will any bones from the grave's mouth defile its ever green shores. Only in earth shall boasting or fear exist. Beyond is the infinite peace and the halo of a never setting sun. The time of this setting up in a manifested sense of this righteous throne was, as Matthew indicates, (but which I dare not enter into now) the close of the natural system of works, and the spreading abroad of the skirts of Christ's love, when the

anointing of the Spirit took the place of the anointing of oil. May we be called therein.

I could not possibly put in words my own sense of the hidden wonders of these majestic sayings of Jesus, and of how far I fail of understanding them; nevertheless such as I have I give. For if all the smaller lights hide themselves under a bushel, shall not the King say, Thou oughtest to have at least put my one talent to the exchangers, that when I come I might receive mine own with usury?

Humbly yours,

MRS. J. STREET.

[ALTHOUGH we do not agree with all the conclusions and views presented in the above letter, we publish it for the consideration of our readers, because of the kind and unassuming way in which our sister has presented her views, and also because of the many good things which are well worth our consideration. With many things we are in full accord with her, and we regard the manner of her letter as being an able presentation of the views which she holds upon the points covered. We do not desire to set up our views as a standard. We feel very deeply our liability to misunderstand and misapply the Scriptures, and so we do not feel qualified to dictate to others in any sense. But yet we do hold that the Scriptures teach abundantly the resurrection of the dead, both of the righteous and the unrighteous. We would suggest that some of the arguments presented in this letter would also involve the denial of the resurrection of the righteous, if carried out to their legitimate conclusion. We do not mean to imply that this is the meaning of our sister, for she has expressly said to the contrary. But some of the arguments would

involve this conclusion. That is, if the Scriptures to which our sister has referred do not teach the resurrection of the unrighteous, neither do they teach the resurrection of the righteous. If they involve the thought of the resurrection at all, they involve the thought that the wicked dead are raised as well as the righteous dead. We do not wish to write at length in reply to this letter, and so will say that we understand the Scripture in John v. 25, "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," to refer to what we commonly speak of as the quickening of dead sinners unto divine life. This, and the two following verses, our sister understands as we do, as we conclude from her letter. Taken together they declare the power of the Son of God to cause his children to live in him. Some would marvel at this, and think that it could not be possible, yet those among the Jews who would question this power, as did Nicodemus, when the Master presented the same truth under the figure of a birth, also believed in the resurrection. Now, taking advantage of this which they did believe, he bids them not to marvel at this which he has declared. If it be true, as they also believed, that the dead should be raised up, they ought not to think it incredible that dead sinners should now be quickened into divine life. In verse twenty-five, as we have seen, he speaks of what is now, as well as of what shall be: "The hour is coming, and now is." But in verse twenty-eight, he does not use the expression, "and now is," but simply speaks of a work in the future. He says in verses twenty-eight and twenty-nine, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their 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." This, as it seems to us, is purely in the future. The Savior uttered these words to silence the objection of those who would cavil at his words in verse twenty-five. They believed in the resurrection, why therefore should they think it incredible that now the dead in sins should be quickened into divine life? This is the reason, as we understand, why Jesus brought in the truth of the resurrection, in the midst of an argument concerning a different subject. They believed in the one marvel, therefore they could not deny the other.—ED.]

ETERNAL VITAL UNION.

ONE of my correspondents says, "I would be pleased to read an article from your pen on the subject of 'eternal vital union.'" Some seem to think that this term carries the idea that the children of God actually existed in the annals of eternity before time was, but that the word "unity," in the place of "union," implies that the eternal life of the children was ever in Christ, while they themselves had not existence as such until manifested in the world by ordinary generation. Now I do not claim much as to the definition of terms and words, but I have understood all along that where brethren used the term, "eternal vital union," they have generally meant that the saints ever had their eternal life standing in Christ Jesus, while they have their earthly standing in their earthly head, Adam, which has its beginning in time. Now, I could not more clearly and comprehensively express what I have always understood to be the truth upon this subject, than my correspondent has done. Those who are born of God, re-

ceive a life that was theirs in Christ before the world began, as in the natural birth the life existed in the father before it was manifested in the son. That the man who now receives eternal life in the spiritual birth was regarded by the Lord in that life before the world began, all must admit, for he was then chosen in Christ, and grace was then given him, and all spiritual blessings are now received by him according to that choice. (Eph. i. 3, 4; 2 Tim. i. 9.) This was a personal choice of an Adamic man before Adam was created; it was the writing in the book of God of one of the members of Christ's spiritual body, "while as yet there was none of them." (Psalm exxxix.) Neither the eternal life alone, nor the Adamic man alone, the one distinctly from the other, is regarded in the Scriptures as the child of God. Though the eternal life eternally existed, and the Adamic creature did not exist until Adam was created, yet both are contemplated in the Scriptures when the children of God are spoken of, and the terms predestination, foreordination, foreknowledge, and the like, are used to express the purposes concerning them of that God "who inhabiteth eternity," to whom all things are ever present, and who "counteth things that are not as though they were." I have never used the term "eternal children," that I now remember, for I have never thought that we are warranted in speaking of the life in the progenitor as a child. A will which gives an estate to children who are yet to be born, perhaps two or three generations in the future, does not regard them as children in existence when the will is made. So the will of God does not regard the children as in actual existence, as such, before the world began, but foreknows and predestinates concerning them. True the fore-

knowledge of them on the part of God is absolutely certain, as it cannot be on the part of a man who makes a will concerning children not yet born, for he cannot know that there will ever be such a child to inherit under his will. Some do speak of "eternal children," and say that the children of God actually existed in a body of flesh and bones in eternity before Adam was created. I have talked with some called "Two-seed Baptists," who held that. Others speak of the "eternal spiritual children," meaning what I understand as the eternal spiritual life which is afterward manifest in the Adamic vessel of mercy. Those who insist that the life or spirit in its eternal existence is the child of God, will refer, as one proof, to Hebrews ii., and say that those children partake of flesh and blood, just as Christ did, and that as he was the Son of God before he partook of flesh and blood, so they were. But Peter speaks of the people of God as partaking of the divine nature. Then the same argument would prove that they were children before they partook of the divine nature. Our brethren have generally held, so far as I know, that each child who is manifest in time by a spiritual birth, had an eternal standing in Christ, by virtue of that life, as he had a time standing in Adam from his creation; that is, a oneness or unity of life in and with Christ eternally. Many precious points of truth and holy experiences of salvation are the outgrowth, I believe, of that great, central, discriminating truth. But it is not my purpose now to enter upon the subject more extensively. Those who oppose what they call "eternal vital unionism," sometimes deriding it as foolishness, often make up the doctrine they deride, asserting things as believed by its advocates which are new to us who hold it, in-

sisting that we hold that we were actually in Christ in the flesh. Sometimes I fear such are not truly sincere. So in regard to predestination, some who oppose that true and precious and solemn doctrine, will sometimes say, that if God purposed the wicked acts of men, then he himself does the wicked acts, and they will gravely profess to reply to us by saying that God does not work efficiently in the wicked to do evil, as he does in the righteous to do righteousness, as though we believed the contrary. Such arguments avoid the question, and create the issues to which they apply. And still they have to acknowledge that if God permitted a thing to be done, or even foreknew that it would be, and still created the world with that knowledge, then it was his purpose that it should take place. That truth a child can see, and the wisest man cannot evade it, and an angel cannot understand the full meaning of the glorious truth of God's absolute sovereignty in will and purpose and works. "He is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." "His judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July, 1898.

MACOMB, Illinois, Sept. 29, 1898.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Once more I ask your kind forbearance while I pen a few lines for our dear paper. I feel, as I often do, that I have written in the past more than is edifying or profitable, and I do not think that we should write merely to fill up the paper, or from a selfish desire to see our names in print. If we have no word of cheer and comfort whereby we may edify each other, and whereby the cause of Christ may be honored or glorified, it were better that we keep silent. This

thought troubles me now, and always does, even when I write in a private way, but I hope I have a desire for the welfare of Zion, and when the dear people of God ask me to write oftener, I cannot pass lightly over their request, though in my weakness I fear that I can say nothing to comfort. I feel my unworthiness, and that I am the least of all, and that the most ignorant of God's children could instruct and comfort me. I am poor and needy, and must and do trust in my heavenly Father for direction, and for wisdom and grace. When I wrote my last letter for the SIGNS I was in much darkness; my little hope seemed almost gone, and I could find no evidence that I was a child of God. I felt that I was indeed alone, that there was none like me. I felt that I must write and tell some of my feelings. I wrote and sent the letter with many misgivings, fearing that it contained no word of comfort for any one, but how was I lifted up, and made to rejoice, when within a short time I received five precious letters, and since that time many more, testifying to what I had written, and saying that my letter had been of comfort to the writers. Dear friends, you know not how I prize those dear letters, and how often I have reread them, while tears of joy filled my eyes, and I could praise the Lord who so sweetly constrained them to write me. I have tried to respond to most of these in a private way, but know that I cannot answer them as I would like to. I have many times felt to ask the Lord, though earthly enjoyment were denied me, to permit me to hold a place in the hearts of my dear kindred in Christ, and give me a desire to meet with them, and hear the gospel preached. These things, I consider the most precious. They are heavenly blessings. The Lord has been

better to me than I deserve, for though living twenty miles from my church, I have been permitted to attend five times this season, beside attending two associations. I have heard much able and comforting preaching, and met with many dear brethren and sisters. Elder H. M. Curry, late of Lebanon, Ohio, but now settled in this State, has been with our church twice this season, besides being at both of the associations which I have attended. I have heard him preach quite a number of times, and heard nothing in them to even remind one of fatalism, but the precious and glorious doctrine of predestination, election, and salvation by grace, which we have been used to hearing, and which we believe, love and rejoice in. He was enabled to preach with much ability, and to the comfort of the saints. I wish I could tell how much I enjoy the preaching at the associations. There were eleven ministers at the first and fourteen at the second, and the preaching was very able, and the saints were edified and comforted. Amongst the older ministers were two over eighty years of age, and others nearly as old, who have been on the walls of Zion, and have been brave defenders of the faith, for many years. Besides these there were others much younger, Elders Curry, Scott, Frazee and Thomas, who all preached with great ability and sweetness. It was wonderful to hear them in a bold and fearless manner proclaim the precious truths which we love so well, and cry out against the many institutions of the day; against spiritual wickedness in high places. Truly the Spirit of the Lord was upon them to enable them to so boldly preach Christ, in this day of great spiritual darkness, when the whole world is carried away with the religious inventions of men. I could but send up a

prayer to God for these young men, that God would ever be with them, and keep them faithful, and give them strength to go forth against all the opposition and persecution of men, for they may look for all these things, for Christ says, If they (the world) hate me, they will hate you also, and he also says, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves. O, may our younger ministering brethren ever take heed to themselves, and the doctrine, and each be an example to others, in a godly walk and conversation. The gift of the ministry is the highest gift of heaven. And may you all realize it, and though you may have given up your chosen vocation in life, and high positions, burying earthly ambitions, and may meet with sore trials and conflicts, yet God will be with you. I have felt anxious sometimes about who would fill the places of loved ones gone before, and of the now aged servants of God, but at these meetings I felt no further concern, for God has shown that he will not leave himself without a witness. He will not leave us comfortless, but a remnant shall be saved according to the election of grace.

While listening to all this glorious preaching, my hope was renewed, and I could and did rejoice. I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. Yes, it was sweet as honey and the honey comb. I could say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." The world with all its cares, vexations and troubles, was for a time forgotten, and I felt that I could mount up with wings as eagles. I have been feasting on this heavenly manna ever since, and have gathered many a rich cluster, and anthems of praise have filled my heart, to the author of all these heavenly blessings.

But, dear friends, perhaps before you read these lines, if you ever do, a cloud may intervene between me and my enjoyment, and I may be down in the slough of despond, or be a prisoner in Doubting Castle, or be taken by giant despair himself, for thus it has over been with me; a short season of rejoicing, and then dark clouds obscure my way. But let us remember, "He maketh the clouds his chariot," and he comes to us in the night seasons, and often when we seem to be sinking in the deep waters he says, "Be not afraid, it is I."

Were it mine to do, I would write a word of comfort to the aged servants of God. They are those who have stood on the walls of Zion for many years, through storm and fire, and have fought many a battle against error, who have ever been faithful to the cause of Christ. Many times have they spoken comfortingly to Jerusalem. I feel that as they have so often and so comfortingly spoken, and faithfully ministered to us in spiritual things, we should not think it a great thing to minister to them in carnal things, and may we not forget their needs. I deem it a great joy to minister to one of the servants of the Lord, in word and deed, even in the humblest manner. My dear father used to shed tears of joy upon receiving a word, or line of appreciation, from the brethren. So, if we can speak a word of encouragement or appreciation, it is a gracious privilege given us to do so. But of far more comfort than anything I, in my weakness, can say, are the words of our dear aged pastor, Elder Dark, who is still very feeble. He is past his ninety-second birthday, and we fear is nearing the end of his pilgrimage journey. I visit him often, and his words are more precious to me than an eloquent sermon. On my way to the Association

I called on him, he said, "Tell the brethren for me, that though I am absent in body, I am with them in Spirit. Tell them that I am trusting in the same God in whom I have trusted and believed lo, these many years, and whose name I have proclaimed for over sixty-five years. Tell them to be faithful, and preach the word, which is God manifest in the flesh, Christ, and him crucified, the only name by which sinners are saved. Tell them not to be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, but to preach it against all opposition. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Yes, I feel that I have kept the faith."

A few days ago I visited him again, and asked him how he was. He said, "I am feeling well spiritually. I am resigned to the will of God. I wish that I could feel more cast down, and more oppressed with doubts, then I could feel more assurance that I am suffering with Christ." Then he began repeating the hymn beginning, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," and on down to the sixth verse, when he stopped. Then I said, "Yes, my dear brother, and even down to old age all my people shall prove, my sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love, and when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn, like lambs they shall still in my bosom be born." With tears flowing from his sightless eye he said, "It is enough, he does carry me in his bosom, and will be with me to the end." Thus he converses with those who visit him. O, for such faith, such hope, such trust. It is of more value than all the vanities, wealth and show, of this unfriendly world. May these things be of encouragement to the servants of Christ, both old and young, and to all who love his name.

My dear kindred, I must quit. I know not why I have written in this way, but I have

written as my mind led me. It is not what I intended to write when I began, and I fear it will prove poor comfort. To all who have asked me, I send this as a token of love and fellowship. Dear Elder Chick, may you long be spared to the comfort of God's dear people. Please cast a mantle of charity over this lengthy letter, and believe me your sister in Christ,

SARAH E. RUNKLE.

[We have greatly enjoyed the above letter. Especially are we glad of the account given of the beloved and venerable Elder Dark. To him it is given according to the promise, to bear fruit in old age. How solemn a place is it to be with such aged servants of God in their declining years. We also retain a clear recollection of Elder I. N. Vanmeter, with whom we met one spring at our eastern associations. The writer of the above letter is his daughter. We recall that our affections were drawn out to him much, as a man, and as a preacher of the word. Our desire is to follow these servants of God, as they followed their Master.—ED.]

RIVER VIEW, Ala., August 22, 1898.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—I enjoyed most heartily, and concurred in your recent editorial in the SIGNS, upon the subject of Lot, and Lot's wife. I once used the text, "Remember Lot's wife," and since reading your editorial upon the subject, my mind has been exercised upon these things again. But the question, "Is it not a little one?" has seemed to strike me with considerable force. There are so many things which are really sin, which even the people of God engage in, and we are so ready to conclude that it is so little that the Lord will not take cognizance of it, when in reality we are culpable in the least, as well as in the great-

est sins. God has, in all ages of the world, punished, judged or chastised his people for their sins and disobedience, and they have in the end been forced to eat the fruit of their doings. The writer to the Hebrews says, "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and immovable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" &c. And as you have quoted, "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, which shall devour the adversaries." In another place the apostle says, "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong that he hath done, and there is no respect of persons with God." And again, "He will render to every man according as his work shall be." From these, and many other Scriptures, it seems plain that there is such a thing as sinning willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth. Also, that the people of God are under binding obligations to implicitly obey him, even in the least of his commandments. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

I now wish to present a few examples of disobedience, and the results that followed. There was Saul for instance, whom the Lord took and exalted, and made king over Israel. For his persistent enmity and hatred, and persecution of David, and other flagrant transgressions, it is said of him in his last days, that the Spirit of the Lord departed from him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. Samuel reprov'd Saul for his disobedience, and among other things told

him that rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry. And Samuel said unto him, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." And Samuel said unto him, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou." And Samuel visited Saul no more to the day of his death.

There was a prophet sent to Bethel to lay hold upon the horns of the altar, and cry out against the sins of Israel. But he had a strict command from the Lord not to eat or drink in the place; and for his failure to observe this command, he was slain by wild beasts, and nevermore reached his home. Eli, the priest, for a failure to restrain and reprove his sons from their lewdness, fell over dead upon receipt of the intelligence of the vanquished Israelites, and the still sadder news that the ark of God was taken. His two sons, Hophni and Phineas, were slain in the battle, and his daughter-in-law died on the spot. Her last words were, "The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken." Moses, for the little transgression when he smote the Rock, was not permitted to enter the promised land. We might go on and multiply instances recorded in the Scriptures of the same nature, but let this suffice. These things are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It may be truly said of Israel now, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help." It does seem to me that but

for the sovereign grace of God which saves them, the people of God would go astray and destroy themselves. "Salvation is of the Lord." It does seem to me that a life of sin and rebellion against God is sure to terminate in turmoil and confusion, disappointment, sorrow and darkness. Taking Eli and others as an example, this must be so. But grace saves in the end. Grace always triumphs, and the dying testimony of every saint has been to the praise of the glory of grace. Eli could have left no better evidence of his love of God, and his truth, or that God's word was in his heart, than the fact that he immediately expired when the sad news reached him that the ark of God was taken. The death of his two sons was a small matter as compared with the glory having departed from Israel. O, that all the house of Israel might be possessed with the same holy zeal and devotion to the cause of God, that characterized Eli in his last moments. "O the depth of the riches, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

In love and hope,

H. J. REDD.

HUTCHINSON, Kan., Aug. 27, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES
—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—As I see in the last number of the SIGNS, a letter written by me to Elder True, of Kansas, Ill., I will inclose you his reply to my letter. It contains sound doctrine. I think it will be agreeable to a majority of your readers. I like the SIGNS, and believe in the doctrine which they contain, generally speaking. I cannot understand why the subscribers will neglect to remit their dues; poverty alone could excuse them. If this is the case, they should be plain to so speak.

The prayer of Elder Purington, in a late number of the SIGNS, is to any sinner saved by grace, worth more than all we pay for it for one year, and especially to those who so seldom hear so solemn and effectual an appeal to the great God of mercy. "Not my will but thy will be done," were the words of Jesus, and they are also the words of all his true followers. The writing of Miss McColl, sent in by Elder Durand, in the last number, is another of the same value. When we, as the poor of the flock, can find nothing to offer, such offerings as these come with power, making us thankful that we are able to understand and realize the truth contained in them. More such would be profitable to the readers who seldom hear preaching from the pulpit.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,
A. MCINTURF.

KANSAS, Ill., Jan. 11, 1898.

MY DEAR BROTHER MCINTURF:—I have no hesitancy in thus addressing you. Though we have never met to know each other in the flesh, yet your very highly esteemed letter of the ninth inst., makes me know that we are brothers. This is especially so where you say that you are poor in spiritual things, but rich in sin. O, is it possible that there is another one living, who ever made a profession of being born again, who is so poor in Spirit as I am? Can there be one so prone to sin? I want to say that your words of approbation of the letter which I wrote to Elder Chick, did my poor soul good. Last October I passed my seventy-fourth birthday. I have been a professor fifty-five years, having been baptized near here, in Coles Co., in March, 1843. Since that time, unworthy as I have been, my name has been on the church book as a

member in good standing among the Predestinarian Baptists. In the spring of 1878, I was licensed to preach, and in August, of the same year I was ordained. Since then I have been in my poor way trying to preach Jesus as the way, the truth and the life of poor, lost and helpless sinners. With Paul, I know that I can say, "And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." O, that I could always just preach Christ, and be clear of all speculations, such as some almost constantly go into, about "time salvation," carrying it even to Arminianism. I know of but one salvation, and that is by and through the righteousness of Jesus, and his shed blood. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Our good deeds have nothing to do with salvation, either eternal or otherwise, they are only the evidence that this salvation is wrought out for us, and we are enabled to work out thereby, what God hath wrought in us. This much on salvation I suppose will show you my notion on the error into which some have drifted, and which tends to lead to the law service, or to salvation being hinged upon our obedience. I try to preach the sovereignty of God, his unlimited predestination, power and purposes, and that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

When at the throne of grace, remember me in your petitions.

JAMES M. TRUE.

ECCLESIASTES XII. 13.

“LET us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”

Lord, we know this is true, but what hast thou commanded us? All our plans come to naught, and we cry unto thee day and night. This one thing, a body of death, is ever before us; this deep sorrow of soul like a ghost, brings with it all the coldness of the tomb. All day I walk hither and thither, performing my daily task, but ever at my side or near me walks this ugly demon, and although I hurl threats and groans, and entreaties, at him, that assured expression of power and privilege sits upon his brow, and he buffets me about as the tiger his prey. When we think we are safe from danger, his sharp claws seem to reach out from the darkness, and sink deeper than ever. O, If death would only come and stop the pain. Yet while there is life there is hope, (and the life is eternal,) and like the poor victim, we keep trying to get away, and hoping each time that we are safe this time, but in vain. Vain is the help of man. Each one is pursued by the same monster of sin and trouble, so how can we help others, when we cannot help ourselves? Can it be possible that the cries of agony and deep distress rise daily to him? O Lord, comfort the poor. Surely they fear thee, and they see their record of sin and short comings, but how can they keep the commandments, when this body of death is crushing them down? One moment they cry, “We will keep thy statutes,” and the next find they are bound hand and foot by this ghost of the past, and a fearful looking for of judgment. What are temporal blessings and worldly goods, when this devil, backed by all the stings of the world, stands before us with one hand pointing to the

kingdoms of the earth, and the other to the crown of thorns? But thanks be unto God, when by the power of the Spirit, we cry, Get thee behind me, Satan, the sting of death (sin) and the strength of sin (the law) are forever put away. It is then we can sing,

Bring forth the loud trumpet,
And our harps let us bring,
To the Lord God, Jehovah,
Our praises we sing.

Through great tribulation,
And low grounds of sin,
Our Savior still leads us,
His people must win.

Hear his words to these loved ones,
You, you I will lead,
By the side of still waters,
And supply every need.

When bowed down with sorrow,
And no light appears,
“Peace be unto you,”
Shall quiet those fears.

When we feel that we have violated the law; when we know we have sinned, and have been beaten with many stripes, as each and every one who fails to keep his commandments are, we fear him, and then when his love and mercy and long-suffering to usward, is manifested, we find that like Paul, we with the mind serve the law of God, (keep his commandments,) yet with the flesh we must admit we serve the law of sin. So when you have tried all the vanities recorded in this book in which we find our text, you are ready to hear the conclusion of the whole matter: “Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” May you see your duty and do it, is our prayer for his name’s sake. Remember that when you keep the words of comfort that are given, you keep that which is not wholly your own, for we must have all things in common. When you hoard these things that belong to the household of faith, you become a miser,

and hide that which would be food and raiment for the poor in Spirit. The strongest proof of one's call, is his effort to obey this call, and the best way to show that we love him, is to keep his commandments. Then come as a little child, humbly trusting in the word of its father. Not seeking to know the deep mysteries of God, but having in view the good of yourself, the cause of Christ, and the love of your brethren, go forth in the discharge of your duty so plainly before you, and you shall find rest.

If within your heart there lingers
Love of truth or hope most sweet,
You shall surely find a blessing
As you his commandments keep.

DUDLEY G. JOHNSON.

LAWRENCEBURG, Kentucky.

WOODSTOCK, Mich., Sept. 12, 1898.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS OF THE SIGNS:—Inclosed you will find a letter handed to me while in company with our pastor, Elder Lines, and other brethren and sisters, while on our way to the Sandusky Association, last June, to have published in the SIGNS, if you indeed think best. The dear one who writes has been a member of my family for six or seven years, at different times, and I have for a long time thought she was one of the dear called ones, standing without the fold. O, how glad I was to hear the sweet story from her own pen. May the same divine and compassionate one that she saw by the eye of faith, at noonday years ago, constrain her to go to the church and tell her friends what the dear Lord has done for her. I have not her consent, but trust that she knows me well enough to overlook all, if indeed there should be any wrong in what I am doing. The letter will explain itself. With the greatest desire for the dear old SIGNS, and its editors, and correspondents, I would ever

in my weak way try to hold up their hands, as long as it contains the grand old Bible-taught doctrine of the apostles and prophets of old, and of our dear Savior Jesus Christ. I desire to read its pages while reason shall last. I would say with that dear old servant of God, Elder James M. True, and also with Elder David Bartley, that I believe these things from my very heart. And if any one asks me the reason, I tell them it was the Lord, as I hope, who implanted in my poor soul, these precious things.

In hope of eternal life through the merit of Jesus alone,

M. P. LEWIS.

BOICEVILLE, N. Y., May 20, 1898.

DEAR COUSIN NETTLE:—Again I find myself seated to answer your most welcome letter. I said to myself when I read your dear message, I will answer that right away. But, do you know? the next thought was, Do not be in a hurry, you can write nothing good, and it may be she will not care to read it. Yet there has been a desire to write, and tell you how much good your letter did me. If there is anything I love to hear or read, it is the dealings of the Lord with his dear people. They tell my own feelings so much better than I can tell them myself.

From a little child, I felt that I was very sinful and wicked, and thought if I should die, I should go to hell. Many, and many nights, I have lain awake, afraid to go to sleep, and promising that I would do better, if I lived to see another day, but still I could not see that I did any better. Time passed on, and I grew up, and these things in a measure left me. I went in young company, and was as jolly as the rest of my young companions. In 1879, I came back to the State of New York. One evening I went to a

Methodist meeting. The preacher did not come, and so they had a prayer meeting. A man got up and began to tell how much good he was doing, and had been doing since he started to serve the Lord. O, I never can express what feelings came over me. Something seemed to whisper in my ear, What good can you do? I felt that I was a poor, lost sinner, and unless the dear good Lord had mercy and compassion on my poor soul, I was forever lost. I went home, and when I got to my room I tried to pray, but all that I could say was, "God have mercy on me." That fall I went back to Michigan. All that winter, and next summer, I was so troubled about myself. I had no trouble about any one else, for I thought everybody was better than I. I was then with Mrs. Brooks. She would often ask me what the matter was, but I could not tell her. I arose one morning and went to work. I thought I could not live until night. Dinner came, and I did not go to the table until the rest were away, and while I was eating, I trust the dear Lord spoke peace to my troubled soul. It seemed as if I saw the dear Jesus nailed to the cross, and that he suffered, bled and died, for poor, unworthy me. I was so very happy for a long time. I thought, I never shall be troubled again. But a trouble arose in my mind soon. It was the thought, What if you have been deceived? it may be imagination. About that time aunt Hannah told her experience, and was baptized. I thought, If I was only fit to offer myself. And do you know, cousin Nettie, this is a great query in my mind now, Am I worthy to have a name and place with the dear old Baptists? I do love to go to their meetings, and hear them talk and tell their story, and all look so much better than poor, unworthy me. Others do not feel what

is often felt by me, such trials and temptations perhaps they do not see, for I am the chief of sinners, I freely own with Paul, for if I am a christian, I am the least of all.

I fear that I have been wearisome with my writing, and will bring my poor scribble to a close. With much love to you and yours, I remain your loving cousin,

ORRA

ELLISVILLE, Ill., August 9, 1886.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:— I would say to you that I get the SIGNS OF THE TIMES regularly, and can assure you that they come in demonstration and power of God, and I have been much comforted by reading the editorials and communications from our brethren and sisters scattered all over this sin-stricken earth. It has been thirty-four years since the Lord showed me what I was by nature, and what I must be by grace, before I could see God in peace. I thought that I was the greatest sinner in the world, and that God could not have mercy, and save such as I was. I tried everything that was in my power, and all failed to make me better, but still felt that I was worse. I could not think a good thought. Every act and thought was, I thought, an abomination in the sight of God. I tried to ask God to have mercy on me if he could, and maintain the honor of his throne, for I felt that I deserved nothing but to be banished from his presence forever. I thought I would try to ask the Lord once more, that if it could be that he could have mercy on such a wretch as I, and falling on the ground, saying, lost, lost, forever lost, expecting never to rise again, but in a moment my trouble was all gone, and I saw the way of life and salvation through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ

the Lord. O, what ecstasy of joy. I thought I could tell my neighbors just the way the Lord saved sinners, and started to tell one of my neighbors, but I had not got but a little way till the thought occurred to my mind, You are going to tell something that you know nothing of, and I stopped and went back to my team, as I had left it standing in the field. I still felt happy, and thought I never would see any more trouble, that I always would live, and never sin against such a blessed Savior, but O, how mistaken; I find that my nature is still wicked, and the things I would, I do not, and the things I would not, that I do. Sometimes I think that I can adopt the language of one of old and say, "It is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

Dear brethren, I have tried to pen a few words of the way the Lord has led me. Hoping the Lord will enable you to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

I have taken the SIGNS OF THE TIMES about twenty-five years, and will take it as long as I live, and it continues to contend for the doctrine that it has ever advocated. There are many Baptist papers starting in different States, but there is none of them to me like the SIGNS. Your old father was the only Baptist that took up the pen in defense of the truth, and he did not take it for popularity nor for money, but for the truth as it is in Jesus. That is why I love it so well. I am sixty-eight years old, and of course cannot expect to live many years. May God enable us to honor him with our bodies and spirits, which are his.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,

THOMAS ROSS.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1898.

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EDITORS:

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GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

REPLIES TO INQUIRIES.

THE question has been asked, "Does the Lord give to his called servants in the ministry special gifts?" That is, does he give to one the power to expound one portion of the doctrine, and to another the power to expound some other portion of the doctrine of the Scriptures, so that each has his own special part of the truth to present?

There can be no question that our God has given to each of his servants, his own special gift. We have only to read carefully the different writings of the several prophets and apostles, as recorded in the Scriptures, to see that although they were each and all of them moved in what they wrote, by the Holy Spirit, they yet were different in their gifts. They differ in the manner or style of their writing, so that a careful reader could not well mistake the writing of Paul, for John, or Peter. The work of the Spirit of God in the heart does not destroy the natural distinctions of disposition and manner among men. Men who were moved by inspiration of God to write his words for our learning, yet possessed their own personal manner in their writing. This is one of the wonders of the revelation of

God to men. They were moved by the same one Spirit, but yet they maintained their own peculiarities of style, and each showed that he possessed a different order of mind from any one else. We believe that the same distinctions are maintained in the ministry to-day. Common observation shows every one that no two ministers are alike in their order of thought, in the subjects which specially claim their attention, or in their manner of presenting the same truth. This is all as God would have it, and is not to be deplored, but rather it is something to be thankful for. In it we see the manifold wisdom of God, who has introduced such endless variety into all that he has made, whether we survey the kingdom of nature, or that of grace. In all that pertains to the spiritual kingdom of our Lord there is a diversity of operations, but the same Spirit. There is diversity in unity.

Furthermore, we do not doubt that the Lord impresses upon the minds of his servants in their ministry, also a diversity of subjects. As far back as we can remember anything, we have heard it said of some of the servants of God, their gifts seemed to be of different orders. Of one it would be said, he had a special gift in depicting the exercises of the believer. Of another, that he was peculiarly gifted in expounding the word. Of another, he was especially gifted in presenting the strong foundation principles of our faith. Of another, he was much gifted in presenting the obligations of those who believed. This was the common feeling of those who were spiritual, concerning these varieties of gifts. All were useful, and none of them were to be counted as less profitable than the others, without impeaching that wisdom which had imparted these several gifts to his servants. However much one might wish that he

had the gift of another, still it remained true that God had given to each as he saw that the needs of his people required, and no one could or ought to change his gift for that of another. And no one had any right to despise the gift which God had given to his servant, no matter of what order it might be. The same is true to-day. But this is a very different thing from what we sometimes call "riding a hobby," in preaching. It ought never to be said of a minister of the gospel, that no matter what Scripture he reads, we know just what he is going to say from it. It is very evident that if any one is called to the work of the ministry, he will feel that he desires to search the Scriptures, and to present out of their boundless treasure, such variety as the needs of the people among whom he labors may require. This he must do solely under the direction of that Spirit of truth which God gives his people. We have long believed that when God calls any one to the work of the ministry, he will also confer upon that one a heart to search the Scriptures, to learn what they do contain, that he may present them to those who hear him. There is something radically wrong when one who professes to be a servant of the Lord preaches but one thing. The minister is not to know anything among the people save Jesus Christ and him crucified, it is true, but in this theme there is an endless variety of matter. In the Scriptures this variety of matter is contained; therefore we should search them carefully. The Holy Spirit will illumine the sacred page, and fill the heart of the called servants of God with rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge. There is but little evidence that one is called to the work of the ministry, and there can be but little profit to the churches, if there be but one theme pre-

sented in the preaching. Predestination, election, effectual calling, justification, obedience, the atonement, sanctification, the resurrection, any and all these subjects, beside many others, are good and profitable to be considered in their several times and places, but he who preaches about one of them all the time, and neglects the others, can be of but little profit to his brethren. We do not understand that such a course as this is approved of God. All these subjects are presented in the Scriptures, and are good and profitable to believers. It seems to us sure that God will bestow upon his servants a heart to search the Scriptures, and to present at different times this variety for the edification of the church.

We leave these remarks with our readers. We should be very glad to hear from other brethren upon this subject. It seems to us of importance to be considered.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

EPHESIANS II. 10.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

The epistle in which our text is found is addressed “to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus,” and embraces all those of every name and locality, of every kindred, and throughout all time, which were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto God, and made acceptable in the Beloved. With these the apostle includes and identifies himself in the pronoun we. “For we are his work-

manship.” As well in the apostle’s day, as at the present time, men were found contending for salvation by works; and those who expected to be justified by the deeds of the law, and accepted according to their own righteousness. In branding this heresy, and to settle this matter forever, the holy apostle, inspired by the Holy Ghost, has said in the preceding connection of our subject, most emphatically, “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.” And then follow the words of our text, “For we are his workmanship,” &c. Being the workmanship of God, we cannot be our own workmanship, nor the workmanship of men or of angels. This workmanship embraces and includes all the work, from first to last, that has any bearing on our salvation, or the good works which he has before ordained that his people shall walk in. The creation, formation, manifestation, as well as the inscription of the names of all the saints in the Lamb’s book of life before the world began, must necessarily have been the work of God himself. Therefore he says, “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.” “This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. 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; and thou art mine.” The workmanship of God plainly appears in their creation and formation, and also in their redemption, “For I have redeemed thee.” Their Redeemer is the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole

earth. The whole arrangement of the covenant of grace and salvation was the work of God alone. He loved them with an everlasting love. He elected them, as he has declared, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It was his work alone to "Bless them 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." "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." In all this the exclusive workmanship of God is indisputable. Nor is this all, their regeneration and heavenly birth are also the work of God. Of his own will begat he them; and they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Hence the men of God, inspired by the Holy Ghost, most devoutly acknowledged that God has wrought all our works in us, that it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. No man can come unto God but by Christ, and no man can come unto Christ except the Father draws him. No man knoweth the Son, but he unto whom the Father shall reveal him. Simon Bar-jona was blessed in this, that flesh and blood had not revealed to him the Son of God, but the Father which is in heaven. And Paul also testifies the same. When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me, straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood. Again, God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shined in

your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. Each of these Scriptures, separately considered, prove beyond all successful controversy that the saints are exclusively the workmanship of God, and all of them collectively confirm the same important truth. Of this truth every one that is born of God and taught by his Spirit, has a witness in his own experience, and as soon as he is born of the Spirit, he begins to lisp it forth in language like this: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul; he hath taken me up out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and he hath established my goings, and put a new song into my mouth," &c. The workmanship of God is inimitable. Neither men nor angels can create within us a clean heart, nor renew within us a right spirit. When men attempt to convert sinners, make ministers, direct the course of the gospel, or to protect the church, they make wretched work; their base imitations may be received by the world, but they are easily detected by those who are taught of God. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God, Almighty." Truly he is a wonder-working God. "All his works are perfect." But none of the works of men are perfect. And this is the work of God, saith Jesus, that ye believe on me, for faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and it is the gift of God.

"Created in Christ Jesus." As our natural creation was in Adam, so our spiritual creation is in Christ. What we understand by our creation in Adam is, that God gave us an existence in the person of Adam, which was to be developed in the proper time, by ordinary or natural generation; and so it is our understanding of the Scriptures on this

subject, that God gave his people their original spiritual life in Jesus Christ, who is the second Adam and the Lord from heaven, and that all spiritual blessings were given to the church in him, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. And as the apostle John has said, And this is the record, (or divine testimony) that God hath given 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. The Son of God is the life of his people, as it is written, When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory. The life given to the church is called eternal life, and that which is eternal is without beginning of time or end of duration; yet it is spoken of as a creation in our text. What then are we to understand by the term, in its application to the spiritual existence of the church of God in Christ Jesus the Lord? To help our infirmities, we being finite creatures, God has in his word pointed us to natural things, as figures of things which are spiritual. Thus the natural creation of the world is illustrative of the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. But while we trace the instruction given in the figure, we should be careful to observe that the figure is natural, but the things signified are spiritual. As, for instance, in the new birth, allusion is made to a natural birth, but not to signify that the new birth is a natural birth, but as in the natural, a new production or manifestation of natural life is developed, so in the second birth, a new and spiritual life is brought forth and made manifest. All we know of the natural creation of the world is, that God spake the word, and it stood fast; he commanded, and it was

done. All things were spoken into existence, which did not previously exist, and this calling things into existence was called creation; formation is another thing. But in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, and all the years that fill up the space from the creation to the great burning day, are required for the development of what was in the beginning created. The spiritual existence of the church is also attributed to the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. And it is thus set forth, "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." That is, by the word, which was with God, and which was God." "And without him was not anything made that was made." "In him" (that is, in the Word which was with God, and which was God) "was life, and the life was the light of men." "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." John bore witness of him, and cried, saying, "This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Thus as the existence of the natural world was embraced in the word of God's power, and sprung forth into development, when that word of power was spoken, so the spiritual existence of the church, or the life of the church of God, was in the Word, which was with God, and the Word which was God. This Word in which was life, and grace, and truth, is the same that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and whose glory was seen by the saints as that of the only begotten of the Fath-

er. The relative appellation of Son, applying to Christ in his mediatorial position, is based on his being the only begotten of the Father, and begotten full of grace and truth. His being the begotten Son of the Father, shows that his existence was in the Father, and one with him, and that his being set up as the mediatorial Head and life of his people, in eternity, is what we understand to be expressed by the terms begotten, set up, brought forth, sent, &c., together with every other term implying derivation or subordination, which is in the Scriptures applied to him, except such as apply to the flesh which he assumed, or was made, when made of a woman, and when he took part of the same flesh and blood which his children are partakers of. Thus, as in the creation of the natural world, God spake all things into existence by the word of his power; so, in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, he spake the word and it stood fast. He spake, and said of Christ, "A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." Our hope of eternal life, therefore, rests upon the promise which God, who cannot lie, made before the world began. And hence it is affirmed that God 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 third and last point to be considered is, Unto what end were we created in Christ Jesus? Our text informs us that they were created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Many portions of the Scriptures express substantially the same thing. Peter says, "But ye are a

chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." And Paul says, "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." The psalmist whose words we have quoted, says, "A seed shall serve him," &c. "They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." The good works in which God has ordained that his people shall walk are also ordained of God. God has said, they shall shew forth his praise. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness, and to this end were they created in Christ Jesus, and to secure this end he has not only taken them up out of the horrible pit, but he has established, or before ordained, their goings, and put a new song in their mouths. It is not in them that walk to direct their own steps, for God has before ordained that he will lead them in a way that they knew not, and in paths that they have not known, and put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. This people he has formed for himself, and they shall shew forth his praise, for he has before ordained it. No works are good in his sight, but such as he has before ordained for them to walk in, and of these the New Testament is replete with instruction, and the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All works which he has not ordained are evil. In no other works than those which he has ordained can we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are his.

In our fleshly nature we are fallen and depraved, and the whole fountain of our

carnal hearts and minds are polluted and wicked, and "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Not one. From our creation in Adam we have a nature which is totally depraved, in which there dwelleth no good thing. In that nature, "There is none that seeketh after God; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." But in our spiritual creation in Christ, we are constituted members of him. His Spirit is put within us; his law is written within our inward parts, and we are redeemed from the law, and become dead to it by the body of Christ, that we should be married unto another, even to him that is risen from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. By vital union with Christ we have our fruits unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. But as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, neither can we bring forth fruit to the honor and glory of God, except we abide in Christ; for he is the true vine, and we are the branches.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., April 15, 1856.

TO OUR AGENTS.

WE have not yet been able to supply all our agents with statements of the accounts of delinquents in their section, but will press the work as fast as possible. The list of delinquents is so large that it requires much time to select the names for each agent. We are very anxious to get these bills out at as early a day as possible, as we are in need of all that can be collected for us.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE.

ALTHOUGH we have not published for some time our advertisements of large Family, and Pulpit Bibles, and a number of other books, formerly advertised, yet we have them for sale, and any one wishing to purchase, can obtain full information in regard to them, by sending for one of our handsome illustrated catalogues, which we mail free.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Oct. 7th, 8th and 9th, 1898, to the churches and Associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

As it is a long standing custom among us, at our associations, to write what we call a Circular Letter, to be published in our Minutes, we will call your attention to the subject of the Resurrection, in which rests all the hope of God's people. Martha believed in the future resurrection of her brother when she was talking with Jesus, but did not expect his present resurrection, when "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."—John xi. 25. He proved this grand truth to the joy of those sorrowing sisters, by raising their brother from the confines of the tomb. Jesus, in talking with the Jews, and calling their attention to the resurrection, says, "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." So we have the assurance of the resurrection of all the human family. Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 12-20, in reasoning with the brethren on this point, says, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead

rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." It seems that there was some in Paul's day, though they had believed Paul's preaching, yet denied the resurrection, simply because they could not understand the great mystery of the resurrection, saying, With what body shall they come forth? It is a wonderful mystery; nevertheless we by faith believe this wonderful truth. Jesus was crucified, and his body laid in the grave for three days and nights, till the time appointed of God to raise him from the grave, and then all the powers of darkness could not prevent the resurrection of the body of Jesus from the dead. It was the same body that went into the tomb that was raised up, and appeared unto the apostles and many other witnesses, and it was the same body that they saw ascend up into heaven, but we must remember that Jesus did not appear to them in his glorified body, for no man can see Jesus in his glorified body with his natural eyes. Now the body of Jesus never saw corruption, because there was no sin in that body, for the conception of Jesus was not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, by the Holy Ghost; nevertheless all our sins were laid upon him, for he was our life, for we were chosen in him before we sinned in Adam, which necessarily brought Christ under the law; for he being the Head of the church, which is his body, and as the head cannot be separated from the body and live, neither can the body be separated from the head. We, as the children

of Adam, are sinful, and are of a corruptible seed, and must necessarily see corruption. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 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? 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. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.

A. MELLOTT, Clerk.

The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, in session with the Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1898, to the several churches and Associations with which we correspond, sends greeting.

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—According to custom we address you this our annual epistle of love and fellowship, calling your attention to the subject of charity, than which there is no other subject of greater importance to the church. We base this assertion upon what the apostle says in 1 Cor. xiii. 13, "And now abideth

faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." We do not think charity is greater than faith or hope, simply because it has a more lasting or eternal abiding, or simply because it continues in the life to come. We do not understand the apostle to use it in this sense, but rather instruction in righteousness to the man of God in this present time state: that the supporting, sustaining power of charity is greater than faith or hope: that it has greater cohesive power than either faith or hope.

The word charity not being found in the Old Testament, we take it for granted it is because there was found no place for it. The end of the commandment being charity (1 Tim. i. 5), so long therefore as the end had not been attained, charity had no place. The law of commandment, embodying separation, servile punishment and death, must be abolished before charity could become operative. We understand the true significance of charity is found in the love of God through the work of Jesus Christ, and that there is no charity except in love manifested in works corresponding in spirit with the works of Jesus. God loved from all eternity, and loved his people from the beginning, but never until that love was manifested in bringing his people together in one, was charity effective. We do not understand that love and charity, as closely allied as they are, have the same significance, but rather that charity is the work of love in righteousness, as the apostle says, "out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." Though love, and faith, and hope, had their existence under the Old Testament, yet there was not an organized church where the people of God dwelt together in the unity of the spirit, and bond of peace, on earth. Nor could

there be, so long as every man demanded according to the law, which he had a perfect right to do. Herein does the righteousness of the saints under the gospel dispensation exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees. Wherein we condone not, but condemn, reprove, rebuke sin, yet we do it with long forbearance and compassion, bearing their sins in our own bodies, thus following in the righteousness of Christ, and in the charity of our blessed Lord, and not in the righteousness of the law. Because of this charity the people of God are brought together, even as the love of Christ manifested in works of charity brought his people together, and made them one in him. So does the love of God in us manifested in works of charity toward our brethren draw them unto each other in love and fellowship, uniting us altogether as members of the one body, so unites us that we are bold to say, "If you are a member of the body of Christ, so am I." In a worldly sense it is not the magnificence of the house, nor the richness of its appointments, that makes it worthy of the name of home, but however humble, or however grand, where the sympathizing tear flows for each other's woes, and a happy smile for each other's joys, where charity abounds, where heart in each other's heart delights, *there, and there alone*, is a place found worthy of the dignity of a home. And so where love behaveth itself lovely, "Seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," is that place worthy of the name of the church of Jesus Christ, or a home for the people of God. Whatever else we may have, whether prophecies to solve all mysteries, or faith to re-

move mountains, yet in the absence of this binding principle that gives light and life to the church, all is profitless. We may know some who we cannot doubt have faith and understand mysteries, yet in the absence of charity toward their brethren, death reigneth, their light has gone out in the church, the candlestick has been removed out of its place. That the church may know that he is the God that trieth the heart and reins, and will give unto every one according to his works (Rev. ii. 5, 23). If we do not do the works of love (charity), love like faith is dead, being alone. Being works we are commanded to put it on. Not only so, we are told by both Paul and Peter, above all things to put on charity. That it is the bond of perfectness. It is the transcript of Christ's love to us, bringing together all parts of the body of Christ in harmonious agreement. Without it there would be no church. So long as the church exists on earth, so long will faith, hope and charity abide. There is however a material difference between abiding in weakness and abiding in strength: "This is love, that we walk after his commandments," "And whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." So, as we understand, it is works of love that bringeth perfection to the church. It will be understood that this perfection has reference to the organization of the church, to the order of the house of God, of which charity is the sum and substance, greater than faith or prophecy. Of all things, and above all things, see, brethren, that we hurt not the wine found in the cluster. Let us by due diligence to every obligation resting upon us as members of the church, show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. As we have received the Lord Jesus

Christ so let us walk in him. As we are not children of darkness but of light, let us walk in light. We can only do this by acts of kindness towards our brethren: not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is: nor of visiting the poor, the sick, and the afflicted: of speaking in kindness and love, "forbearing one another."

O, that we could see the fire of charity burning brighter upon the altar of the church, that we could see at the times of our meetings the laying aside of every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and the presence of our brethren to cheer the hearts and strengthen the faith of the church. These are works of righteousness, which, if a man neglects he forsakes his own mercy. God will not be mocked. "We beseech you therefore brethren that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

J. N. BADGER, Moderator.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

W. A. MARTIN, Assistant Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Mes-songoes, Accomac Co., Va., Oct. 19th, 20th and 21st, 1898, to the Associations with which we correspond, sends christian salutation.

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have enjoyed a pleasant series of meetings. Your messengers have come to us with cordial greetings of love and fellowship, and have been most cordially and lovingly welcomed, and the ministers have come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Their preaching has been well received. There has been no discordant note, but the sound of the one great trumpet through all the sermons,

and we feel that it has been with power, and has comforted and built us up in our souls. Our churches are in peace, and seem to be enjoying a good degree of prosperity.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the church at Forest Grove, to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1899, where we hope to again welcome your messengers, and receive your messages of love.

T. M. POULSON, Mod.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

SELF-PRONOUNCING, REFERENCE BIBLES.

(KING JAMES' VERSION.)

OF all the different styles of Bibles we have placed upon the market, there are none, in our opinion, equal to the above named. The self-pronouncing feature alone renders the book most valuable. Without doubt the system adopted for these Bibles is the simplest form of diacritical marks yet devised. They are printed in clear type, on white paper. The helps have been entirely rewritten, and revised up to date. The new patent process of flexible binding, give them a special value above all others. When opened they will lay perfectly flat, or they can be opened back, and rolled up like manuscript, without injuring the binding in the least. So confident are we that these Bibles will give general satisfaction, that we offer to those purchasing them, to refund the money on return of the books, if they are not pleased with them.

The styles of binding are so numerous that space will not admit of our quoting them all. The list given below is for good, substantial, flexible binding, viz:

8713. In Long Primer type, one size smaller than this type, bound in French Morocco, extended covers, gilt edges, linen lined, \$2.00.

8413. In Brevier type, three sizes smaller than this type, bound as above, \$1.50.

8313. In Minion type, four sizes smaller than this type, bound as above, \$1.40.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder G. N. Tusing, Oct. 18th, 1898, Carl Parkinson and Katie White, both of Licking Co., Ohio.

By Elder Wm. L. Beebe, Oct. 26th, 1898, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. Ferdinand A. Stevens to Miss Janet N., daughter of Mr. Benjamin D. Bradner, both of Warwick, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

WE read in Chronicles that, "All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah, and Jeremiah lamented for Josiah." Thus it is that the brethren, sisters and friends of **Elder Benjamin Young**, mourn and lament his death in many Counties in Texas, where he died, and in Kentucky, where he was born and raised.

Elder Young was born Sept. 7th, 1814, in Simpson Co., Ky., and died August 15th, 1898, in Limestone Co., Texas. He joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Mt. Zion Church, in Warren Co., Ky., in 1833. He was a member of the church sixty-five years. He was an earnest and faithful preacher of the gospel for fifty-five years. He gloried in the doctrine of election, predestination and final perseverance of the saints. He served as the pastor of many churches. He served as Moderator of Drake's Creek Association, in Kentucky, for many years. He was Moderator of the Big Creek Association, in Texas, almost from the time he moved into the State, in 1879. In 1889 he moved into the bounds of the Union Association, and soon became Moderator of the Association. On account of his age and health he was excused from being Moderator about one year ago. He was universally loved by all who knew him. He was in the constitution of Bell Springs Church, in Hill Co., Texas, May 22d, 1880, and was received into said church the same day. His first marriage was consummated in Kentucky, to Rebecca H. Blunett, who died July 21st, 1885. His second marriage was on Feb. 9th, 1889, to Mrs. Elizabeth Cook, of Mantalba, Anderson Co., Texas, which was his home at the time of his death. While on a visit at Green Cook's, Limestone Co., Texas, he died suddenly, and almost without a struggle. He had been dangerously ill for several months at his home, but had partially recovered. He was blessed with two noble, christian wives, both being members of the Primitive Baptist Church. There was born to him and his first wife twelve children, eight of whom are living, seven sons and one daughter. He died at the ripe old age of 84 years, lacking a few days.

P. S.—Since writing the above obituary of our beloved brother, Elder Benjamin Young, the writer attended the Big Creek Association, and met many dear brethren who lamented his demise. They greatly missed his presence and counsel. He had been the

pastor of many of the churches of the Association, and had served them as Moderator of the Association for many years. He was not only loved and revered by the church, but was admired and loved by all who knew him.

William Clark Butler was born near Woodhull, Ill., Sept. 2d, 1875. He was the eldest child of B. F. and Meriba R. Butler (nee Paris). He was a very promising young man, of fine qualities of mind and heart, being much loved and respected by all his associates. He was full of life and hope until the last few months. Last February he had "la grippe," from which he never recovered, as he went into a gradual decline, which seemed to terminate in catarrhal consumption. He never made a profession of religion, but had great respect for those whom he considered honest, and lived what they professed. He was not afraid to die, but felt fully resigned; was conscious to the very last moment, taking his brothers in his fond embrace, and advising them for the future. I was away at the time, and did not arrive till several hours after the spirit took its flight, as he was taken suddenly worse, and a telegram failed to reach me in time. He died the evening of the 19th of August, surrounded by sympathizing friends, who all vied with each other to do him homage.

His funeral was largely attended the Sunday following; the casket was almost buried in a sea of flowers. Elder Miller delivered a comforting discourse, after which all that was mortal was followed to its last resting-place, by the side of his mother and little sister, who preceded him almost five years. We are confident that he was taken from the evil to come. A sweet smile rested so beautifully on his dear, innocent face. He leaves an almost heart-broken father and three brothers, besides others, to mourn the loss of one they had so highly cherished, yet we mourn not like those without hope, for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

B. F. BUTLER.

Elder E. T. Saunders departed this life August 2d, 1898, at his home in Pawnee, Ill., aged 68 years and 1 month. He leaves his aged companion, with four children, all being with him during his sickness, and many relatives and friends who would have sacrificed anything that would have added to his comfort. Brother Saunders joined the Baptist church called Horse Creek, in 1862. Was ordained by a presbytery called by said church, in 1874, to the work of the gospel ministry, which calling no doubt he filled to the best of his ability, and died firm in the faith for which he had contended earnestly these many years. Brother Saunders did not only claim to believe the predestination of all things, but believed it, and con-

sidered all those that do, highly favored of the Lord. Brother Saunders did not believe the Lord punished people for their meanness, neither saved them for their goodness, but for their good and his glory. I visited him several times during his sickness, always found him in the same mind, greatly desiring to be reconciled to the Lord's will, in which he was highly favored, and peacefully passed away when the final end came. At his request, at the church of his membership, over his remains, and to a large congregation there assembled, I truly hope that it was by the ability that God gives, that I was enabled to proclaim a free, finished, complete salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people. To this end may we rest in hope of a better resurrection; having borne the image of the earthly, which we now consign to earth, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly, where and when we hope to be equal with the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection, and die no more.

C. C. PURVINES.

COTTON HILL, Ill., Oct. 22, 1898.

BY request I send for publication in the SIGNS a notice of the death of **Mrs. John Bennett**, of Salisbury, Md. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church of Salisbury, June 4th, 1871, and remained a faithful member. She was held in warm and loving fellowship by all the saints who knew her, and was highly esteemed in the community. She was born Jan. 3d, 1842; married June 14th, 1866, and died June 10th, 1898. Her disease was cancer. I called to see her at her brother's, brother Thomas Smith, in Baltimore, March 24th. She had then but lately learned the nature of her disease, and had decided not to have an operation performed, having no confidence that it would be successful. She expressed a desire to be reconciled to the Lord's will. I called to see her at her home in Salisbury twice in April. Her conversation showed a quiet and peaceful mind regarding her condition, and a trust that her hope was in the Lord, and that it was a good hope through grace. I felt comforted with her in the conversation, but it was a very solemn comfort. Her sufferings at times were very great, but were born with patience. Her daughter, Mrs. Minnie Tyndall, and her daughter-in-law, were with her during her illness. From them, and her husband and two sons, she received all possible loving care. They, with another daughter, who was in Mississippi at the time, but was at the funeral, are left to mourn.

Elder H. C. Ker attended the funeral the second Sunday in June, and preached the gospel to the large congregation. Their loss is deeply felt by her dear family, and by our little church. Her brother, Thomas

Smith, of Baltimore church, was at her funeral. He has since been taken home.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary Ann Dennis departed this life Saturday night, Oct. 29th, at the home of her son, Archie Dennis, in Salisbury, Md., aged 57 years. She was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist church, in Salisbury, in January, 1868. I remember well the warmth of love she expressed for the people of God, and the warmth of love and fellowship that was awakened in the church for her, as she told tremblingly of the hope which had been given her. But few of those who then received her into the fellowship of the church, now remain, and one of those is her mother, who still remains a loved and faithful member of the church on earth, and who was present at the funeral of her daughter. Sister Dennis was always present at the meetings of the church when able to attend. A few years ago she took her letter to the church at Indiantown, the distance to Salisbury being too great for her to reach the meetings; yet she came when she could. Last Saturday afternoon she was present, and manifested more than ordinary interest and comfort. She said to the sister with whom she sat, "Let us go up near the pulpit, where we will not miss a word." I was reading Philippians ii., and speaking of the humility and exaltation of Christ. There appeared a peculiar tenderness and joy in her soul as she greeted and conversed with her brethren and sisters, and during the evening she frequently expressed her comfort at being here once more, to her daughter and son-in-law, brother and sister John Parker. Her husband, who has not been in the habit of attending meetings, offered to bring her, which was a comfort to her. She was taken ill with heart trouble about nine or ten o'clock, and passed away about midnight. Her sufferings were great, calling forth the prayer, "Dear Savior, have mercy." She leaves a husband and ten children, five of whom are married. It is a sad bereavement to them. Also, a sister whom I baptized in May, 1868, and brothers, and her aged mother, who lives to see her great-grandchildren, some of whom are grown to manhood and womanhood. May the Lord comfort them all.

The funeral was held in the Old Baptist meeting-house in Salisbury. Of the many relatives, only one daughter was not able to attend. I read the words of Jesus to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life," &c.—John xi. 25, 26.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 30, 1898.

DIED—At her home in Fauquier Co., Va., July 12th, 1898, Mrs. Catherine Sutphin, aged 72 years and 4 months. Sister Sutphin had been a member of the Broad Run Church for many years, and her walk was consistent with her profession. For several years before her death ill health prevented her regular attend-

ance upon the meetings of the church, but her faith in her Redeemer remained unshaken to the end, and when the final summons came she was fully prepared to meet it, and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

ALSO,

George A. Dodd, near Poolsville, Md., August 19th, 1898, aged about 82 years. It was my privilege to baptize brother Dodd in the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, in Loudoun Co., Va., in October, 1885. He proved a faithful follower of the lowly Jesus, a sincere lover of the truth, and adorned his profession with an orderly walk. The last few years of his life were spent in suffering so that he was unable to attend the meetings of the church, where he delighted to be, but he experienced the faithful care and loving-kindness of his Savior, in whose unclouded presence we believe he now rests. May God comfort the sons and daughters who are left to mourn their loss.

J. N. BADGER.

ALDIE, Va.

ERRATA.

In the Circular Letter of the Lexington Association for 1898, two mistakes occur, viz:

The twenty-second line should read, "have passed their centennial, and others." Next to last line of letter should read, "which ye have been taught, whether by."

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SILAS H. DURAND.

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Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1898. NO. 23.

CORRESPONDENCE.

“IT DOTH NOT YET APPEAR.”

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—The Shepherd of Israel still loves and cares for his ransomed flock. I am comforted in believing that none shall pluck them out of his hand; and thus I have hope that he will not yield even me up a prey to sin and Satan. But to the end he will lead me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. And as I review the past, I believe that when I am faint and weary, and sick, and ready to die by the wayside, he will not despise me, pass me by, and leave me to perish in my infirmities, but he will take me to his bosom, and carry me upon his shoulders, and with his own sweet mercy he will nurse me to health again. “He restoreth my soul.” There is no power, no one but the Lord our Shepherd that can quicken and revive our drooping souls. I have not written to you for some time, but I call to remembrance how sweet your last letter was, and I read it again and again, it was so good and comforting. There is something so above and beyond all other things in the fellowship and communion of the children of God. It is another

world, another country, another life, than that which is merely in the flesh. Two lives we live. One the natural life which we have in common with all our fellow creatures, and the other a life which only the elect of God know. Multitudes lay claim to being the favored ones of God, to be christians, the children of God, but as soon as they open their mouths upon the subject of religion, we feel to be ill at ease, that we are in the presence of strangers, and the more persistent they are in their religious talk to impress upon us that they are believers, our brethren, the more we feel that we are unknown, unrelated, and of no kin to one another. What a difference there is when we meet a quickened sinner, a humble believer in Jesus. We speak a few words to one another, we begin to relate our soul's exercises to each other, and each heart says, That is a language I understand, I have been in that place, I have traveled a little in that path, I have had glimpses of that scene. O, that one whom my friend says is all his hope, Christ the Lord, the lovely Savior, surely I have seen his dear face, and he it is whom my heart yearns after. He has taken captive poor me, and I cannot live, and cannot die without him.

As we hear another speaking of the excellencies of Jesus, and of his hope in him, my poor heart that has mourned his absence is sometimes ready to burst with love-sickness, and exclaim, "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him I am sick of love." How sweet to my soul is communion with saints. I have been saying of late to myself, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." "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." Look abroad throughout the world; sin and folly are rampant; the whole world lieth in wickedness. This may be disguised, glossed over, and covered up as with a garment, yet the child of God cannot always remain deceived. All mankind are but dust, corrupt, perishing, dying; there is none abiding; this earth is a vast sepnlechre. Earth's joys are transient, they have no endurance, they are suspended, they fade, they end, and bereaved of them the child of God learns that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. Surely this world, and our natural life therein, is not our abode. Its dying pleasures, its cares, pain and sickness, bereavements, losses and crosses, admonish us that this is not our rest, it is polluted. We are but strangers and pilgrims; we desire "a better country, that is an heavenly." (Heb. xi. 16.) "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Now we have sorrows; the world, our flesh and the devil annoy us, and make our life sometimes dreary indeed. The ensnaring vanities of time allure us, by their deceitful baits, into traps and pitfalls, and were it not for the tender mercy of the Lord, we should utterly perish in the vanities of the flesh. Now, the enemy of our souls puts on a bold face, and sneers at

our spiritual mindedness, and challenges us, when cast down and broken in spirit, to produce the proofs of our being the beloved sons of God. Often we are wounded by our own fleshly vanities, and by Satan's malicious thrusts. At times everything seems to be against us, and our God himself it would seem, no more pities us, and in our infirmity we are ready to cry, "Lord, why casteth thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me?"—Psalm lxxxviii. 14. Sometimes the heavens over us are brass; we are thrust down, we are nothing. In regard to spiritual things I wander in desolate places, as a beggar, friendless, houseless, naked and hungry, and no one cares for my soul. How could they, even if it were in their power, such a worthless worm as I know I am? "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Now perplexities, sickness and pain, bring the wrinkles upon our features, and the grey hairs upon our heads; the outward man perishes, and the worms shall soon feed upon our mortal bodies, and still, as I have contemplated all this, I cry, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Sometimes in a mournful strain I have repeated these words to myself, and then again amidst a succession of scenes that have passed through my mind, hope has sprung up, my heart has warmed, I have looked out of obscurity and out of darkness, and in the voice of hope, in the foretaste of victory, my heart has sung the words, "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." Our beloved Christ journeyed through the world as a prince in disguise. The world knew him not, so the sons of God are unknown to the carnal world. It cannot see they are of God, his dear children, heirs of God, and

joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. "As unknown, and yet well known," unto the Lord. Now, while in the world, the saints are plagued with sin and sorrows, trials, sickness, pain, and death terminates their earthly career. We cannot see that such are the sons of God. Look ever so intently upon them with our mortal sight, and we cannot see that they are heirs of God, kings and priests to reign with Christ in eternal glory. The true believer in Jesus is despised and hated by the world, and they are often accounted the offscouring of all things unto this day. Contemplate them, and it will be seen that God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him. "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence."

In the recent removal from our midst of some of our dear kindred in Christ, we have witnessed the truth of the word, "We do all fade as a leaf." We have looked upon them in their coffins, our eyes have looked upon the mortal tabernacle, and I have said again to myself, "It doth nor yet appear what we shall be." They have been carried to glory; their souls are with Christ, before the throne. Their bodies await the resurrection at the last day. O, it will be "a better resurrection." Our God shall build again, re-erect and raise again the bodies of all his dear children. No more a mortal body, a natural body, no more weakness, no more dishonor, no more corruption. "We shall all be changed,

in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible."—1 Cor. xv. 52. O, it is very infidelity to be quibbling, questioning, and presenting what men in the vanity of their earthly minds conceive as the incredible, to be denying that the mortal bodies of the children of God shall rise again at the last day. They shall be raised spiritual, immortal, incorruptible, in power and glory, changed, that they may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Phil. iii. 21.) The resurrection of them that are Christ's, (1 Cor. xv. 23,) is the crowning act, the actual accomplishment, the consummation of the regeneration of the chosen in Christ Jesus, the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. But in what I am now presenting, it is as it were a lifting of the vail, and getting a glimpse of what we shall be. To see what we shall be, we have need of keener sight than the eye of the vulture. What eyes were they which Abraham had to look through ages to come, and to see Christ's day, and to rejoice therein? With eyes of faith the believer is favored as Moses, to see him who is invisible. We look with eyes of faith upon the things that are unseen and eternal. (2 Cor. iv. 18.) When the eyes of our spiritual understanding are enlightened, we have such sight to see beyond all that the mortal eye can see, even though it takes to its aid the telescope of all the wisdom of this world. O, dear, humble believer in Jesus, "Blessed are your eyes that see," that penetrate beyond the scenes of time, that pierce the mist and shadows of mortality. "We see Jesus, who was made little lower than the angels

for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." O, when our blessed Redeemer was received up into glory, he left not his body in the tomb. The Word made flesh, when he ascended and passed into the heavens, did not divest himself of his manhood. Glory to God, no. Our beloved Intercessor, our Mediator, who now within the veil appears in the presence of God for us, is David's Lord, and David's Son. Our manhood is in heaven, in eternal glory, and glorified in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." O blessed "afterward." There is hope. O my soul, did the body of Jesus rest in hope? Then my flesh shall rest in hope. The bodies of all the elect, of all the church, of all that are Christ's, shall be raised from the dead, harvested to glory. "Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Infidelity may deny all things recorded in the Scriptures, but on the day that Jesus was taken up. (Acts i. 2, 9, 10.) Let infidelity traverse every inch of the earth, let it drain the Mediterranean Sea, and it shall not find the body of Jesus. The Word, the Son of God, cast not his manhood away; it perished not as he ascended far above all heavens. Our precious Christ who suffered, bled and died, and thus descended, is the same that ascended. (Ephes. iv. 10.) Then in eternity will the glorious body, the manhood of Christ, be the only manhood in heaven? Will he only, the Word made flesh, who "verily" (not in pretense) took on him the seed of Abraham, be found in eternal glory with his resurrected, glorious body? O no. Faith in our heart says, "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." In the resurrection it is "Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." When life's journey is ended, then the better country, that is the heavenly, will be our abode. The climate is good. No sickness, pain or death, shall ever invade the realms of bliss. It is the home of the glorified church of Christ. We shall see him as he is, the King in his beauty, and we shall be like him. The psalmist long ago exclaimed, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." And then in the palace of our God we shall dwell forever and ever. By faith we receive the revelation of God, and believe that in the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, that our salvation and ultimate glorification was perfect. Again, by faith we look to the crucifixion of the Son of God, to his descending in sufferings unto death, and his rising again from the dead, and by faith, as we look to Jesus, we say all is perfect in Christ. He is our salvation, and by faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, we embrace and rejoice in the precious words of Jesus, who says, "I am the resurrection and the life." Christ Jesus, our glorious Head, has died; he could not be holden by the sorrows of death; he saw no corruption, but his dear body in the predestined time, the third day, rose again. He attained unto the resurrection, the first-fruits of them that slept. But, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Even our beloved brother Paul tells us he was not already perfect, that he had not yet attained unto the resurrection of the dead, but it was his hope and blissful anticipation. (Phil. iii. 9-14.) It doth not yet appear that mortality is swallowed up of life. Our mortal bodies shall be quick-

ened. This mortal hath not yet put on immortality, but God hath wrought us for the selfsame thing, that is, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. We have not attained unto immortality and incorruption, for our body, which is Christ's, which he bought with a price, is now mortal and corruptible, but O blissful hope of resurrection, we shall attain, for Jesus is our Head, he has died, he rose again, he is our salvation, he hath ransomed us from death, and the power of the grave, and God hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. (2 Cor. v. 5.) Now we have the earnest; this is our consoling experience, our hope, the assurance of salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. We are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Now, our God hath given us the earnest, the foretaste by faith, that mortality shall be swallowed up of life, for the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts is the assurance that this mortal body shall put on immortality. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Romans viii. 11. "Shall also." Therefore we shall attain unto the resurrection of the dead. (Phil. iii. 12.) To this we hope to come. (Acts xxvi. 7.) Our mortal bodies shall be quickened by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. They shall put on immortality and incorruption. God hath wrought us for the selfsame thing. Mortality shall be swallowed up of life. Having therefore the earnest in our hearts, we can sing, as we press toward this mark of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear

what we shall be: but we know when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

FRED. W. KEENE.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SALVATION.

It has been my pleasure to note that the SIGNS has with the Bible contended that there is but one true Christ, or but one Savior. As is said in Acts iv. 12, For "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." "Under heaven and among men," undoubtedly does not refer to our eternal abiding place, in the third heaven, but to our salvation in this present time, meaning that Jesus is not only our Savior in bringing us from death in trespasses and sins, to a state of spiritual life, but that even after being born of water and of the Spirit, Jesus continues to be now, in this present time world, the only name in which is salvation. And when men fail to present the scriptural connections of texts, so that they shall teach that he is the only name whereby we must be saved in time, as well as in eternity, they are guilty of perverting the Scripture, and of doing violence to the name of Jesus, our only hope. To say that we have more than one Savior, is to teach a plurality of names whereby under heaven and among men we must be saved. This would contradict the text above quoted, and would destroy the Bible as the witness of Jesus, as our only Savior. We must remember that if the old covenant, as some think, contained an offer of salvation upon conditions unto Israel, so that they could receive those offered blessings through obedience or good works, then by reading the history of their conduct and God's wonderful dealings with them, we must conclude

that Israel was ever a stiff-necked and rebellious people, and that they never, of themselves, obeyed, and therefore never in a single instance obtained the blessing of life, by the performance of the conditions. But we do learn that God still remembered them in their rebellion, and God did himself, for his own name's glory, with a strong arm bring them back. It was God who removed their stony hearts, and gave them hearts of flesh. Thus he did prepare their hearts, and so did they inquire of him to do this thing unto them. (Ezekiel xxxvi. 25, to the end of the chapter.) Thus we see that the salvation of national Israel, including all their temporal blessings, was by grace, through mercy, as it is with us. If during the past twenty-five years I have not searched in vain to know the truth, this is the true doctrine of the Bible. To disconnect Scripture from its connection we form erroneous conclusions. For instance, if we quote, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," and fail to read the connection, we would be guilty of perverting this text. To do this as some have done, would bring us to the conclusion that we are our own savior; and to apply this to each individual in this way, would result in the conclusion that there were as many saviors as there are names. We should conclude thus that there were as many names under heaven whereby we must be saved, as there were persons to be saved. But to regard the connection, we find that the subjects of this address were those who were or are pricked in the heart, and who say, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" There was a superhuman power within them, teaching them that there was something that they shall do. Peter, speaking as the Holy Ghost gave him utterance, and not of his own option, told them

what they should do; that is, they shall repent and be baptized. Now we know that repentance is the gift of God, for, "Jesus is exalted at the right hand of God, to give repentance and the remission of sins unto Israel." And it is the goodness of God which leads us to repentance. Thus Peter refers to the goodness of God when he says, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Thus baptism itself is the gift of God, and is from heaven, as was John's. Repentance and baptism being two things which pertain to life and salvation, were included in this text. In 2 Peter i. 3, we read, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness." Thus we see that while Peter used many words, saying, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation," they that gladly received his word were baptized. Thus to repent and be baptized were given them by his divine power, and could not have come in any other way. We cannot suppose that this work could have been done otherwise, unless we can suppose that they could have done differently from what he said they should do, and this would be to suppose that the purpose of God failed in giving those things which pertained to life and godliness, and to admit this would be to admit that God was slack concerning his promise. And we must notice that the reason why they shall repent and be baptized is because "the promise is unto you," &c. Thus while by the Holy Ghost we do labor and save ourselves from this untoward generation, it is not after all, we that do labor, but the grace of God which is with us, according to the testimony of Paul. So Peter could say, "I made them obedient

by word and deed," and yet he could also say, "Yet not I, but the grace of God." For like Paul he could say, "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed."—Romans xv. 18. Peter upon the day of Pentecost preached to Gentiles as well as Jews, and therefore the quotation from Romans is applicable, and is in harmony with 2 Peter i. 3. Therefore it was the Lord who added, and who does still add to his church daily, such as should be saved. Thus it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. It is God who saves the believer by the foolishness of preaching. Therefore we take heed to ourselves, and to the doctrine, and speaking experimentally concerning ourselves, even after being born again, we will say, "I am carnal, sold under sin." "I find 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." "In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing." "I do that which I allow not, and what I would, I do not." "O wretched man that I am." Paul said, "I am the chief of sinners," and "less than the least of all saints," and, "I have no confidence in the flesh." "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." When taking heed unto ourselves, even after being born again, we thus speak of ourselves. And God, leading us to thus take heed unto ourselves, it is he, by this means, saving us from presumptuous sins. In taking heed unto ourselves, and to the doctrine, and continuing in them, we continue in the apostle's doctrine, which is, it is God who delivers us, even in time, from this body of death, that

where sin abounded and reigned unto death, now grace should reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. We thus see that our sufficiency is of God. And we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. So we can say, dear brethren, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place." We see by this text that Paul was by the work of God a savour (not a savior). Some will have it that baptism saves us, and indeed, without the connection of the Scripture being considered, it would appear so. But Peter first referred to Noah being saved by water. It was the Lord who shut Noah in the ark, and as God saved Noah by water, even so it is he who shuts the righteous in the church now. And in a figure God saves them now by baptism. The virtue of baptism is, that it is a figure of the salvation of his people, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The jailer did not have reference to being saved from the prosecution of the governor when he said to Paul, "What must I do to be saved? The governor had only required the jailer to keep the prisoners, and Paul had informed the jailer that they were all there. Neither did he fear because of the earthquake, for the governor would not have held him responsible for God's earthquake. Therefore it was with the jailer as it was with us when God had shown to us his marvelous power; we also thought that we must do something to be saved, but the Spirit of God in Paul testified then, and now in us testifies saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," thus teaching us that it is Christ who saves us. If it be contended that believing is a condition of

our salvation, I reply that believing in Jesus is the work of God in us. This jailer knew that Paul had been put in prison for preaching Jesus, and in these words Paul simply declared unto the jailer that Jesus is the only Savior, and hence the only name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. Those who oppose this doctrine say, Suppose we do not obey, or do not believe, or suppose those on the day of Pentecost had not repented, would they have received the gift of the Holy Ghost? In one place Peter said, some had received the holy Ghost before being baptized with water; yet we have no right to suppose how it would have been, if it had not been just as it was with them, or with us either. I cannot suppose that they would not have repented, and been baptized, for it was something which they shall do. Neither can I suppose that it is the will of God that any should unite with the church who do not thus unite, for it was the Lord who added then to the church such as should be saved, saved as I understand from this untoward generation.

Dear brother Chick, I have waited long for some one to write upon this subject, in the SIGNS, using just such Scriptures as are misapplied and disconnected from the other Scriptures, by those who advocate a conditional time-salvation, and I have grown weary of waiting. Therefore to relieve what has become a burden to me, I have made this attempt. I request your judgment with it, and do with it as you please. I feel no spirit of animosity, personally, toward any, and hope that love of the truth has prompted me to thus write. May God enable us to trust, and look, and believe in the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, in time, as well as in

eternity. Jesus being eternal, and the only Savior, we have no temporal or perishable Savior.

Yours in hope,

DAVID L. MCNEES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Oct. 12, 1898.

[It seems to us sure, that every saint will ascribe his salvation from all temptation here, as well as his salvation in the world of eternal glory, to the name of Jesus.—ED.]

STATE ROAD, Del., Nov., 1898.

BROTHER BEEBE:—I have been requested to write a letter for the SIGNS, commenting on the events recorded in the sixth chapter of the book of Joshua. I have no knowledge of particular points of inquiry, and I might not be able to deal with them to much satisfaction or profit if I had. I will offer such reflections as present themselves.

In this chapter we have the account of the destruction by the people of Israel, of the city of Jericho. The sentence of doom upon this city stands out in a prominence distinguishing it in some respects from all other devoted cities. Not only the order for its destruction, but the manner of its execution, seemed to be designed especially to show the Lord's hand, and to be to him a perpetual memorial of that wrath that is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. We are not informed particularly of the depravity of this city; hence it may have been a query in the minds of some why such a terrible doom and curse should come upon them. While the Lord has preserved a record of righteous men, and their righteous acts, from the days of Abel all the way down, and of the faith that sustained them in the face of opposition and persecution, not so with the wicked. Even the old world, except the

few sentences recorded by Moses, they left no trace or record of the character or measure of their abominations. We have just the simple record that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. Let no record or memorial be kept of the degradation and shame that has settled like a pall upon the human race. Let all traces of the foul and inhuman crimes that men have committed be obliterated, along with the actors, at once and forever. Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth as examples, suffering an utter annihilation, and as cities, the vengeance of eternal fire. Sodom and Gomorrah shall never be rebuilt. The plague-spot is sunk in the deep; and all traces of the entire race, with the record of that depth of depravity and infamy to which they had descended, is obliterated at once and forever. Many cities have gone the same way. Herculaneum and Pompeii and Euphemia are examples of which we know little, except the sudden and terrible vengeance that swept them out of existence. The pen of inspiration has given us very little information with regard to the wickedness of this city of Jericho. It probably stood out prominent among those whose abominations led to the filling up of the cup of the iniquities of the Amorites, and showed them ripe for destruction. The race of men learn evil readily enough without examples and traditions to lure them on. So in this case, as in the other cases cited, no traces or records of their abominations shall ever see the light. They have walled themselves in, bidding defiance to even omnipotence. Here it would seem that Joshua commanding the armies of Israel is a representative man, and the armies of the aliens are here represented

in this devoted city of iniquity. There are no arms or armed men to go against the city in this battle. The testimony that God is the God of Israel, and the ark that contains that testimony, will do the work. It is a living word, and it has all the vital energy and power to destroy the strongholds of the enemies. This event is not repeated in the conflict with any other city. The Lord is King in Jeshurun, and the ark is his representative. It is in charge of divinely appointed and authorized priests, and as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, so will God overthrow Jericho in a way that shall stand as a memorial to the latest generation. It is possible that skeptics have indulged in criticisms touching this miraculous interposition. I am not going to discuss the matter with cavilers, and as to questions that may arise in the minds of honest inquirers, I will say, that I am satisfied to accept the record as literally true. The entire Jewish race who were eye-witnesses, never questioned the record of the event. Their after fighting and success seemed to have obtained its inspiration here at Jericho. Josephus, the Jewish historian, who wrote nearly two thousand years ago, records all these incidents in full accord substantially with the inspired record. Down in the valley of the Jordan, in the wilderness of Judea, in a kind of isolated location, it seems to have been a place for all the worst elements of society to congregate and settle, Jericho was not far removed from the site of ancient Sodom; and the influences that tended to make Sodom what it was, made Jericho what it was. And so the man that went down from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves. It was probably a place where thieves and robbers were harbored and protected. No trace or record is allowed

to remain to show that this people ever lived, and we have to judge of the depth of their depravity by the judgment that was visited upon them. The remembrance of them shall be blotted out from under heaven. In the visions of John the evangelist, in the final conflict between true and false worshipers, it is said, "They overcame through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony." No carnal weapons to be used in this war. The battle is not yours, but God's. The testimony with which the Lord has endowed his witnesses will burn like devouring fire, and scoffers and gainsayers shall not stand before it. All the walls and fortifications with which they have fortified themselves, and in which they have entrenched themselves, will go down like Nebuchadnezzar's great image when smitten by the little stone, and it became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor. Two questions have seemed to be suggested by this chapter to which I am inviting attention. The authenticity of this account as a strict record of a literal event, and the reasons why such special tokens of divine displeasure should be exhibited to settle an anathema upon this place and people, to endure to the latest generation.

The above is submitted.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 7, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—I send you a copy of letter written by Cornelius Myers, who died a few years ago at an advanced age. His name was once very familiar to the readers of the SIGNS, where many of his very interesting and comforting letters were published in its columns. This letter was written to Miss Emma R. Martin, at whose mother's house he was entertained during the meeting of the

Delaware River Association with the church at South River. Emma had united with the New School Baptist Church two years before. It will be seen by this letter that brother Myers had discovered in her an experience of grace, as others also did. That was the last time the association met with that church, which has been so sorely afflicted by disorder and bereavement, that in July last only two orderly members remained, both widows. On the fourth Sunday evening in July, several brethren from this church, Philadelphia and Hopewell, went with me to visit that little church, which I have been visiting occasionally for several years. On Monday morning two were received on experience, and were baptized in the presence of about a thousand people. One of them was a woman of about seventy-six years of age, very feeble, and unable to walk without help. She had been a believer for many years, and had long desired the ordinance. On the evening of the fourth Sunday in September, I visited this church again, and on Monday baptized sister Emma, to whom this letter was written, and Mr. Alfred Stultz, aged eighty-two, the husband of the sister above referred to, whose hope dates back many years. There seems to be much interest manifested among those who meet with this little church.

Your brother in hope,

SILAS H. DURAND.

LOCKTOWN, N. J., June 6, 1882.

MISS EMMA R. MARTIN:—Dear stranger, and, I hope, pilgrim, inquiring the way to Zion, the city of God, the city of our blest abode. I feel a desire to drop a word, if possible, for the encouragement of any who might be inquiring after the footsteps of the dear Redeemer's little flock, to whom he says, "Fear not, for it

is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." O, my dear child, when I first met you, and heard you inquiring of that dear servant of God, Elder Wm. L. Beebe, the way of the Lord more perfectly, I thought, Does your teacher talk to you about this little flock, this poor, despised little company, that, like the dear Lamb of God, have always been spoken against? Why is the dear Jesus and his little despised company spoken against? Will you let a poor sinner like me try to tell you some of my thoughts, and also some of my experience in these things? Christ came into the world, what for? Why, bless your dear soul, to suffer and die for poor sinners, that they might live. And in the midst of this little company it pleased the blessed Savior to let me know that I, a poor sinner, had a right to rejoice with them. And O, what a rejoicing time I had. My dear child, would you like to know why I rejoice? After I had been made to see that I was the greatest sinner upon this earth, and to feel my just condemnation in the sight of a holy God, I did not dare to approach such a holy God for fear I should be crushed in an instant, and the cry was in my heart, "Where shall I go, or whither flee, to escape the vengeance due to me?" At that time my "anxious bench" was in the woods, where I thought none but the great God could see me, a poor, condemned criminal. O, thought I, if I was only a beast, that I might die and be no more. I lay down to die, but had no power to do so. Not so the dear Savior. He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again, and in him we live, and move, and have our being, and our life is hid with Christ in God, says the apostle, "And when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." Dear

child, did you ever feel afraid to meet one whom you supposed to be a christian? "Yes," say you. Why were you afraid to meet them? Because, "I thought they were good, and I was such a wicked wretch that they would reprove me, or ask me some question that I could not answer. I have always found it easier to ask questions than to answer them." My dear little one, I would like to tell you if I could, why I so love these poor, little, despised, heaven-born children. It is because they have all been born of God, and there are none who can understand this language only those whom the Lord hath taught. You know there are, and always have been, men in the world who pretend to say that they can tell poor, lost sinners, how to get that which is the gift of God, which is eternal life. These poor, blind guides, can get the wages of sin, which is death, with a great deal less trouble. But I will not say more against them, for it is just what I used to contend for when in my awful ignorance, before the Lord called poor me by his almighty grace. "When God revealed his gracious name, and changed my mournful state," I then thought I could tell it to the world, but I soon found my mistake. But I could tell it to the least of my Father's children, because they have the same things written in their hearts. It is a song that none can know, only those heaven-born and heaven-taught souls. O, how hard it was for me to think that I could do nothing to gain the favor of God. How I fought against the purpose of God, his election and predestination. Only think, to fight against God's electing love, chosen in love, or in God, for "God is love," or in Christ, before the foundation of the world. My dear child, are you not glad that these things, or blessings, are fixed, and treasured up in

Christ Jesus, for him to deal out to his poor, needy ones, just in time when they will not waste them by casting them before swine. Jesus is my Lord and my God, and beside him there is no Savior. I have tried to tell you of some of the Lord's workings in the hearts of his poor and afflicted children, but I have only touched the subject.

CORNELIUS & CHARITY MYERS.

P. S.—After looking over what I have written, I thought of many things I wanted to say. I wanted to ask you if you love to hear such glorious truths preached as we had all through the association? If so, it is because you have been blessed with a hearing ear. I am a poor sojourner on this earth, not long to stay in these low grounds of sin and sorrow. When I see the youth taken away I wonder, Why not me? I am worn out, cannot do anybody any good. I have no enjoyment only in that little company where Jesus holds his court. Did you notice in the SIGNS of Jan. 15th, 1882, the obituary of Annie E., daughter of Ephraim Myers? She was our oldest granddaughter, and a loving pet. You can see by her letter to her grandfather and others, her firm and unshaken confidence in God's "everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure." And why should we still drop a tear while we sorrow not as those who have no hope?

Well, I will close. I need not tell you that I have no learning, that will tell for itself. I will ask you to write, after all. We want to hear from you all down there. We would not forget our dear old brother, Deacon Stultz. Please remember us to him. Give your mother a kiss for me. Come and see us. May the God of all grace be with you to give comfort and knowledge, and may he keep us all by his mighty power, through faith

unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

C. M.

"O YE OF LITTLE FAITH."

THE words above recorded, are some of those spoken by the Lord when speaking to his disciples on the mountain. From some cause, I suppose it is from trying to serve two masters, God and Mammon, I have, for a considerable time past, been much cast down. I have been as firmly settled in mind as I ever was, that God is a sovereign, and that he worketh all things according to his will, yet I find so much of my time that I am distrustful and fearful, that certain things will not work out as I desire. Last night, after listening to my wife, as she read several articles in the SIGNS, and then several chapters of Paul's letter to the Corinthians, I felt a calm resignation, and the words at the head of this article came with much force to me, "O ye of little faith." How I was reprov'd in my feelings. I had been fearing that things would not be as I desired, and that I must do thus and so to accomplish them, but when this precious lesson filled my mind, I could realize the truth of the words, "Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?" Reading the sixth chapter of the gospel by Matthew all over carefully, I could see much beauty all through it, and said in my mind once more, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." I became trustful, and could realize the fact that God works, and that none can let nor hinder. With David I felt to say, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Again I felt, the Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. O, that

I may thus be led beside the still waters, and thus dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Yet now, as I write, it comes to my mind that trials and tribulations await me. When they come may it be given me to see the beauty of the Savior's words, where he said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." May I realize that in him I have peace.

Fifty years ago last March, I hope the dear Lord gave me evidence of a hope in Christ, and that for me personally he had overcome the world. Since then, many, many times I have realized the truth of the words in full force, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." But I am still trusting and hoping in that God, who has said, "I will be with thee in six troubles, and in the seventh I will not forsake thee." The seventh, I feel, will be death itself. Here I am walking through the valley and shadow of death, and I hope that I am leaning upon the same rod and staff that David did. If so, I need not fear any evil. If I live four days longer I will have gone through my seventy-fifth year. With one of old I can say, "Few and evil have been my days." Yet I would not call them back, to live them over, for I know that I could not better their deeds. I would like so much to call back the many mistakes made by the way, but this I cannot do. Yet I do hope that I have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous. In many respects I realize that I have been wonderfully blessed in worldly associations, and in the comforts of life. I was married the first time when I was but twenty years of age, and can truly say, no one needed a better companion than I had. She was the daughter of Elder Thomas Threlkeld. I was married the second time in June, 1891, to the widow

Kester, and can now truthfully say that none need to live more agreeably together than we have done for nearly eight years. Both my wives have been, not only help-meets in worldly things, but also truly companions in the Lord. Why should I not fully trust the dear Lord? Why should I at times feel so downcast? Why should I want more evidence of my acceptance of the Lord? Very recently, in the desponding hours to which I alluded in the first part of this letter, it has been so plainly shown me, that to my wife was given wisdom to use words to my great comfort, that I could but shed tears of joy. How true it is that a word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. We have very recently succeeded in getting church privileges here in our town, so as to accommodate some who could not get to the country to the meetings, and that we in our declining days may have sweet communion with our friends who meet with us. We now hold two meetings in each month, the first and third Sundays, the third Sunday being our regular church meeting day. At our first church meeting there was three additions by letter, and we are fondly hoping for others by experience and baptism. With David, we want to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thy iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." O how merciful the Lord has been to me. If not mistaken I can say like David, "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."

When I commenced this, I did not think of writing as I have. I hope you will pardon my rambling letter, and if not suitable, do not publish it. I do not want space in the SIGNS to the exclusion of better matter. This may be the last time that I shall write for publication. I know that it is near the last, and if published it will be as a feeble effort, to remain after I am gone to my eternal home. In conclusion I desire to say that the dear SIGNS OF THE TIMES still come regularly to us, bringing good news, and giving no uncertain sound. May God bless the editors, and faithful correspondents, and may all speculative theories and errors be kept out of its columns. Trusting only in Jesus for all salvation, I remain yours to serve until death,

JAMES M. TRUE.

KANSAS Ill., Oct. 10, 1898.

MUIRKIRK, Ont., Feb. 10, 1890.

MR. F. W. KEENE—MY DEAR FRIEND:—I have been thinking of your visit here, and kind talk to me, a great deal since you left. You told me to write to you, and I wish to do so. I was at Holly Spring (Georgia) meeting when sister Kate was received in the church. There I felt for the first time what I was, and what I wanted to be. I could not control my feelings, but cried so hard that pa asked me what was the matter. I could not tell him, but when I found I must answer, I asked him to make Kate stop crying. I went sometimes to meeting, and ministers preached in our house sometimes. I was always glad of these opportunities, not that I thought I was getting better, but I loved to see those dear people, and hear them talk. I rejoiced that there was such a people, though I felt the difference between them and my-

self so great, I felt I was not fit to be near them. I believed all Christ died for would be saved, but felt that I was not one of those for whom he died, and I felt I could not do anything to make myself one. I wanted to pray the Lord to have mercy upon me, but could not raise my voice at all, for the words were in my mind, The prayers of the wicked availeth naught. I was much grieved because those around me seemed to care so much about me. I thought in some way they would suffer on account of me. One day I opened the Bible and read the parable of the wheat and the tares. I was comforted, for although I did not want to be a tare, being one, I was glad that the wheat could not be injured. So I have lived on, at times wishing I had not been at all, at other times engaging in the pleasures the world afforded around me, but never finding the peace and rest I so much wished for until last February, (a year ago) just before the Duart meeting. I was thinking of the meeting, and trying to make ready to go. I felt very sad and lonely, and felt my own helplessness more than ever. I did not know whether I trusted in the Lord or not. I hoped my trust was in him. I knew in my own works I did not trust. It seemed as though I had been always in darkness, and this now was the darkest time of all, when I heard plainly, as though the words had been spoken, "Child, there is your hope." For a few moments I could not go on with my work, and through the day these words came to my mind, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." I was very happy for a little while. I have not felt so sure and satisfied since then. I have often thought if imagination could go so far as that? As I now write I do not believe it did. I do believe the Lord has bid me hope in his

mercy. His power to save I have never doubted. I have tried to write to you plainly, that if deceived myself, you may not be. My heart is with Beulah church, and my desire is to live with them, if the Lord will. I thought as pa (Elder Wm. L. Beebe) stood by the water after baptizing Mr. Alec McAlpin, in Brooke, I must go at once, and ask to be baptized too.

I must bring this to a close. If you had not called me "sister," I do not think I should have written at all, but I wish you to understand me plainly, and then if you can still say "sister," I shall be very happy. If not, I am glad my letter has cleared your mind.

With love to Mrs. Keene and children,
I am, as ever, sincerely your friend,

LUMMIE McDONALD.

KALAMAZOO, Mich., Sept. 21, 1898.

G. BEEBE'S SON—DEAR BROTHER:—

If in your judgment, after reading this scribble over, it, or any part of it, is worth a place in your paper, you can insert what in your judgment will be of interest to God's humble poor, and all will be well with me. It is again time for me to remit for the SIGNS, and I feel that I cannot get along without them, in this isolated part of the world, so far from any church, and not near any of the brethren and sisters, and having the gospel preached only about four times a year. O, dear ones, how we mourn at times, until we are reminded to, "Be still and know that I am God." I am thinking of you, dear ones scattered abroad all over this land, and some of us spared monuments of the grace of God. All that we do is laid wide open before God, even to our secret thoughts.

Surely there was never a heart so base,

So false as mine has been,

So faithless to the promises,

So prone to every sin.

Yes, I was a wanderer afar off, but bought by the blood of the Lamb. The more I felt my condemnation, the less I felt that I could do, until at last I gave up all hope in myself. Then I felt, I suppose, as the apostle did, when the scales fell from his eyes, and all was bright. And I am reminded of, and can claim to have been like the prodigal son. Grace and strength were given me nearly five years ago, and I went home, where I belonged, as I hoped, to the church of God, the Old School Baptists. If I am not with them, I feel out of my place.

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose. We read of the dear Savior, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to 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, and to comfort all that mourn." And Jesus says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And again it is said, "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." And the Lord said, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah," "for this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their minds and write them in their hearts. And I will be their God and they shall be my people." May these declarations, as quoted above, be our lot, and in our hearts while we journey below, and then our prayer shall be, "O, Lord create in me a new heart."

Dear brethren and sisters, pardon me for taking up so much time on this theme. It is so boundless and so precious to my poor, drooping soul, for I well know that this world is not my home. My faith carries me away into that world which God has prepared for them who trust in him.

Yours in hope of a world to come,
D. D. McALPINE.

NEW MARTINSVILLE, W. Va., Nov. 22, 1897.

ELDER D. M. VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—Your kind letter has been received, and it has been of priceless value to me. How good the Lord is to give me such kind and sympathetic friends, and to put it into their hearts to remember poor unworthy me, in my lonely condition. No, I do not think strange of you for writing to me. Although I have never met you, yet you are not a stranger to me. I have read your communications in our religious periodicals, with much comfort and profit. Those who have been taught to speak such language as you do, are not strangers to me. How I have longed to hear that dear familiar language in this seemingly barren land, where the people never hear of Old School Baptists. How I wish that the gospel might be preached right here in their midst, for surely the Lord must have some poor inquiring ones even here. You are not mistaken in supposing, that I am longing for the company of the dear brethren and sisters. O, the longings in that direction, and the heartaches which fill my breast, none but the dear Lord can ever know. I hope that none others may ever learn by experience just what I feel. To be separated, and cut off from those we love so dearly, and from all church privileges, and from all that is enjoyment to us, would seem enough, but with other

trials also, it seems to almost crush a poor, weak and timid one. Could I only know that I suffer these things for Jesus' sake, it would be easier. But in my lonely feelings, I sometimes fear that the Lord has nothing to do with my case. This is the hardest trial of all. Then when the enemy suggests the same, how very cutting it is. But the dear compassionate Savior has in time past proved to me again and again, that his presence can, and does, make palaces out of prisons, and that he causes his people to sing his praise even while thrust into the inner prison, (and such is the case with me). You spoke of coming to see me. Now I want you to come, and hope that you can come soon. It will be real good just to see the face of a Baptist once more, and to hear of the good things of the kingdom will be better still. When you come, would you mind filling an appointment or two, if I can arrange to make them? I would love to hear you preach, and would like others here to hear you also. It was so kind of you to write to me, and I appreciate it, more than I can tell. Viola, my daughter, wrote me of your appointment in Washington, and I longed to be with you all. I have had some precious seasons meeting with the dear ones there. But the Lord ordered that I could not be with you, and I must be content. I have often wished to meet you, and after reading your communications, have several times felt impressed to write to you.

Thanking you for your kind remembrance of me, I am, as I trust, your sister,
ARAH ALDERTON.

NEWARK, Del., Oct. 26, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—
DEAR BROTHERN:—When I read the excellent letters in the SIGNS this evening I felt a desire to write a few lines to those

who wrote them. As I read Elder Hardy's letter I thought I would write to him, and tell him how much I enjoyed his letter, and when I read brother Cole's and brother Coulter's, I felt like writing to them, too. I could hardly tell which I enjoyed most, they were all richly laden with substantial food. I do love to read after brethren when they write those things which their eyes have seen, which their hands have handled, and which they have tasted of the good word of God; away theorizing in things pertaining to the gospel of Christ. The saints are all taught in one school, and the Lord is their teacher. O, how good it is to speak often one to another of the precious lessons that we have learned in the school of Christ. This is talking experience, and not simply talking "on the subject of experience." That kind of preaching comes right home to me, and I feel like saying, I know that is so. It is what I call good preaching, and yet how strange this is, we would not give much to listen to a lecture on a subject that we knew all about. Information is what we want in temporal things, but spiritual things are different from temporal things. Temporal things are seen, spiritual are not; they are hoped for, they are eternal, and if we lack knowledge concerning them, we can only ask the Lord. He is the only teacher in the spiritual school. All that we know about eternal things is by faith, and faith is the gift of God; faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We live a life of faith; we walk by faith, and not by sight. Sometimes we try to trace in our past lives some marks of election, some tokens of grace, but could we do such a thing, that would be of sight, and not of faith, and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. It matters not how many wonders

and miracles one may see, or how many remarkable dreams one may have, without faith his hope would perish. The just shall live by faith. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. John needed more than seeing the Holy Ghost descend in a bodily form like a dove, and light upon the head of Jesus, and hearing a voice out of heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," to make him know whether Jesus really was the Christ. Faith was what he needed.

I ask an interest in your prayers, that my faith fail not.

In brotherly love,

EDWARD F. ROUNDS.

KINGWOOD, N. J., Oct. 19, 1898.

ELDER F. A. CHICK—DEAR BROTHER:—It has been just one year, the fourth Sunday in last September, since it has been my privilege to meet with you, but I have been with you in heart. I enjoy the reading of the editorials in the SIGNS very much, but I think it such a favor when we can meet and talk face to face. But when the Lord in his providence has taken from us such a privilege, he is able to comfort us in other ways. He that keepeth Israel shall never slumber nor sleep. Many years, it was my privilege to hear preaching almost every Sunday, and now I am favored to hear preaching mostly once a month. Elder Bogardus has been with us, and Elder Vail has been with us the last two months. I was favored with another manifestation of the goodness and mercy of God, and I can say it was not only a crumb from the Master's table, but it was a rich repast. How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter. This was applied to me, and I was humbled in the dust to think that I, a vile, polluted sinner, was a daughter of the

Prince of life, and of peace, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords. The King's daughter is all glorious within. Her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought to the King in raiment of wrought needlework, while in herself she is as black as the tents of Kedar. These things we cannot see with the natural eye, they are the gift of God. The neck of this daughter of a king is as the tower of David, built for an armory, whereon hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Wherefore Paul says, "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, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." I would write a great deal, but do not feel that I have a gift to write to my satisfaction, or that of the brethren. I have been deeply exercised upon the parable of the talents. We ought to improve even the one talent, and not bury it in the earth. Some fifty years ago, I heard preaching from the words, "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." The preacher went on to say, the Lord was knocking at the sinner's heart, and while dwelling upon it, to my mind, so erroneously, I thought over the whole text, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." "And will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." I saw that Christ, in his mediatorial

work, suffered the demands of the law, which were due to our transgressions, and we were redeemed from all our sins, and unto God. The prophet said, in his humiliation, his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation? He fulfilled the law, every jot and tittle of it, and arose a glorious conqueror over death, hell and the grave. And so every member of his mystical body shall be raised incorruptible. While here in this mortal state we shall see corruption.

Now pardon me for the liberty I have taken in writing to you. I have been in very delicate health all summer. I hear that you have had some additions at Hopewell. I felt much pleased. May peace and prosperity attend your path; that peace which the world cannot give, and cannot take away.

I remain your sister in Christ, as I humbly trust,

MARY L. KISE.

[THIS dear aged sister has been a member of the church at Hopewell, New Jersey, for more than half a century. She is one of four left who came into the church under the ministry of Elder Boggs, who was pastor here for more than forty years. Through the testimony of the aged ones, we have the glad assurance that the doctrine which we now love has been dear to the hearts of the Lord's people all these many years. The fathers believed as we do. Elder Boggs was followed by Elder Curtis, and he by Elder Hartwell, and he by Elder Purington. This carries the records back for more than ninety years. The same doctrine has been preached here in all these years.—Ed.]

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

"ALL THINGS COMMON."

I WOULD like to see an editorial in the SIGNS upon
"All things common."

N. TOMLINSON.

FORT BRANCH, Ind.

R E P L Y .

This subject has been upon our own mind for some time past, and we are glad to comply with the request for our views upon it. We cannot say that we are undecided as to what the Scriptures teach with regard to this matter, for we have decided views concerning it.

First, it seems to us needful that we refer to the narrative given in Acts ii., in which this subject is embraced. We read there as follows: "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need." In Acts iv. we read as follows: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." "Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them

down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." This is all that we have been able to find in the Scriptures of the New Testament bearing directly upon this subject.

We will now speak of some things connected with it, which have long seemed clear to us. First, the narrative teaches that the hearts of those early disciples were filled with love to God, and their brethren in Christ, that they had a deep sense of the mercy and grace which had saved them, that they had come to count the things of the world as the good gifts of God, to be used as should be most for the glory of his name, and that the heavenly things were nigh to them, and were the most precious of all. It also teaches that they regarded the apostles as the appointed judges in Israel, and that all that they were, and all that they possessed, were to be held at the disposal of these inspired judges. Such a view of the supremacy of God was given them that they did not count the things which they possessed as their own, but as all belonging to God. They recognized that he had a right to dispose of them and theirs as seemed good in his sight. They recognized in their fellow-believers children of the same common Father, and love flowed out to all who professed his name. The spontaneous offerings which they brought for the support and comfort of their needy brethren, were full evidences that loved ruled in their hearts. These things seem clear from the narrative which we have just quoted. It is evident from the narrative also that the grace of God which sheds his love abroad in the hearts of his people, will show itself in good fruits, in their conduct toward each other, and we may add, toward all men. In their hearts was ful-

filled the command to love God with all their powers, and their neighbor as themselves. This which is recorded is the full evidence of this. Furthermore, the circumstances of the case were peculiar. Many had now believed, and were added to the church. Most of these were, as has always been the case, poor in this world's goods. They could expect no sympathy from earthly friends who were the enemies of Christ, and despised his religion. Their hearts were knit together in love, and each felt that what he had was not his own, but that it belonged to his needy brethren. The love of God will lead to this feeling. Love not only works no evil to the neighbor, but it works positive good. To-day when a brother sees another naked, and lacking daily food, if he shuts up the bowels of his compassion from him, How dwells the love of God in him? This question has never been answered yet. Let it not be forgotten that they laid their possessions at the feet of the apostles. They did not acknowledge any other authority for the disposal of what was theirs than that of the apostles. Neither should we. The teachings of the inspired apostles must take precedence of all our wishes, and of all the directions which other men may seek to enforce. This was a good time in the church. When each member prayerfully and carefully searches the word of God to-day, to see what the Lord will have him to do with what has been committed to him, he is doing just what these disciples did at that time. As was said before, the circumstances attending that time were peculiar, and so peculiar manifestations of the love which dwelt in their hearts, were to be seen. Let there be a reviving in any of the churches to-day, and manifestations of the warm love which fills the hearts of those who are

thus blessed, will be seen. These manifestations will be suited to the time, and to the blessing which they are then experiencing, but they need not be expected to always last, and indeed ought not to last. The scene in the mount of transfiguration was good and glorious, but still it would not be well for it to endure at all times. Were it a good thing for all times and all circumstances, that the people of God should live in the mount of transfiguration, then we may be sure our loving Lord and Father would have provided for us just such an abiding place. And so had it been good that this which was done by these early believers in Jerusalem should have continued literally, the Lord, our King and Lawgiver, would have provided for it in his commandments, and in his providence would have pointed out this road to all believers in all ages. We notice also that there never was any command or exhortation for this to be done even then, and certainly there was none in all the after years of the apostolic age, for such a procedure in churches. We shall search in vain in all the New Testament, for another instance in which this was done, that was done at Jerusalem. That is, in any sense other than that all who believed felt that what they had was to be held subject to the divine teaching, as given to the churches by the apostles. The apostles nowhere intimate that such a course is advisable for the churches to follow. We have this one instance given, and we hear no more of it as a custom among the churches. If it had been a command, or even an advisable thing, it is inconceivable that the apostles who were continually warning the churches against all departures from the faith and practice of the word of God, and who were continually stirring up the minds of their brethren to their duty, should have

failed to reprove all the churches where it was not practiced, or to have commended such a course of conduct, if in any case it was followed. In this case at Jerusalem the apostles neither advised nor commended it. It is stated simply that the church did this, and then we hear no more about it.

The case of Ananias and Sapphira, recorded in the fifth chapter of the Acts, shows that the apostles neither commanded nor advised such a community of goods. What Peter did show plainly there was first, they had a perfect right to keep all that they had in their own hands, and that they would not have sinned in doing so, and second, that the thing which condemned them was their falsehood, and desire to have a great appearance of zeal, when in reality they did not love their brethren as much as they loved themselves. Thus the narrative shows that there was no violation of any command of the Master when believers did not sell what they had and throw it into the common fund, and that in this case, as well as afterwards, the rule was that every man should give as he purposed in his heart. The lesson is taught here, as well as in all parts of the Scriptures, that it is our duty to hold what we possess, subject to the teachings of the chosen apostles of the Lamb. There is nothing in all this to for a moment justify the modern notion of a community of goods, either in the world, or among the people of God. There is nothing in any other portion of God's word to justify such a thing. There is no after-example for it, and there is no exhortation which would imply that this was an obligation resting upon the churches. In fact all the exhortations to brotherly kindness, to care for the poor and needy, and to minister to their neces-

sities, are against such a practice. All these exhortations relate to the giving of aid to the poor. Giving for this purpose is enjoined as an individual duty, and as the expression of love to God and his people. In case this idea of a community of goods were carried out, there would be no room for charity, nor for any exhortation to its practice. Those who advocate such a thing either in the world, or in the church, claim that thus poverty would be done away with. In such a case a great share of the exhortations of the New Testament would have no place. There would be no rich to give, nor any poor to receive. It seems incredible, if this community of goods would cure all the ills of poverty, and make all men comfortable and prosperous, that when the apostles were enjoining upon their brethren the duty of showing kindness to their poor brethren, they had not at once pointed to this example at Jerusalem, as the proper pattern to follow. But they never once endeavor to deal with this question of poverty in any other way than to stir up their brethren to strive to relieve it by giving. Thus churches made up a donation for the poor saints at Jerusalem, showing that even in the case of that church, this example was not followed, and that therefore their poverty appealed to more favored churches for relief. Paul bore their liberality to Jerusalem, and urged the collections among them for that purpose. He never once intimated that they ought to sell all that they had, and pour it all out in one common fund to be used as the apostles might judge right. One of the best proofs that our God has not designed such a method of management among the churches, is that every such effort in all the history of the world has come to naught. It has proved in every case, a

visionary dream. The gospel was not given to destroy distinctions in the natural circumstances of men. Men are not equal in anything. Why should it be thought then that they ought to be equal in wealth? If he has not made them equal in things which are infinitely more precious than this world's goods, why should he enjoin upon men equality in the things which perish, and are purely of the earth? Men differ in position, and must differ. They differ in intelligence, and skill, and physical strength. They differ in the localities in which they live. Perfect equality is impossible. The gospel did not come down among men to do away with inequalities. Therefore the apostles address rich men, and bid them be mindful as to how they shall use their wealth. Such exhortations do not certainly imply that it is a sin against God, or against our brother, to hold great wealth, but it would be a sin to use it selfishly, and to make it the instrument of oppression to the needy.

Again, we would urge that there is a vast difference between laying all that we possess at the feet of the apostles, and laying these things at the feet of a board of directors, chosen from among ourselves. If God has given to any man a share of this world's goods, he individually and alone is responsible to God for the use or abuse of that wealth. Where there is a community of goods, this responsibility is laid one side, because all is in the hands of the community, or their agents. There is in such a case no room for the exercise of individual love and kindness to the needy. By such a community all is brought to the method of a machine, which may move more or less smoothly, but which yet feels no thrill of life.

We also urge, that if all were filled

with the love of God, so that each loved his brother as himself, still it would be unscriptural, and unwise, to endeavor to live in the fashion which we are combating. The history of such experiments proves it, and the whole current of the Scriptures is against it. Had it been according to the will of God, and for the best good of his people, we should have seen it continued among the saints at Jerusalem, and spreading wherever the gospel was received.

Now to sum the matter up. First, the circumstances of the church at Jerusalem were exceptional. Second, it was in their case the spontaneous outpouring of the love that was in their hearts. Third, in their case there had been no command given to do this. Fourth, the example of Ananias and Sapphira shows that it was not a wrong for any one not to enter into it, even then, but only wrong to seek to deceive. Fifth, there is no after example, nor exhortation to this practice. Sixth, the exhortations to the exercise of charity are all against it. Seventh, it has always proved when attempted, to be but a visionary dream. Eighth, men are not made equal in anything else, and there can be no reason to believe that our God desires equality in this, which is the poorest and most temporal of his gifts. Ninth, there is no room for the exercise of christian love in it. Tenth, even if all were filled with all love, and all selfishness were eliminated from the hearts of believers, still it would not be wise nor practicable.

We leave these thoughts with brother Tomlinson and our readers. We trust that they may be acceptable to lovers of the word of God, and all those who desire to abide by its decisions.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

“DEARLY BELOVED, AVENGE NOT
YOURSELVES.”

ROMANS xii. 19.

WHO that read the solemn admonitions with which the New Testament abounds, do not feel deeply humbled under a sense of their shortcomings, and propensity to err? Were we not in the flesh, and exposed to temptations, we should not require to be thus frequently admonished; but such is our present exposure to the alluring vanities of the world, the corruptions of our own carnal nature and the temptations of Satan, that we need every admonition that is given us in the Scriptures, and we also need abundance of grace to incline and enable us to heed them. Among other trials which are common to the saints of God, their exposure to unjust injuries in their persons, their reputation, their property, or what is by far more trying to them, in that which brings down on them the unprovoked censure, suspicion and disfellowship of those whom they esteem as the excellent of the earth, among whom is all their delight. This, although more cruel than the grave, is sometimes the lot of the dear children of God, and while called to pass through these bitter waters of Meribah, while chafed and fretted in their feelings, how very apt is their carnal nature to suggest to them the idea of retaliation. Our carnal minds will urge that it is just and right that we should resent the injury done us, and smite those who have wantonly smitten us, and deal to them a just retribution for their wicked assault upon us. Self preservation is said to be among the fixed laws of our nature, and it is sometimes mistaken by even the children

of God for a law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But we, alas, have found it to be a law of our members, warring against the law of our mind. Under no circumstances are the disciples of Christ to administer retribution to those from whom they have received injuries. “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves.” Your cause is before the Lord, and perfectly under his control. He will judge his people, and avenge his own elect who cry unto him night and day. There are several good reasons why the saints should not attempt to avenge themselves, of which we will call the attention of our readers to a few; and

1. Because we are forbidden to do so, not only in our text, but also in many other portions of the word. This, in the absence of all other considerations, is a sufficient reason. We cannot avenge ourselves, nor attempt to do so, without involving ourselves in an act of disobedience to our Lord and Master. He has, both by precept and example, pointed out to us the better way. By precept he has commanded us to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, and do good to them who despitefully use and persecute us, and if they smite us on one cheek, turn to them the other also; if they violently take away our coat, give them our cloak also. As we reverence him, let us regard his authority. In his example he was meek and lowly; he gave his back to them who scourged him, and his cheek to them who plucked off the hair. When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he was reproached, insulted, slandered, rudely led away to be crucified, as a lamb is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth. And when writhing in agony and blood upon the cross of Calvary, condemned as a criminal to die

a painful and ignominious death, though he could command the hosts of heaven, and had power to summon all the legions of mighty angels, he called not for vengeance, but he cried, "Father, forgive!" Righteous precept; blessed example. Dearly beloved, let us obey the command, and follow the example of our blessed Savior.

2. Another reason why we should not avenge ourselves, is our incompetency to accurately estimate the amount of injury received, the criminality of the motive of the offender, and the amount of retribution due to the transgressor. Both from the world and from brethren, we are liable to receive injuries. From the world we have no right to expect anything less, and from brethren whom we hold near and dear, we shall sometimes encounter such treatment as is calculated to wound the spirit by which we are sealed, and provoke the corrupt passions of our yet unsubdued and sinful natures. When in conflict with the world, let us remember that our God has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," and leave the matter with him who knows how to deliver the tempted, and to reserve the ungodly to be punished. He will preserve his people from the wicked who are his hand and his sword; or, as the poet has said,

"When men of spite against me join,
They are the sword, the hand is thine."

And when from brethren we are made to feel the force of the words of the psalmist, "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then could I have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company," &c.—Psalms lv. 12-14.

While in this world of conflicts, sorrows and afflictions, it is impossible but that offenses will come among the disciples. See Luke xvii. 1. But when offended by a brother or sister, instead of laboring for redress, or for the punishment of the offender, the divine rule is clearly given us, and we are commanded by our Lord Jesus to labor according to the rule to reclaim the offending brother. If he hear thee, well, thou hast gained thy brother; but if unsuccessful in laboring to reclaim him, conclude not that his is an hopeless case, for the failure may be in part, or wholly attributable to thyself; take the second step; take with thee two or three faithful brethren, who are prepared to give wholesome advice, and to judge impartially between you; and let it still be the grand object to gain the erring brother, and if this second step should fail to reclaim him, still presume not to decide the case yourself. You can neither search the heart nor try the reins of the delinquent brother. Do as your Lord directs you, tell it to the church. The Lord is there. God is in his holy temple, and he will judge his people. Let all the saints look to him for counsel, and ask of him, and he will give you that wisdom which comes down from heaven, which is pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, without partiality or hypocrisy; such wisdom he will give to his saints, and not upbraid them, and such wisdom we greatly need to direct us in the adjustment of all the difficulties which occur among the saints.

3. We should not avenge ourselves, because to do so would be a usurpation of a prerogative which belongs only to the Lord. It is treason when the subjects of any government usurp the prerogatives of the king or sovereign to whom their obedience is due. None who possess the

Spirit of Christ would willingly and understandingly grasp his sceptre, or attempt to seize his crown. But they all, while here in the flesh, possess a fleshly nature, which is full of opposition to that which is good, and it is from that polluted fountain that all our corruptions flow. From whence come wars and fightings? Come they not of your own lusts? The saints have never been afflicted with any conflicts among themselves, which were not attributable to their own fleshly lusts; for that which is born of God cannot commit sin; and if we, as christians, possessed nothing about us that is not born of God, we should neither be disturbed with sins, trials nor conflicts one with another. Under all these considerations it is exceedingly improper that dearly beloved brethren should avenge themselves.

4. Were we allowed to so avenge ourselves, such are our liabilities to err, we might severely injure those for whom Christ has died, without securing to ourselves anything more than the gratification of a vindictive and revengeful feeling of the flesh, which should rather be denied and crucified. It is greatly to be feared that christians sometimes mistake their carnal passions which are aroused to resentment of real or supposed injuries, for a justifiable grief of spirit, and their attempts to avenge themselves, for an obedience to the divine rule which requires us to labor to reclaim such as have departed from the order of the house of God. Liable, therefore, as we are to err, it becomes us the more earnestly to take heed to the admonition, "Avenge not yourselves."

5. The relationship in which we stand to each other, as dearly beloved brethren, presents another good reason why we should not avenge ourselves. When

Moses saw two of the Hebrews striving together, he reproved them, saying, "Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" As a fraternity bound by the most sacred considerations, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, we should rather give place to wrath, than attempt to avenge ourselves. The saints of God are not only brethren, but they are dearly beloved. Dearly beloved of God, for, "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," &c. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God. Such was his love that he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. And our Redeemer has also said, when lifting his eyes to heaven and addressing his Father, "That thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me; and, O righteous Father, thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." As God has so loved them before the world began, and given such incontestable evidences of his love towards them, is it meet that we should attempt to retaliate on them, when we feel confident that they have injured us? As we love the Lord supremely, will we not rather for his sake suffer the wrong for a season, until he is pleased to reclaim the wayward? But the saints are not only dearly beloved of God, but they are dearly beloved one of another, and as we love him who begat them, we also love them that are begotten of him, and his solemn charge and new commandment to them was that they should love one another. How can we obey this new and blessed commandment, if we seek to avenge ourselves?

6. Aside from the wickedness of disobeying this command, if there were no

law against it, should the saints attempt the administration of retributive justice, they would make wretched work, cause trouble for the saints, and make a thorny pillow to recline their own heads upon. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" But what can be more unchristian, or more unpleasant, than for brethren to indulge in hard feelings, and hard sayings, and unkind actions one towards another?

To the foregoing we might add many other reasons why the saints should not avenge themselves. The whole spirit and letter of the gospel forbids it; the law of Christ written in our hearts forbids it. Then from all these considerations, dearly beloved brethren, let brotherly love continue; let love be without dissimulation, and love one another with a pure heart fervently. Avenge not yourselves. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. And while in love we admonish one another, and with much long-suffering reprove those who err, let us at the same time remember how much our brethren have to bear from us, and how much our God has forgiven us. We are not to be remiss in faithfully laboring to reclaim the erring, but let it be in meekness, considering that we also are subject to many temptations.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1856.

HOLIDAY PRESENTS.

LOOK over our list of advertisements, and see if you cannot find about what you want to make your friend a holiday present.

AN EXPLANATION.

THE response to brother B. F. Butler's letter, (on page 548,) by a number of the brethren, sisters and friends of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in such liberal donations, has caused us to feel that an explanation is due them, of how the paper became financially embarrassed. As most of our subscribers are aware, the time of about four-fifths of the subscriptions expire with the end of the volume, and over two-thirds of the remittances for the year are received by the first of March. So at the time the publication came into our full possession, at the death of our dear father, May 2d, 1881, the remittances were about three-fourths paid in for that year, and the paper had to be supplied to the paid up subscribers for the balance of the year by us, and in doing this we incurred an indebtedness of about two thousand dollars, which at the commencement of the next volume had to be paid, which left us in much the same condition as the year before. And so it has run along from year, to year, ever since. This would not have been the case had we been able to collect from delinquent subscribers the amounts due us.

Another cause why we have not been able to liquidate this debt is, that the income, as well as the circulation of the SIGNS, has been materially reduced by the starting of other publications for the Old School Baptists, until there are now twenty-two such publications that we know of, in the field once covered by the SIGNS alone.

In short, we received the SIGNS with a debt of about two thousand dollars against it, in the shape of advance subscriptions to be filled out, and we have had to go in debt every year to complete each volume, and pay the indebtedness from the ad-

vance payments of the succeeding year. This is the condition this year, only through the liberality of the friends of the paper, the indebtedness at the close of this volume amounts to about thirteen hundred dollars, instead of the original two thousand dollars.

We know that it is not considered very good business policy to publish the details of our financial affairs, but as we said at the beginning, we feel that we wish to explain how the paper came to be in debt. And we feel that we are writing to brethren and friends, and have no fears that our confidence is misplaced.

B.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

Elders and messengers composing the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., Oct. 19th, 20th and 21st, 1898, to the several churches of which she is composed, Greeting.

DEARLY BELOVED:—You will, no doubt, according to custom, look for an address from us, your messengers, in our associate capacity; not, however, as asserting authority, as lords over God's heritage, but in the way of kindly advice, as those who realize the infirmities of the flesh, and as being subject to the same temptations, and mourning the depravity of wicked hearts, and having constant occasion to weep for our many sins and transgressions.

In this address we would call your attention to some things that we, as the professed followers of Jesus, should give heed. The apostle left Titus in Crete to set in order things that were wanting in the churches. Perhaps we may find some things that need to be set in order among us. We dare not claim that there is no

lack with us, that we are perfect, and if such a spirit should have taken hold of us, we do well to hearken to the apostle's admonition, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." In 1 Thess. iv. 1, Paul says, "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more." It is true what ye have heard of us, that the salvation of sinners does not depend on what they do, as salvation is "by grace, and not of works, lest any man should boast." But God has called his people "out of darkness," and "into light," and "unto holiness," and as that Spirit by which they are led is holy, is a holy life, so those who are led thereby ought to be holy, and as they still are possessed of earthly bodies, with all the natural appetites and propensities in undiminished force, constantly warring against the law of the mind, and in league with all the elements of the world, they have need of constant watchfulness, not of the conduct of others, but of their own conduct. It is certain that God is not pleased with the filthy conversation of the wicked, nor with their idolatries and evil practices; do we think he will be any better pleased with these things in his children, whom he has chosen and called out, and separated from the world, and consecrated to his service by the anointing of his Holy Spirit? No, he is displeased with them, and will visit their transgressions with his rod; but while he does so with his children, it is not in anger, but in his covenant love and mercy. Yet for the time its effect on us is as if he were angry, and we know not but he is angry, until the end is revealed to us, and then we have seen his hinder parts, and have heard his dear voice in

sweet, soothing, comforting tones, saying to us, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious," then we know that it was in loving-kindness and tender mercy that he chastened us, and that he had not "in anger shut up his tender mercies," and that he is still favorable to us. But how are we to walk? Let us ask Paul. "For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus." The Lord Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." The apostle also said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." If then love be the ruling principle of our lives, we cannot but please God, for "God is love." "Without faith we cannot please him," and "faith works by love," and "he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God," and he cannot, by this law, work any ill to his neighbor, nor go into idolatry, and finds his whole heart, soul, mind and strength, occupied with the love of his God, and that love finds expression in deeds of kindness toward God's children. It was love that moved them, and yet moves them, to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, and clothe the naked, visit the sick, the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, which is pure and undefiled religion. Are we attending to these things? Is there no lack among us in these things? and if there is, are we looking out for them, to see that we fulfill the end of our calling, that we are keeping our vessel in sanctification and honor? "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification," "that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor." We should not commit fornication; we must not follow the Gentiles in their evil lusts; we must not defraud a brother, for the Lord is the avenger of all such, and has said, "Vengeance belongeth unto me, I

will repay." God has called us unto holiness, and we are taught of God to love one another.

T. M. POULSON, Mod.

J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

The Juniata Old School Baptist Association convened with the Sidling Hill Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Oct. 7th, 8th and 9th, 1898, to the Associations with whom she corresponds, sends greeting in the Lord.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In the providence of God we have met together once more to worship God, who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and made us kings and priests unto God. Dear brethren, it is enough to make us speak after the manner of the psalmist, "Praise the Lord, O my soul," to hear the ministers tell their ups and downs, and the many blessings that have been bestowed upon them, and God's children feel their weakness and unworthiness. And now, dear brethren, we desire a continuance of your correspondence with us, and may the blessing of God continue with you.

Our next Association will meet with the Springfield church, in Huntingdon Co., Pa., to commence on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1899.

E. V. WHITE, Moderator.

A. MELLOTT, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday evening, Oct. 12th, 1898, Mr. Alvin C. Stover and Miss Martha H. Bainbridge, both of Pennington, N. J.

By the same, at the bride's residence, Thursday evening, Nov. 10th, 1898, Mr. Gordon R. E. Hunting-ton, of Trenton, N. J., and Miss Maggie L. Savidge, of Mt. Rose, N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—At his home in Washington, D. C., suddenly, on Nov. 17th, 1898, **H. B. Waddey**, son of B. F. and Henrietta A. Waddey, aged 43 years.

Edward Burgess died at his home near Elk Lick, Ky., on the morning of August 28th, 1898, aged 82 years. He was twice married. His wife, seven sons and three daughters survive him. My husband had been an invalid for twelve years, due to rheumatism and erysipelas, which he bore with great patience, often saying it was the chastening rod for his disobedience. He was a subscriber for the SIGNS nearly forty years. During his illness, as long as he could hold his paper, (the SIGNS) he would have me to help him dress nearly every night, seat him by his lamp to read. He would when through reading often say, "This paper is worth its weight in gold." Feeling his unworthiness he never united with the church, but was firm and unwavering in the doctrine of salvation, by free, rich and unmerited grace. Elder Eubanks spoke very comfortingly from the words, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." After which the remains were laid to rest in the family graveyard, there to await the glorious resurrection, when we hope he will come forth in the likeness of his blessed Redeemer. O, may the giver of every good and precious gift, be a Husband and Father to his widow and his children, guide them by his unerring counsel, be their staff and stay through life, give them grace to bear up under this sad bereavement, and prepare them for home where sorrow is unknown, is the prayer of his lonely, sad wife.

SARAH E. BURGESS.

My grandmother, **Sarah Patterson Sweet**, was born in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., March 15th, 1819, died April 7th, 1898, at the home of her youngest child, Garner Sweet, near Polo, Ill., aged 79 years and 23 days. She was united in marriage with Nelson Sweet, Sept. 25th, 1836. He died Sept. 17th, 1886. After his death she made her home with her children, not being content very long at a time anywhere, she was so lonely. Her Bible and SIGNS were her greatest comfort. She attended associations and yearly meetings when her health would permit. Eleven children were born to this union, five of whom preceded her to the better world. James, Erastus, Gershum, Garner and Mrs. Lydia Travis, of this place, and Mrs. Mary Smith, of Traer, Iowa, survive. For over sixty years she was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, always ready to defend the faith once delivered to the saints. She was baptized by Elder Isaac Hewitt. She died of pneumonia. All that physician and loving hands could do was done, but all to no avail. It is very lonely without her cheering words and kindly smile, but our loss is her eternal gain. Although her

last days were days of great suffering, she bore it with great patience, often desiring to go and be at rest. She said, "This world is not my home, I am ready to go at any time." About the last words she was known to say were, "He was crucified and died for me."

The funeral was held Saturday. There was a large gathering of relatives and friends, to pay their last respects to one who had lived among us so long. They tried to get the minister of her faith and choice, but failed. The M. E. minister, of Polo, officiated, after which the remains were laid to rest by the side of her husband, there to await the resurrection.

ALSO,

My aunt, and sister of the above, **Catharine Patterson Randall**, was born in Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., March 12th, 1826, died April 15th, 1898, at the home of Garner Sweet, near Polo, Illinois. She came to visit her sister, and was taken sick, and only a week, when the silent messenger called her away. She said we should not think of her dead body up there in the ground, but as her happy in the home above. She was the last of a large family, leaving only nephews and nieces. She was married to Jesse Randall about thirty years ago, who preceded her to the other world in September, 1885. She united with the Old School Baptist Church when young; in coming west she never moved her membership. The M. E. minister, of Polo, officiated, after which the remains were laid to rest.

MRS. SHERMAN I. DOTY.

POLO, Ill., Nov. 4, 1898.

DIED—At his late residence in Wilmington, Del., Nov. 4th, 1898, **Robert Pearl Tawresey**, in the 69th year of his age. Brother Tawresey was born Jan. 4th, 1830, in Adleborough, Suffolk Co., England, emigrating to this country, with his parents, the following spring. After years of wandering the family settled near London Tract, and for a long time were faithful and useful members there. They were Baptist members in England. Brother Tawresey was married to Miss Susan E. Watson, by Elder Thomas Barton, April 18th, 1858. She was baptized and received in the London Tract Church some years before her husband. She now survives him. He was baptized by Elder Joseph Staton, July 6th, 1890, since which time he has resided in Wilmington, being a great help to both the Wilmington and London Tract churches. Through all this man's life grace shone conspicuously. He was humble and unassuming, yet rooted and grounded in a knowledge and love of the truth. The fruits of his zeal and faithfulness remain a legacy to us. He was stricken with paralysis Feb. 20th, 1890, and has had repeated shocks since that time. Of late his mind had been affected, and his speech so much impaired that he could have very little satisfaction in conversation, but he showed steadfastness in his faith

and patience in all the years of intense suffering until the end, which was peaceful. While all through those weary years he was ministered unto both night and day. Nobody outside of the immediate family will ever know the never-tiring and self-sacrificing devotion of the members of his family, faithful, patient and uncomplaining to the end. We have all felt that he was worthy of all the care and attention that could be bestowed upon him, and we may be assured the consciousness of having faithfully discharged a great duty and responsibility, will be to them the best of all rewards.

On Tuesday the 8th, he was consigned to his last resting-place, at London Tract.

ALSO,

DIED—At the residence of her daughter, in Cecil Co., Md., Oct. 12th, 1898, **Mrs. Lucinda Frazier**, in the 62d year of her age. Mrs. Frazier has long been one of our congregation at Bryn Zion, her mother having been a worthy member there for many years. From my first acquaintance with Mrs. Frazier she has been a serious, thoughtful woman, but very diffident. I think she was an experienced woman from early youth. She never made a public profession, for I suppose the same reason that hinders so many. Like the man that went to the Savior, he wanted the favor, but told him that he was not worthy. From general good health she was stricken with bilious dysentery, and only survived about ten days. She was a widow, and a married daughter is her only child. I think we may say, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." She was possessed of an abundant measure of that meek and humble spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Delaware.

Deacon John G. Rucker, of Lacombe, Linn Co., Ore., departed this life Oct. 28th, 1898, of heart disease, being 76 years, 3 months and 13 days old. Brother Rucker was a son of Ephraim and Rosy Ann Rucker; born August 15th, 1822, at Frankfort, Ky., where he lived until his twenty-eighth year, when he married Miss Harriet Medley, in 1850, and moved to Vernon Co., Mo., the same year. To this union there were born two daughters and one son. His wife died in February, 1877. Brother Rucker was again united in marriage, to Miss Martha E. Pyatt, daughter of Elder J. T. and Amelia Pyatt, August 22d, 1877. Of this union there was born one son, who survives him. While brother Rucker was living in Vernon Co., Mo., he professed a hope in Christ, and united with the Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church called Zion, and was baptized by Elder Charles M. Reed, in the year 1876. He was ordained deacon, on Saturday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1878. After serving Zion church one year, he moved his residence to Bates Co.,

Mo., in 1879, placing his membership with Pleasant Gap church. He remained a member of this church until he moved his residence to Lacombe, Oregon, in 1891, when he placed his membership with Bethlehem church, near his home, where he remained a member, serving the church in his official duties, until released by death. Brother Rucker has gone to his reward, having fought the good fight of faith, and finished his course with joy. He bore his suffering with remarkable patience, being at times a great sufferer. The writer visited him several times during his illness, and spoke to him in regard to his hope. He said he was perfectly reconciled to the will of the Lord, and was only waiting to be released. After an illness of three months he peacefully fell asleep.

His funeral was preached by Elder Silas Williams, to a large concourse of sympathizing friends, using as a text 1 Cor. xv. 51, followed with remarks by the writer, after which his remains was followed to the Providence Cemetery, and laid to rest until the trump shall sound to awake the sleeping nations of the dead. We feel that our loss indeed is great. His companion sustains the loss of a kind husband; his children, a loving father; his church, a faithful brother, and an able counselor. May the good Lord in mercy remember his bereaved companion, and children, and grant them the grace of reconciliation to his will, and his little church that has so recently been called to pass through such sore trials; may they realize the Lord is their refuge in time of trouble, and that the Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

A. HORNER.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged.....	\$165 15
M., Kentucky.....	2 00
Total to date.....	\$167 15

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

By Elder William Gadsby, late of Manchester, England. Many thousands of these pamphlets have been scattered throughout England and America, and read with intense interest by the lovers of the truth, and still the demand has increased to such a degree as to induce us to present to the public this edition, which we will send (postage paid by us) to any post-office address in the United States or Canada at the following rates, viz: a single copy for 10 cents; 12 copies for \$1.00; 25 copies for \$2.00; 50 copies for \$3.00; 100 copies for \$5.00. Address,

GILBERT BEEBE'S SON.

Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

THE
"FEAST OF FAT THINGS."

A pamphlet containing the following articles, viz:
First. "Minutes of the Proceedings and Resolutions, Drafted by the Particular Baptists, Convened at Black Rock, Md., September 28th, 1832," at which time the division (or "split") took place between the Old School, and the New School Baptists.

Second. The "Everlasting Task for Arminians." By the late Elder Wm. Gadsby, of England.

Third. "A Dream-Tour Through the Arminian Heaven." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fourth. "Fatalism." By Elder H. M. Curry, of Lebanon, Ohio.

Fifth. "The Celestial Railroad." This allegory, after the style of "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," is written to show what wonderful improvements have been made since his day, in journeying to the "Celestial City." Please do not confound this with the Arminian poetical effusion, of the same title.

Sixth. "A Riddle." By the late Elder Gilbert Beebe. Will be mailed to any address on receipt of price.

BOUND IN PAPER COVERS.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

“THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON.”

VOL. 66. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1898. NO. 24.

POETRY.

WHAT AM I?

I HAVE no wonderful field in the world,
That breaks on me day by day,
And at times the lip of scorn is curled,
As I travel my lonely way;
But where the Master placed me I am,
And there in his service stay.
I know that often, like Esau of old,
My heart from life's toils would stray,
For beautiful looks the hunting fold,
Where the wild deer fearless play.
The skies of that far off liberty land
Shine blue against my gray:
Just then he putteth forth his hand,
And for strengthening grace I pray.
Only a little moment of time,
And I a speck on it lying,
My soul next longs for a purer clime,
And throbs with its daily dying.
O how I would that will of thine
To me were satisfying.
How many plans of my busy brain
Have burst in bubbles of sorrow;
Fair hopes, as sweet as a song's refrain,
Floated past me on life's morrow.
What then, if that precious faith remain?
Which time cannot steal or borrow.
So my field is my home, from-day to day
Each trifling burden bearing,
And sometimes I find a piece of the way
The Master has been sharing.
How much I wish him ever to stay,
That my spirit might cease its caring.

MRS. J. STREET.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Sept. 27, 1898.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHAMPAIGN, Ill., Oct. 14, 1898.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES—
DEAR BRETHREN:—I have received and read with unusual interest the current number of the SIGNS, especially the editorial on the atonement. How foolish to talk of an atonement designed by our Lord, and consummated by him, in which the final result is left to the dead sinner for his acceptance or rejection, with power to act. I have no doubt of the final condemnation and destruction of the whole race of mankind, if it were left to the unregenerated sinner to choose or refuse God's mercy. A universal atonement presupposes absolute freedom of the will, hence the institution of this grammatical monstrosity, known as free moral agency. It makes no difference how deep in crime and immorality a sinner may be sunk, still, according to this creed, he is a member in good standing in this society, fully able at any time to transpose himself or herself from a demon to an angel of light, with power to resume his former character at any time that may suit his caprice. If this doctrine were followed to its logical conclu-

sion, it would dethrone the Almighty by elevating man above him. I heard a very prominent minister, of almost national fame as a minister and lecturer, reason out clear to a final conclusion the freedom of the will, in the presence of at least three thousand people. I will not give his name here, but can do so if required. As his crowning argument, he asserted that man is wholly independent of God, and God cannot enter man's heart to save him until man surrenders the keys. That man is an agent I have no doubt, but he has no authority to teach or believe anything not contained in God's instructions to his agents. But the idea that man is free to accept or reject life at his option, is preposterous. Life is from God, and it comes without option upon the part of its recipient. I hardly think there is a person living who will claim that he came into this world at his own option, or at the volition of his own will. It may be asked, When or how does man enter into that condition called the new birth, by which he obtains eternal life? I think that I am safe in saying that the first knowledge that the sinner has of this change is when he begins to realize the effects of life. That is, he mourns, hungers and thirsts after (Christ's) righteousness, is weary and heavy laden, and feels a desire for spiritual blessings. It is perfectly safe to say that there is no spiritual activity without spiritual life, just as there can be no physical activity without natural life. Where there comes a change in the desires and longings of a person, and the mind is exercised in spiritual matters, and sin becomes exceeding sinful, and there is a burning desire for peace, for rest, with a desire to hide their trouble from others, there is evidence of life. These things accompany salvation; but

where it began, and how, is clear beyond the comprehension of the finite mind.

Also the question of Inquirer, with the editorial remarks by the editors, I am fully in agreement with. And while these things are instructive as far as they go, I want to say that it seems to me that much more might be said upon the same subject. As brother Beebe says, many of the brethren are diffident in writing or speaking for personal reasons. But I think that faithfulness becomes the house of God in this matter, as well as touching our faith and polity as a church. The calling to the sacred office of the ministry is one of vital importance, and should engage our most prayerful attention. As a natural consequence every one who has experienced the love of God in their hearts, will be filled with gratitude toward the source of all their spiritual blessings, and would very much like to make some return. Therefore, when they are comforted by the preached word, it begets a desire in them to also preach Christ; and I think that many a man has been led to believe from this cause that he had received a call to preach. Now I fully believe that every member of Christ's mystical body is called to a life of activity and usefulness in the church. There is a diversity of gifts, and all who are called are not chosen of God to minister in word and doctrine; and while there may be many evidences of a call to the work of the ministry, yet I think that the only infallible one is that named by brother Beebe, that he does preach. I am satisfied that many minor gifts in the church are spoiled in trying to make a preacher. And this invariably results in a dismal failure. Churches are usually more culpable in such cases than the persons set forward. But some one may say, Well, probably the church was mis-

taken in your own case. I have felt during the whole of my ministry, to greatly fear that this is too true, and while I think it the duty of every member to be present at all their meetings, yet I never can understand why any one should put themselves out of their way in the least to hear me try to preach. And just how brethren in the ministry can feel offended because of fancied neglect, or failure on the part of the brethren to regard them as the greatest in the kingdom, is past my comprehension. Surely it is not the Spirit of Christ. It becomes the church to look well to these things. There is no doubt that God's greatest blessing to the church is a sound and faithful ministry, and the greatest misfortune that can befall a church is an unsound and unstable ministry. Nearly all the church difficulties which have resulted in discord, contentions and divisions in the churches, have originated and are traceable to petty jealousies among preachers. I have heard it remarked that there were two kinds of preachers, one of them thinking that they shall die if they are not allowed to preach, and the other kind would die rather than try to preach. I have never been able to see just why one should desire the profession of the ministry as life calling. Surely such an one cannot feel the burden and fearful responsibility resting upon one who is called of God to that work, the work of ministering in holy things. I have no difficulty in deciding the factors which lead one to decide in favor of the ministry among those who are devotees of the commercial religion. Men can well choose between other worldly professions and this one. God's call, and the call prompted by worldly ambition, are two separate things. Each calling has its rewards, but they are different also. The one feels,

"Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." The other, "Woe to me if I fail to please the people." The one says, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." The other says, "Unto me, one of the most talented of my profession, is it given to deliver one of the most learned disquisitions on the subject of the development of the physical manhood ever delivered in this city." The one finds a deep response from the hearts of those who are born of God, and hunger and thirst after righteousness. The other meets with the approbation, and elicits the applause of the worldly minded and cultured audience. The one is rewarded on the part of the hearers and doers of God's word, with a hearty God bless you, and a silent tear of gratitude, but by the world with scoffs, persecutions, &c. The other is rewarded by worldly applause, and other more substantial tokens of appreciation. So to any one asking the applause of men, the gospel ministry offers a very unpromising field, and any person actuated by selfish motives would do better to look to some other calling than that of an Old School Baptist minister. I have often felt at a great loss to know how to deal with the young men who feel that God has called them to the work of the ministry, and I have become satisfied that there is no reliable rule, either for pastors, or for those exercising a supposed gift. But one thing is settled in my mind, and that is, that a pastor should be a father to such, and exercise a fatherly care toward them. He should encourage them when necessary, and if need be should caution them against presumptuous and boastful habits, and when they rebuke, it should always be in a spirit of meekness. "Train

up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." If there is any one thing that will destroy the usefulness of a minister, it is a spirit of selfishness, with a disposition to be talking of self constantly, both in the pulpit, and out of it, in private conversation. We hear Paul say, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." And, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Too much levity also is like the dead flies in the precious ointment of the apothecary. If your preaching is well received, the brethren will let you know it in some way, without asking them how they liked it, or what they thought of it. It is distasteful to a congregation to listen for ten or fifteen minutes to a long list of defects, such as ignorance, illiteracy, unfitness, barrenness, &c. They will know all about these things before you are done speaking. Stick to your subject until you are through, and then quit. Do not tell your audience from three to six times that you are going to quit in just about a minute. Also talebearing, or tattling, is contemptible business for a minister. I have seemed to derive more satisfaction from communications on the subject of christian experience, than any other subject, yet I think that an article on practical godliness would not be amiss occasionally.

From your brother,

S. KETCHUM.

[We commend the above article to our readers for the many good and pertinent suggestions which it contains. The work of the ministry is great and solemn. Those engaged in it at the call of God will feel that they should give heed to themselves, and to the doctrine. A right

behavior is of as much importance as right doctrine. And those who are called to the work of the ministry will not desire that it should be said of them, that when they are out of the pulpit, they ought not to go in, and when they are in, they should never come out. The doctrine which is according to godliness, should be accompanied by a life which is according to godliness also.—[ED.]

WARWICK, N. Y., Nov. 22, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BENTON:—I send herewith a private letter, which I think too valuable to be withheld from the readers of the SIGNS, and ask that you give it room in its columns, if it meets your approval. I have obtained the consent of the writer to its publication, although it was written as a private letter. Of course it is not designed as a presentation of all that is contained in the glorious doctrine of the resurrection, but I regard the thoughts submitted as being worthy of careful consideration. Such is the glorious fullness of inspired truth that its brilliance illumines the pathway of the saints in their pilgrimage here in time by the very light whose infinite glory is the eternal life of all the redeemed. I would exhort all the saints to contribute to your columns such views as they have found profitable in their own experience.

As ever, in the hope of life in Christ Jesus, your brother,

WM. L. BEEBE.

FRENCHTOWN, N. J., Nov. 10, 1898.

ELDER WM. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Feeling that it would be a great privilege to me to write you, I take the liberty, hoping you will forgive my trespassing on your time and patience. My mind has been very dark for a long time, and I have seemingly been hoping in

vain for the "appearing of the Lord." How wonderfully forgetful I find myself of all the past mercies of the Lord. I cannot well express my proneness to walk after the flesh, and consider well every temptation of the adversary, believing the father of lies, rather than the assuring evidences of sonship in all the travel I am called to pass through. I have been thinking some of late of some things in connection with the fifth chapter of John, in which Jesus talking to the Jews, says, "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." And again, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in ~~their~~ 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." It seems to my mind that the Redeemer would set forth the truth concerning himself, and this is true, that he was to fulfill the law for his people, and raise them from the dead, and present them holy and without blame before God in love. His coming in the flesh, and what he accomplished, must be made known unto every member of his spiritual body. Never could a natural Jew, although a type of the spiritual, come forth from the dead. The power of him who is the "resurrection and the life," must be felt. Now Jesus would so present it. Not only was it true that "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live," which was true of those that were raised, made alive, and followed him, and lived in him as their life, their sanctification and redemption, while he was in the flesh, but it must equally be true of every one, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, when he had ful-

filled the law, and brought forth the whole church from under the law. Hence, "The time is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." All shall know him, from the least unto the greatest. This deliverance which was wrought on Calvary must be known. The power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings must be felt by every member of his body. Does not all this come true in the experience of his people now? Do they not show forth this truth, which Jesus taught? Do they not all come forth? And do they not come forth from the grave of sin and guilt? And do they not praise him who is their resurrection and life? Does not this prove conclusively that this was what the Redeemer would set forth when he said, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth?" "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "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." "Behold I and the children which God hath given me!" "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." I fail to see how else this is fulfilled in the experience of the saints. When we see Jesus in his people, we see the resurrection. There is no resurrection outside of Jesus.

"They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." This certainly can have no reference to any other people than those who are partakers of the resurrection. These are his people; these come forth. Some come forth and walk in all the order and ordinances of his house, and live; some

come forth and walk after the flesh, and die. One is raised unto life, the other unto condemnation. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We find in our experience that in the things of Jesus there is life; in the things of the flesh there is death, condemnation. This we see verified here. We see some who give evidence of life, bury their one talent in the earth. In this they are unfaithful, and they have come forth unto condemnation. On the other hand, we see some who are always abounding in the work of the Lord, and in all these things there is life and peace.

I will write no more at present. Please do not hesitate to call my attention to anything and everything you see amiss in what I write, for I recognize your discernment in spiritual things so far superior to what I know, that I want your judgment. I wish I could be with you Sunday in New York.

With love to all your household, I am, as ever, yours in hope,

O. R. KUGLER.

[PLEASE append to the letter the following extract from brother Kugler's reply to my request for liberty to publish the foregoing.—W. L. B.]

"Your welcome letter received, and it did do me good to have your approbation of my views of the Scripture in John. While I so very imperfectly presented them, yet it does seem to me that we lose much of the sweetness of divine things when we stray from what we have seen, which our hands have handled of the word of life. The more I am led to meditate on these things, the more I find in my own experience the fulfillment of that which is written; hence I can say, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,

and is profitable" to the saints alone. Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and when his people are made alive from the dead, they hear his voice, and come forth, and are manifestly partakers of his fullness, or are partakers of the resurrection, and as we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we grow in the knowledge of the resurrection. Being therefore partakers of his fullness, we by faith "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." And in this high and holy calling we press forward in this highway and holiness, confidently expecting to be fulfilled in us the promises of our God, that we shall be conformed unto the image of the Son of God. "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." Hence it follows that all we can know here in our imperfect state, of the resurrection, is what is revealed in us of Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, and the fullness of him of which we have received, will only be known when the shackles of mortality shall fall.

"Then shall we see and feel and know
All we desired or wished below."

O. R. KUGLER."

BROTHER BEEBE:—After writing a communication for the SIGNS, and not being satisfied with it, I received the following, which I send to you. I would like to see it published.

J. ABNER MORSE.

DEAR BROTHER MORSE:—In giving you my views on the communion, I shall make no apology for my weakness or soundness, as that will appear plain enough before I am through. I will begin by going direct to the word, for if we

speak not according to that, we might as well stop at once. Let us read, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, 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."—1 Cor. v. 11.

Is it to be supposed that Paul, after he had written the above sentence, would have sat down with them at the communion until those unruly brethren had been excused from the table, or would he do what he told them not to do? Or would he say, Now if it is your communion season let us go forward, and afterward exclude them that were found guilty? For he had told them before, to cast them out. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my Spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." This offense must be attended to before communion, for he says, "Let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven." "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump." See to disorders before communion. For, "It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make inquiry."—Proverbs xx. 25. Let us read again, "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?"—Romans ii. 21. No, please do not tell us that Paul would have eaten with those Corinthians until he had first attended to their disorders. After rebuking them for eating with disorderly persons, and also their manner of eating, then he says, "When ye come together therefore into one place, [marginal ye cannot] eat the Lord's supper." This

tells the whole story. Paul would not eat in such confusion, and also tells them, "Ye cannot." Then after telling them how to proceed, in the foregoing verses, and telling them the terrible consequences of eating and drinking without due consideration, he says, (verse 28) "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." Here Paul makes a man that is accounted worthy by his brethren, to be his own examiner and judge. He not only has to be judged by his brethren, to be a partaker of that holy ordinance, but he must examine something that his brethren does not have access to, that is his own conscience. He must have the answer of a good conscience toward God. When he can commune with his Lord in secret, then, and not till then, can he lawfully partake of that bread. There is no time set for him to finish his examination. No one is given authority to say to him, "It is time you were through this search." Inquiry can be made, exhortation can be given, but no one can say, You must come along, we are ready, for the command is, Tarry one for the other. Neither is one examination sufficient for a lifetime; it must be continued, and whenever he feels free to do so, and opportunity is offered him, he will eat of that bread and drink of that cup, for has not his Lord told him to do so? After all of our preaching and exhortation, to a subject of grace, we must leave him with his God, trusting that that same Spirit that has brought him thus far, will make him willing to confess his Lord, and go forward in his appointed ordinances. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalms cx. 3. The Lord has not told us how often to eat, so there can be no excuse for hurry. The one great thing is, to be done by a fit subject, and

in a proper manner, and in remembrance of him.

Now in regard to our individual experience, we know that sometimes we cannot do what we would, what we would really like to do, and the very thing we are expected to do; that which if not done by us would be a disappointment, yet we sometimes fail to do it. I remember a time when it was expected for a certain Elder to preach a funeral. At the time appointed he told me he could not. He spoke to me, and told me his text, and I spoke. Again, I was expected to speak, and went in the pulpit; the hymn was sung, I looked in the Bible, but I felt I could not, nor dare I attempt it. I called on the brethren, and after they were through, I spoke an hour and a half as free as I ever did in my life. This has been the case twice with me. The brethren did not ask for an explanation, or make me an offender, although I knew they felt disappointed. I never felt to make an apology, only to say I could not speak. Now, why should we lay a burden on the brethren that we cannot bear? Where did we get a command to make a brother an offender for not taking the bread each time, although he may be present with the church? Every heart knoweth its own bitterness, and the Lord alone knows the many struggles we have with ourselves, and with the conduct of our brethren, as that conduct appears to us; but if left alone with him that knoweth our hearts, and not prodded and provoked by those that have no sympathy for us, we may come all right yet. For our Lord giveth songs in the night. When the Lord cleansed the ten lepers, there was but one returned to give glory to him. He asked, Where are the nine? We may also ask, but we

have no account of the Lord sending after them.

Yours to serve in gospel bonds,

M.

[WHILE we cannot fully agree with all the conclusion of brother M., as stated above, yet we feel willing to publish his letter for the consideration of the brotherhood. Having written lately at considerable length upon the above subject, we do not feel to add more now. We would only say, that we have often felt entirely unfit in our feelings to break bread for the church, but yet should have felt condemned if we had disappointed the church by refusing to go on. It also seems to us that if a church ought not to break bread until every disorder and every evil is removed, few churches will break bread at all. Yet there should be great faithfulness in discipline.—ED.]

STATE ROAD, Del., Nov. 18, 1898.

BROTHER BEEBE:—As I am regarded as having a place in the ministry, I query why the inspired writers admonish ministers more than private members? Are ministers more exposed to temptations, or is it because they in their public position are exposed to public criticism, and consequently more likely to bring reproach? One Scripture that now occurs to me is, "Giving no offense in anything that the ministry be not blamed."—2 Cor. vi. 3. While he as a minister and an apostle, would set a proper example before the brethren, he also would admonish all gospel ministers as though, if confusion, or negligence, or strife, obtained among the brethren at any time, the ministry would be held measurably responsible for it. The naming of the name of Christ imposes upon each and every one the obligation to be careful to depart from iniquity, and to shun the very appearance

of evil; but those who occupy the more prominent and responsible positions in the church, will bring on the churches more mischief by an unchristian course, than would those who were not placed in such responsible positions. To not give offense in anything would put a restriction on the ministry with regard to a multitude of things. If all the schisms, and alienations, and strifes, that have occurred in and among the churches, resulting sometimes in breaches of fellowship, and lifelong estrangements, are all, or mostly, traceable to the ministry, it is indeed a sad and lamentable record. Happy that man whose ministry is free from all blame in these respects. I will not now attempt to deal with the multitude of cases or circumstances that might be referred to, if the ministry is not to be blamable in anything. I will however call attention to one thing about which I do not want the ministry to be blamed. It was said of the Master, that the Spirit of the Lord God was upon him, and John the Baptist saw it remaining on him. The proofs are given, proofs which characterized his whole life. He ever sympathized with sorrow, suffering and death, and was known sometimes to weep. It has been said that he was never known to laugh, and we have no record that he ever indulged in levity, or jesting, or any kind of vain or frivolous conversation. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." I know of no difference in the Spirit of the Lord God that was upon Christ, and the Spirit of Christ. If his Spirit dwells in the ministers of his word, they will be found ministering to the meek, the penitent and broken-hearted, showing the opening of the prison to them that are bound, and comforting all that mourn, as he did. And no other evidence or proof is given that the Spirit

of the Lord is upon them. No other spirit works like this Spirit. We have a list of the fruits of the Spirit enumerated, but I do not find among them jesting, or vain and idle conversation. In my early life I would not have attempted to say what I am now saying, yet there was more occasion for it then than now. I was a youth among the ministry, and as they were all in advance of me they would not take kindly any word from me that reflected unfavorably upon any of them. My old pastor was in the habit of bushing levity that he disapproved of, by striking up some sweet, melodious song. It was always effectual, and never gave offense. I do not think the remedy has yet lost its virtue. The relative positions of myself and the general ministry has changed in fifty years. Having traveled longer with the Lord's people than Moses did with Israel in the wilderness, I may speak as he did of some of the blessings that await them, before my death. The Savior is said to be anointed with the Spirit, and so the saints are said to be anointed by that one and the same Spirit. When this bond of brotherhood has brought people to dwell in its Spirit, as the anointing of Aaron anointed all the members of his person, so they show that they have all received the same anointing, and have the earnest of the same Spirit in their hearts. The anointing oil was emblematical, and the process of anointing persons was also emblematical. The way the apostle speaks of it seems to set it forth as representing the Spirit of which I have been speaking, and the experience of it teaching them the truth as it is in Jesus. All anointing oils were intended to be fragrant, so the priestly garments were rendered fragrant as representing at least what they ought to be, and what the anointing with the Spirit of

God would be upon those upon whomsoever it should come. All their garments should smell of myrrh, and cassia, and cinnamon, out of the ivory palaces. There should never be any dead flies in the ointment. "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour, so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor." If this ointment represents the grace of God, it should not be fouled with dead flies. It would seem a pity that the priestly garments should ever send forth a stinking savour. Otherwise, because of the savor of good pure ointments, the Redeemer's name would come forth as ointment poured forth. The priests were not allowed to officiate without their priestly garments on. The outside life and deportment of good able preachers has sometimes fallen like a frost upon tender plants, and as a blight and mildew upon what would otherwise have been to godly edifying. "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ." Somebody may say to me, Physician, heal thyself. Well say on; this is my besetting sin. Do not suppose I am giving it all out to others. It was once said to me that I was not given to levity as many others were, and did not have trouble on that account. I answered that it was my worst trouble. I have still in remembrance, and I suppose shall have through life, how, many years ago, a certain Scripture took hold of me as the relentless creditor did the debtor by the throat, showing no pity. My soul has it still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."—Matt. xii. 36. Isaiah's lips were hallowed with fire from off the sacred altar, and that fire burned in

all the words ever afterward uttered by him.

Yours to serve in the gospel,
E. RITTENHOUSE.

RATON, N. M., Oct. 19, 1898.

MRS. KATE HILL—MY DEAR, AFFLICTED SISTER:—I have many times thought of you since my return home. I feel that I ought to write to you. When I first came home I was sick for nearly a month, but since then I have been better than I was before I went away. When I left you I thought that I would see you again, but the time flew so fast, and I found so many places to go, that I could not seem to get around. We live in a quiet way, and there are so few that we have any interest in, that it did seem a great change after leaving you all. I often wonder why it was for us to come so far away from home and friends, to such a country, where there are so few Baptists. But the sealed book may some time be opened, and we be made to know its secrets. I have no question that my visit among you all was of great profit to me, and will be long remembered. We have just heard of the death of Israel Hunt, and are shocked at the suddenness of it. Death never comes but with its surprises, and we never know who will be the next victim.

I have thought much of the peculiar frame of mind that I was in the night I spoke at your house, and of how little was brought out of the text. There are so many curious things in the Scriptures, and I confess how little I know of them. The text, you will remember, was Psalms lviii. 9-11. The thorns I am satisfied are the production of the wilderness, and are always annoying to the heaven-born child. The earth was to bring forth briars and thorns, and the gospel hills

were to be digged with a mattock, and there was to come no more hence the brier and the thorn. The sower was to sow seed, but some was to fall among thorns, and be choked. The cares of this world are the annoying things of the church. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. The whirlwind is very mysterious, and when it sweeps things before it, it is because they are perishable, and therefore taken away. The thorns can no longer harm, for they are gone. Preserved in Christ Jesus are his saints, and no harm can come to them, for none shall hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain. The first miracle was at Cana of Galilee. The pots were preserved, but there was no water, because there was no purifying in the law. Christ came to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He commanded the pots to be filled, and then to draw out, but not water, but wine. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. The wine, or the grace of God, was to make the face of the people to shine. There was a marriage, but at first no wine, and then both a marriage and wine. The church has always relied upon the grace of God in all her feasts, because he has purged her sins by himself, and has forever sat down at the right hand of God as their covenant Head. No thorn can reach him now. He wore a crown of thorns to represent his agony, put on by wicked men, but they did more than they thought. For he sweat as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground. His agony has ever been to his people that which they will ever rejoice in, for no thorn whatever can come against them, for he suffered the just for the unjust. The child may say, I am black, but also can say with Solomon, I am comely. Comely in the Lord,

because she is at the right hand of God. She is washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, and is comely because she is cleansed by his blood. Such wine as the governor of the feast pronounced good, is good, for it is the new wine of the kingdom, and it is wine on the lees well refined. God's promises are connected with the taking away of the thorns, for they are given only when the thorns are taken away. Paul says they were messengers of Satan to buffet him, but when he said, Take them away, the Lord said, My grace is sufficient for you. This grace is sufficient now, and the thorns shall not hurt, for God has taken them away.

"Both living, and in his wrath." "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Daniel had to go into the lion's den, that men might know that the Lord alone delivered him. The Hebrew children had to go into the fiery furnace, that the form of the fourth, like unto the Son of God, might appear among them. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Through death is the hope of life eternal. He is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. The first-fruit was the offering of the church, and all the saints shall be like him. "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." We sow not that body which shall be, but it is quickened in death. The natural dies, but the spiritual is quick, for it shall not see death. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." In this victory there is joy, joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. He says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the

dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." The church has thus been watered for generations, and the Lord has not forgotten to be gracious, for he waters his people with his word, which is quick (living) and powerful (effectual calling) and sharper than any two-edged sword, for the Spirit quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. The church has life, for it is given unto her. This is eternal life, and she shall never perish. They are born from the dead, that they may rejoice over death. They have victory, for Christ lives. It is the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, for God has triumphed, and the victory is unto himself, for there was none with him to deliver him.

"How can I sink with such a prop
As my eternal God,
Who bears the huge creation up
With his eternal word?"

My dear brother and sister, these are things I would always love to dwell upon and rejoice in. But groveling minds cannot explore the depths of boundless love and power; the love and power of that God who hath chosen unto himself a people to show forth his praise. God is in heaven, man upon earth, therefore let his words be few.

Remember me in love to all the church, and accept this as a token of my love and regard for you.

Affectionately your brother,

G. M. FETTER.

OXFORD, N. Y., Oct. 2, 1898.

DEAR ELDER CHICK:—It is with fear and trembling that I attempt to write to you, but as you requested it, I will try to tell you some of the Lord's dealings with me. At least, I trust it is the Lord's

work. I can hardly remember when I did not realize that there was an overruling power, but I was so very young that I can hardly tell about it, only that I would try to pray, in my childish way, to God, to restore my mother's health, as she was out of her mind nearly all my young life, and it was a great trial to me, when it seemed that I most needed a mother's care. But there was one who knew better than I, and he ordered it all for some wise purpose. I can remember quite clearly from the time when I was about eleven years of age, that after Elder Hartwell's death, and before Elder Purington came to Hopewell to stay, I began to see myself a poor, wicked sinner, and I wondered how I came to be upon God's beautiful earth. I did not then know what caused me to have these feelings. About that time I attended a prayer meeting with my sister, held at one of the sister's houses. I can never forget it. Brother Fetter read the twenty-third Psalm. How that Psalm impressed me. I can never express my feelings. It seemed that it had been written expressly for me. That meeting was not long enough. I was sorry when it closed. From that time on I loved to hear the preaching, and would go whenever I could hear of a meeting. I remember reading the Bible, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and found great comfort in them. I well remember meeting with some great disappointments; something that I had planned, and expected would come out as I had planned it, but did not, and as I was a mere child, it seemed a great disappointment. Then I was sick for two or three months. When I was getting better, I think the Lord revealed himself to me in all his glory. I sat looking from my window in a cast down spirit, when in a moment all was changed, and

everything looked so beautiful and grand, and seemed to be praising God, and I was so happy and glad. It seemed to me that there could nothing happen to cast a cloud over my happiness. I do not know how long I sat there, but the first that I remember, I was singing a hymn, and I must say that I was glad that I had been afflicted.

"Oft has my soul in secret blessed
Affliction's painful rod;
It weans me from a creature's breast,
And brings me near to God."

I wanted some one to know how happy I was, but did not tell any one, thinking that I was such a child they would think it did not amount to anything. I thought that I would go and tell Elder Purington after he came to Hopewell, but could not. Little did I think or know how glad they are to hear the little ones bleating around the fold. But the Lord's time had not yet come to tell them, or to be baptized. The time came at his own will, and just as he had ordered it should. I wish it was so that I could be with you all at the meetings every Sunday, but that is not for me. I hope to hear preaching often, but do not expect to get to Hopewell often, it is so far. It has been in my mind for a number of years to obey my heavenly Father's command, and be baptized. Then I would think, How can I, such a one as I? I am not fit, nor good enough. I felt sure that I would not come before the church the day I did. I thought I could not, as my husband was so far away that I could not get word to him, and it seemed that I could not go before the church without his being present. But after listening to your preaching, it seemed that every word was meant for me. The text, as you may remember, was Mark v. 19. While they were singing the hymn the words came to me, "If ye love me keep my command-

ments," and before I knew it, I had gone down in front, to tell what little I knew, and how the Lord had led me. After I was seated I thought, What did I come here for? And could I not get away to some place? But there seemed no place to go, and it came into my mind, "Be still, and know that I am God." I felt more calm, and glad when they received me into the church, and my mind seemed quite at rest. I did not sleep well that night, longing for the morning to come. I cannot express my feeling at the water side. Everything seemed so lovely and grand. I was made to rejoice that the time had come for me to be immersed beneath the yielding wave, and I wished that I could have talked to you more than I did, but it seemed that I could not. I hope to see you some time soon, you and your dear wife and family. How strange it was that my old friend and schoolmate, Altha Drake, should be baptized the same day. So many said it was such a beautiful baptism. It seemed a very solemn thing to me. I could but think whether it was right for me or not, or whether I was deceiving and being deceived?

I have written altogether too much, and yet I have not told my feelings from time to time. I have tried to tell it in my own plain way. I hope that you will tell me just what you think of it all, and excuse my poor writing and mistakes. How much I would like for you and your family to visit us. I had such a pleasant visit at your place. You all seem very dear to me down at Hopewell. I could not think of the time coming for me to return to my home. It came all too soon. I must say to you that my trust is in the Lord, and without him I can do nothing.

With much love to you all, I remain
your little sister,

MARY D. TITUS BREWSTER.

VANBUREN, Ohio, Aug. 12, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER CHICK:—I have just finished reading an article in the SIGNS of Aug. 13, 1898, in which is set forth the belief or faith of a church in Tennessee, in which they say that they indorse the position of the SIGNS upon the subject of predestination. On page 497, first column, they say, "We believe that God's children will do every command that he gives them to do," and on same page, opposite column, they say with reference to God's commands to his children, that they are positive, "and all of God's children obey them, to whom they are given."

This seems new to me, and contrary to what I think Baptists generally believe. Am I, or they mistaken? It may be that I have not read my Bible carefully, and that I have not an experience of grace, but if I have, I fail to harmonize this with what little understanding God has given me upon the subject. It appears to me that if God's children do all his commands, there can be no disobedience on their part, and hence no disobedient children, no chastisements, no need of admonition, no need of rebuke, no need of exhortation, and no need of an intercessor. I fear that if this is the truth, I am forever lost, that I have every reason to conclude that I am not a child of God, for I know that I, at least, come far short of keeping all the commands of God. O, that I could obey all of them, but alas, I can only hope for heaven through the mercies of God. I cannot say that I have always obeyed all of God's commandments, but feel that I come far short. Still for over twenty years, I have entertained a hope that I have been saved according to the mercy of God, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. If Baptists

believe that God's children always do all God's commandments, then I have always misunderstood them, and I am not one of them. Then surely I am one alone in the world, my hope is without foundation, and I am lost, forever lost. O, can it be so?

I have not written this for controversy, but because I am personally interested in this matter. I desire to know the truth. I hope some brother my give me some light upon this subject. Can you not answer my inquiry through the SIGNS? that is, if you shall see fit to give my letter a place in the SIGNS, but if not, and you can spare time to answer me privately, I shall be glad, as I am much concerned in the matter.

Yours in the love of the truth,

A. F. DOVE.

REPLY.—As regards the statements of the church to which our brother has called attention, we do not desire to attempt any explanation, but leave that with themselves, having no doubt that they are abundantly able to present their own position, and to make any explanations which they may desire. But we feel like saying a few words for ourselves in response to the request of brother Dove. We believe, as we always have, ever since we were interested in the word of God, in the predestination of all events, great or small, which come to pass. In this we are in agreement with the old London confession of faith, with the old Philadelphia confession of faith, and with the confession which was adopted at the Black Rock convention, when our fathers finally and formally withdrew from Mother Arminianism and all her brood of institutions. The statement of the same truth, as found in the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, and in the ar-

articles of the old Presbyterian confession, is equally as broad and clear as our own confessions. The one difference being, that these sects do not preach what they profess to believe, while it has been the glory of Baptists that they did contend faithfully and earnestly for their faith. We have referred to these confessions, not as authority, but because of the clear statement of what we do believe in those articles. We suppose that the church in Tennessee, to which our brother refers, meant to affirm this doctrine by what they said.

We have never understood predestination to involve a denial of the fact that man does transgress the commandments of God, in his life daily. And we know for ourselves, that we do disobey his revealed word every day of our lives. The testimony of the word is that the people of God do sin against God, and that therefore they need and have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. If the predestination of God destroys the accountability of man, so does his all-embracing foreknowledge, and his utter unchangeability. If it leaves no room for intercession, for exhortation, and for prayer, so also would his foreknowledge and unchangeability. A moment's consideration would show this to any careful mind. It is not however our purpose here to enter into any defense of the doctrine of predestination. We but wish to emphasize the fact that it does not destroy all exhortation, or the commandments of God, and it does not put away all prayer from our hearts, or the intercession of the dear Redeemer.

Paul, who believed and taught the predestination of all things most strongly, did not think therefore, there was no room for exhortation, for to all of the churches to which he wrote, a great part

of what he says is in the way of exhortation. Some of his epistles are nearly all exhortation. He saw no inconsistency between predestination and exhortation. While he taught that the Lord ruled in all things, and that the wicked only accomplished his sovereign will, even when they did not mean it so, yet he charged upon his brethren many transgressions, and he exhorted* them to repentance, again and again. The decrees of God are accomplished in all that is done in the world, and in all that is done by his people, but yet they often violate his revealed law, which he has given as the expression of his own holy character and will. Thus, they who crucified the Savior, wrought out God's purpose, and yet they sinned against God in so doing. See the testimony of Peter in Acts ii. 23; iv. 27, 28. Peter also sinned when he, with cursing and swearing, denied his Master, and when convinced of his sin, went out and wept bitterly, and yet he did what the Lord announced that he would do, and which, after the Lord had announced it, must be done. If any brethren who believe in and contend for predestination, have gone so far as to deny that believers can transgress the commands of God, in their outward life, they have gone to conclusions to which it is sure the apostle Paul had not attained. If those brethren who insist especially upon the accountability of man, will contend for the first part of the Old London Confession of faith, which declares that God has from all eternity foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, as firmly as we believe and contend for the second part of that article, which asserts the accountability of man, we will have no dispute at all. Those brethren who reject the doctrine of the predestination of all things, and those who would seem to

object to plain direct exhortation to all believers, to do the commandments of God, are alike wrong. As long as the Bible seems to us to teach both predestination, and also the obligations which rest upon believers, we expect to continue to do the same. To deny either one is to dishonor the word of God, and to accuse Jehovah himself of inconsistency. If it will be of any comfort to brother Dove, we want to say that we do know that we have sinned against God, and have experienced his chastisements. And we, like him, hope that through the mercy of God, we are numbered with those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. C.

SNOWHILL, Md., Nov. 1, 1898.

MY DEAR OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST FRIENDS:—I thought that I would have written to you before this. It is with a feeling of fear and unworthiness that I write at all, to the people of God. Yet, I do feel such a strong impression to write that it seems that I cannot overcome it. I do earnestly feel and believe that God has of late again blessed even me, with a sense of his love. And I desire to confess it. Need I try to tell you how little I deserve his blessings? Can I describe how unworthy of them I feel to be? No, I cannot. There is nothing in me to merit esteem. Our God is an all-wise God; full of pity, love, mercy and forgiveness to his little ones. And I find myself claiming his precious promises. Yes, even I, little as I am, do claim them. But he is more full of power than I am of guilt. Nothing can stay his hand. He is able to save to the uttermost. Cannot we trust such a holy being? I feel to say that if my soul were sent to hell, his righteous law approves it well. I awoke with such an awful oppressed feeling about my heart and chest a few nights

ago, (I suffered quite a good deal in that way,) and I remember when not fully awake, calling upon the name of the Lord for mercy, and these words came so sweetly to me, "O for an overcoming faith." Yes, friends, such as will make us ready to say in truth, O God, thy will be done. God alone knows our hearts. He alone can search them. He knows our weakness, and he alone is our proper judge. I feel glad that we have a just being to rule over us, and to guide and guard us. He only allows us to go so far astray, and then calls us back to his dear self again. Perhaps I should not say us, knowing my short comings, yet there is within me to-day, such a strong assurance that God is my Savior, and that he will hold me up, whatever comes against me, that it seems that I cannot help claiming him. I know that he is able and merciful so, Why cannot I trust fully in him? I feel that he has been my friend, is now my friend, and will ever be. I do not believe, nor can the whole world convince me, that he will ever suffer me to be led so far away by Satan, as I have been in the past. I have been of late blessed with the sweet assurance that he will cause me to hate sin more and more, the older I grow. I have the assurance that as my days, so shall my strength be. I believe that he will be to me a God. May he pardon me, if I am claiming too much. The hymn in Beebe's Collection, No. 696, describes my feelings. Please read it. Should you, dear people, request me to stop writing, I will do so if I can. But to whom shall I write? I write to you because I love you. And I love you and every Old School Baptist, because I do firmly believe that God first loved you. May you all grow daily in his grace, and in the knowledge of his truth, is the sincere prayer of an unworthy friend,

"AN INQUIRER."

BURDETT, N. Y., Dec. 7, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER BENTON L. BEEBE:—I have had it in my mind to write you a few lines, many times, since the time when our beloved brother, Elder C. F. Bogardus, brought word to me that you wished to be "remembered" to me, but somehow I have failed to get about it till now. Even now, I have not much to write, though I might write much of a personal character concerning my associations with your father and mother, and others around the land of my birth, and my early union with the church in Wallkill, but this would be dry and empty to the readers of the SIGNS. (There is one thing, however, that I still feel a deep interest in, that I believe will be profitable for the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to think about: that is, whether the multiplication of so many other papers in the same field with the SIGNS, have not grown out of "itching ears" to be heard in the matter of a failure to get some ideas aired that were either unsound, or were not fundamental, as to any point of doctrine at all. Then, failing to find their articles brought forth, they would conclude that the "glory of God" required the appearance of them, so, they could not rest till they saw them sent abroad in sheets under their own control. This has had the effect to cripple the resources of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, than which there is no better publication, and of all that I have seen, scarcely one as good. Those of them that I have seen besides the SIGNS, have good things in them—all of them. But I have not yet seen one that did not fail in some things, to be quite equal to it. I need not be particular to name all the things touching their failure, but the editorials in a special manner (embracing

those of the late Gilbert Beebe) are beyond comparison.

Suppose one writes an article for the SIGNS, and it never sees the light, what of it? It is not in the nature of things that all can be printed. In days that are past, I wrote many articles for the SIGNS, but they were not all printed, though for the most part they were. I remember of counting six in the index at the end of one year, and I felt touched with shame, when I saw so much space taken up by me, that had crowded out better matter. A year after (or more) Elder J. L. Purington had sent a letter to the SIGNS, he died, and that event called out the publication; and though the article was sound and able, it probably would never have seen the light but for the event of his death. Brethren who fail to see their articles printed, should not feel sore over it. It is not even a sign that the editor disapproves them, but many things may intervene to carry them over till they cannot be recalled.

I have a word to say about the price of the SIGNS as compared with other publications, both secular and religious, and I have done. The SIGNS at two dollars a year is as cheap as it can be afforded, if one owns his own press. But if one puts his copy into the hands of those printing other papers, they can do it cheaper; for his own paper pays the expense of his office, and what jobs he can get more than that, is so much gain to him. But remember he cannot begin to do the work as well as one who is engaged in nothing but the one subject. The printer of a secular paper cannot do good work on an Old School Baptist paper. I have seen this in some of the papers sent me, that abounded in the most glaring and hurtful errors. I say these things from

knowledge acquired by two year's experience in the printing business.

I tore off a half sheet before commencing this letter, with a determination not to write more, and will only say to you, and the readers of the SIGNS, that I still rejoice in the truth, and feel thankful to God for my many blessings above what I can ask or think. When I have rough places in the scenes of my life, I still thank God that it is so well with me, since it might have been so much worse. I am nearing the close of my ninety-fourth year, in comfortable health, and have no forebodings of evil. Though I have no place to lay my head, I realize that God has done it, and has made no mistake about it. Praise the Lord, O my soul; let all that is within me bless his holy name; and let me not forget all his benefits.

Love to you and all the brethren.

W. B. SLAWSON.

PHILOMONT, Virginia.

EDITORS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—By special request of brethren and sisters whom I have met. I will venture in the name of the God of Israel to write again, and may the Lord enable me to write a word of comfort and cheer, a word of instruction to those at least who feel eager and desirous to read. Well, I have been among the churches since the 31st of August, and must say that this visit is one long to be remembered, and one for which I feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Such kindness and love, and earnest attention to preaching, I have never before noted.

There is one thing I wish to call attention to, not to quarrel over, but to think about. Some seem to think that if a preacher is plain, and exposes the errors and evils of vain religion, he is out of his

place; but the word of God, and my own experience and past observation, teaches me differently, and when I remember the faithfulness of one Baptist minister, as I believe was sent of God, and note his style, and the effect it had on me when I was in Babylon, I cannot for my life say that God has given the order to cease firing, for Jeremiah says, Spare no arrows at Babylon, for she hath sinned against the Lord. And the twenty-third chapter of Matthew is an armory of projectiles. Whenever God tells me to cease firing, I am ready to obey, but from subordinate ones I cannot comply, because they did not send me, nor can they stop me. I know there is such a thing as carnal weapons and a fleshly spirit, that I oppose, and God forbid that I should be found using them. God forbid that I should cease to stone a wolf, and then nurse a bear. This is all I mean, and we can all think of this, and ask ourselves, If there might not be as much flesh in refraining from preaching certain things, as to declare them? "Whatsoever the Lord bids me speak that shall I speak." If we seek our lives we shall lose them, but if we lose our lives we shall find them.

This letter is a little longer than I expected, but there is more to follow. I have but a poor chance to write, but will, if the Lord will, write again when I reach home, and all these things come up before me. The true wine of the gospel of Jesus keeps us sober and brave, but the wine of Babylon makes us drunk. May God give us continually that pure wine of his kingdom, which cheers the heart of God and man, and enables us to see and know and preach, the whole truth.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1898.

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

F. A. Chick, Hopewell, N. J.

B. L. Beebe, Middletown, N. Y.

All letters for this paper should be addressed, and money orders made payable, to
GILBERT BEEBE'S SON,
Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

DEUTERONOMY XXIX. 29.

DEAR BROTHER:—Please give your views through the SIGNS, upon Deuteronomy xxix. 29, and oblige an earnest seeker after truth, for I do want to be right above everything else. Let brotherly love continue.

Your unworthy brother,

D. F. MATTHEWS.

BEVERLY, Ohio.

R E P L Y .

The text referred to by our brother reads as follows: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

This text has always seemed to us to teach that our God has a secret will concerning all events and persons, which he does not reveal save in the fulfillment of them, and that at the same time he has given unto his children a law which enjoins all obedience upon them. It has seemed to us that the everlasting purpose of God concerning all that transpires, was involved in his secret will, so that nothing has happened, nor ever can happen, outside of this hidden will, or contrary to it. While at the same time that which is to be the rule for the people of God to follow in all their daily life, is that which he has revealed as his law to them. To our finite human reason, which at best can see only what appears, there may seem to be an irreconcilable differ-

ence between these statements; so that reason says both cannot be true. But our reason is all at fault when we bring it to bear upon the will or mind of God. Those who reject the Scriptures (as does Robert Ingersoll) in toto, say that they do so upon the ground that they are unreasonable. Our reason is fallen, and under the dominion of sin, as well as all our other faculties, and therefore, outside of revelation it can know nothing rightly concerning Jehovah or his ways. One word of revelation has more weight than all the deductions of the combined reason of fallen men, though carried to its highest excellence. That there should be apparent differences in the teaching of revelation, is to be expected, because we are finite at best. We can see but in part, and know but in part. Many things in the Scriptures which deal with eternal things, must be expected to be apparently contradictory. Yet in the mind of him who can and does comprehend all things, these apparent contradictions disappear. All is really harmonious, though to finite minds it may not, and indeed cannot, seem so. Those who would glorify human dignity, and human power, have ever done so at the expense of a denial of the sovereignty of God; and those who have hated the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, have ever sought to attach to it all sorts of hideous conclusions. Some have sought to exalt the revealed will of God at the expense of his secret will, and a few perhaps have sought to exalt the secret will of God at the expense of his revealed will. We have personally met with but one or two of the latter class. Some have contended that the secret will of God cannot relate to the things which belong to his revealed will. They seek to place the secret will of God in one part of his universe, and

the revealed will in another part. It is denied that they can occupy the same ground. In other words, it is denied that his revealed law can condemn any man for doing what he has determined to be done, in his secret will. Now we do believe that he can and does condemn men for doing the very things which he has decreed to be done. We do not believe this upon the ground of fallen and perverted human reason, but upon the ground that the inspired Scriptures do state instances in which both of these things are true. It is not our purpose to try to show how these things can be true, and our God still be just and kind. With this we have nothing to do. If any, in reply to the statement of his decrees covering all events, both good and bad, shall say, "Why doth he yet find fault for who has resisted his will?" we shall simply refer the argument to the apostle who said in reply to this objection in his day, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" On the other hand, if any shall say that his secret will does away with his revealed law, so that warnings and reproofs and exhortations are out of place, we shall still refer them to the apostle, who fills a large part of his epistles with just such things as these, that his brethren may learn to walk consistently, in this present evil world. To those who insist upon exhortation and the revealed law, or will of God, and say that therefore his secret will can have no place here, and to those on the other hand, who insist upon the secret will of God, and say that therefore it is unscriptural to warn, rebuke and exhort, we repeat the same thing, and say thou art replying, in either case, against God. Thou art making thyself wiser than the apostle, wiser than the all-wise One himself. For apostles inspired of God, have declared both

the secret will, and the revealed will of God, in the same event or events. To the divine mind they are not inconsistent with each other. We will allude to some instances in the word, which are familiar no doubt to all our readers. We have never seen any attempt to show that these instances did not declare that both wills of God, both his secret and revealed will, were involved. Joseph's brethren violated the revealed will of God when they sold him into Egypt, but they fulfilled his secret will. Those who crucified the Lord, violated the revealed will of God, while at the same time fulfilled his secret will. The same was true of Pharaoh, as Paul declares in Romans ix. We have alluded to these instances because they are familiar. Many other similar instances might be gathered from the Scriptures. Now this is what we understand by the secret, and revealed, things mentioned in the text named by our brother. When we read that the revealed things belong to us, and to our children forever, while the secret things belong to God, we understand the teaching to be that we cannot make God's secret will, either a rule of life, or an excuse for our sins; but that his law revealed to us is to be our pattern, and that by which we are to be judged before him. And this is, and must be so, because we can never know what the secret purpose of God is, before the time when it is fulfilled. When the event is seen, then we can say, it is as was appointed, but we cannot know the appointment of God except by its fulfillment. Therefore we cannot guide ourselves by the secret purpose of God, but must look to his word, or his revealed will, for guidance. It is in this sense that we understand that secret things belong to God, while the things which are revealed belong to us. O.

CHURCH ORDER.

A BROTHER living in New Jersey has asked us to write upon the following questions: "When a church of Christ, in the course of her discipline, has felt compelled to withdraw from one who has been a minister of the gospel in her fellowship, has he afterwards any right to continue the administration of the ordinances of the house of God, either at home or abroad?"

If he does continue to preach and to baptize, can the church which has excluded him, or any of the churches with which she is in fellowship, receive those whom he has baptized, to her fellowship without baptism?

If one who has been thus baptized, should be regarded by the church as a child of grace, and should possess a gift to the edification of those who know the truth, would it be right to ask him to conduct service for the church, while he was still in the position described?"

To all these questions we feel compelled to answer, No. It might be that the church erred in judgment in the exclusion of the minister, or it might be that she was acting upon strictly scriptural grounds, but in either case, while she was holding the truth, and maintaining the order of the gospel, her act must stand until some satisfaction is attained to, either by the church confessing her wrong, if she acted wrongly, or until the minister confesses his wrong, and is restored to the church. Churches may indeed make mistakes in their action, but as long as they remain churches of Christ, their decision must be final, unless we desire to see confusion and trouble spread broadcast in the churches. If this minister should still go on and administer the ordinances, it would be upon his own personal responsibility, and it would not

be by the authority of the church. Those whom he might baptize, would not be baptized in the fellowship of the church. They could not, in the nature of things, have any home in the church. As such a minister could have no right to administer the ordinances, so all his acts in that capacity would be invalid. Should he be indeed a child of God, and a true servant of the church, while he might feel that he had been treated unjustly, yet he ought to remember that his place is to come again to the church, and try to show them that he loves the truth, and that he does not desire to oppose the mind of the church. He should also remember that for him to go on baptizing any children of God, who might be his personal friends, and who might not be well informed, either in the order of the Lord's house, or as to the facts pertaining to his exclusion, would be to bring them afterwards into trouble, because when the time came that they desired the fellowship of the church, and the privileges of the Lord's house, they would be confronted with the fact that the church could not recognize the act of the minister who baptized them, and that therefore they would be required to receive baptism under the authority of the church. In many cases, some of which have come under our own observation, they have not been able to see why this should be so, and so have lived out of the church, to the grief of themselves, and the regret of the church. Such a minister therefore should consider well how it might in the future affect those whom he might baptize, and avoid bringing this trouble upon them.

In reply to the second question, to receive those who had been thus baptized, would be to admit at once that the church had erred in excluding the minister. If however the church has become con-

vinced of this, the only course for her to pursue, would be to confess her error, and seek as far as possible to remedy it. But even then, she could not receive the baptism administered by the excluded minister. Churches may err, and yet be churches of Christ. As such the order and ordinances of the house are with them all the time. Even if she were wrong in the exclusion, the one excluded would not be right in slighting her judgment, and in going on upon his own responsibility. His acts could not be valid in the kingdom of Christ. He should seek to make the matter right before the church. Until this is done he is and must remain without. We do not think however that there have been many cases in which churches have been in the wrong, in such exclusions. But as said, it is our judgment, in any event the church could not recognize the baptism of the excluded minister.

In reply to the third question, in our judgment it would be very unadvisable at least, to ask such an one to take a prominent part in the meetings of the church. It would be right, in conference, for the church to hear what he might have to say, but not orderly for the church to at any time put such an one in charge of her meetings. We could not see how such a course could be sustained from the Scriptures, nor even upon grounds of sound reasoning. Let such an one come in by the door.

We often greatly hesitate in responding to questions which are suggested to us. We feel that our judgment is but weak. Yet we do not feel justified in withholding such views as we have. In no case, when responding to such questions, do we desire to be understood as wishing to interfere with the affairs of any church, or community. We can only

speak of general principles, as they appear to us to be presented in the Scriptures. This we have tried to do in this response. C.

THE WORK COMPLETED.

WE have now completed the supplying of statements of delinquents' accounts, to those of our paid-up subscribers, who so kindly offered to assist us in making collections. As we had to go over our whole list to collect the names of those in the vicinity of each agent, we not only sent statements to agents, but we have sent bills direct to those who are six months or more in arrears, that are not in territory covered by our agents. The total amount of bills thus mailed is nearly fifteen hundred, and the aggregate amount due on them is more than six thousand dollars. If we could collect one-third of this sum, we should be relieved of all financial embarrassment, but experience teaches us that we cannot expect more than one-tenth of it.

The loss on delinquent subscribers, since the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was first published, amounts to more than one hundred thousand dollars. The principle cause of this failure to collect amounts due on these accounts is, that so many think, "O well, my amount is so small, it cannot make any difference to the publisher if I do not attend to the payment just now," and thus it is liable to be postponed until it is forgotten altogether. Each one thinking it is a trivial matter, not knowing how many others are of the same mind concerning their little accounts. But the publisher is fully aware of how numerous such cases are, for he must suffer the combined effect of all such little neglects.

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.

2 TIMOTHY III. 15.

"AND that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Mankind is naturally inclined to be religious, in some way or manner. Cain was as zealous in his way as Abel, but Cain's religion was of this world, and required no faith to open to him by revelation, the things of the Spirit of God; and all worldly religionists from his day to the present time, have gone in the way of Cain, ran greedily after the error of Balaam, and perish in the gainsayings of Core. However they may differ on minor points, they all agree that the salvation of men depends upon the will and works of men, and all repudiate the doctrine that salvation is exclusively of the Lord. They differ much as to what is to be done, but all agree that something must be done by the sinner, or he cannot be saved. Certain who went out from the apostles taught the churches that except they were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved. Jews, Pagans, Papists and Protestants, all have their terms, conditions, offers, proffers, means and instrumentalities, which they hold to be indispensable to salvation, and among others in modern times, there are not a few who hold that the holy Scriptures, if studied attentively, will so enlighten the natural judgment of men, as to give them a saving knowledge of God; and the Bible is therefore a means of salvation. These construe the text proposed for consideration, as establishing that doctrine, and hence the zeal which has been manifested for the last half century for supplying the heathen with Bibles, and missionaries, by which

they claim they are putting into the hands of the heathen the means or instrument, by which they can, if they will, secure their everlasting salvation. We will examine the passage before us, and see if it warrants any such conclusions. Timothy, unto whom the words were addressed, was a Gentile, his father being a Greek; but his opportunities to become familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures, were far greater than what was common among Gentiles, because his mother, Eunice, was a Jewess; and of her and her mother, Lois, Timothy's grandmother, it is said, that the faith which Timothy possessed, had dwelt in them both before it was manifested in him. This undoubtedly accounts for the fact that Timothy had from a child known the Scriptures. He had known them from oral instruction, and from reading them. He knew them in their letter, as they were read in the synagogues of the Jews every Sabbath day. Whether Timothy had any spiritual knowledge of them from his childhood we are not informed, unless we so construe the words of Paul in our text as to signify that Timothy was divinely instructed from a child. Paul himself also had known the Scriptures from his infancy, for he was well instructed in the law and the prophets, and in all the Jews' religion, so far as the letter of the Scriptures was concerned; but we know that he was as ignorant of everything of a spiritual nature, as any of the heathen who had never seen the Scriptures, or heard them read, until God was pleased to reveal his Son in him. With all his biblical knowledge, and religious instruction, and pharisaical zeal, he continued to breathe out slaughter against the saints, and verily thought he ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth, until about noon of

the day when God arrested him on his way to Damascus.

The Scriptures of the Old, as well as those of the New Testament, are holy Scriptures, because they were written by holy men, who wrote as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost. But holy as they were, they could not give eternal life to any dead sinner, who read them. The carnal Jews, with many of our day, sincerely believed that they could, and to expose their error, Christ said to them, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me." Instead of embodying eternal life for those carnal Jews, they contained a full and complete testimony of Christ, in whom those Jews did not believe. But our text says they are able to make thee (Timothy) wise unto salvation. But how, through the reading or studying of them? No, certainly not. Thousands had read and studied them, and had become as familiar with them as Timothy or Saul, but died in their sins. Paul does not say they *were* able, but which *are* able. Timothy, at the time this address was made to him, was manifestly a subject of saving grace, and Paul was persuaded that the faith which had dwelt in his mother and grandmother, dwelt in Timothy also. Being now a christian, having the faith of God's elect, born of God, and taught of the Spirit, those Scriptures which he had only before known in their letter, and which had had no power to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, are now, in his quickened, regenerated state, able to—to do what? To save him from the perdition of ungodly men, from the curse of the law, or from the wrath of God? By no means. From all these he was already saved, as Paul had affirmed in the first chapter, and ninth

verse, of this epistle, was already accomplished. "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." What then are the Scriptures able to do for a saved, called, justified and divinely instructed Timothy? They are able to make thee wise unto salvation, that is, to that salvation in which he now stood, to enlighten his spiritual vision in more fully comprehending that glorious plan of grace and salvation in which he with all the election of grace was embraced, and thus save him from being like children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. The salvation unto which the Scriptures are now able to save thee (Timothy), is fully expressed in the next verse: "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." They are not designed that the man of the world may be perfect, but the profit is unto the man of God, in furnishing him to all good works, and thus making him wise unto salvation, through—what? Through faith which is in Christ Jesus; not through faith which originates in the creature, but that of which Christ is both the author and the finisher, that by which we live. "For the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us, and given himself for us." This faith is in Christ, and Christ is in you, the hope of glory. The Spirit of Christ was in the prophets and men of God who wrote the Scriptures, and being in them, signified beforehand the suffering he should endure, and the glory that should follow. The same

Spirit is now in the saints, and by it the Scriptures, in their spirit and life, marrow and fatness, are opened to their understanding, and they are thereby made wise, for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., May 1, 1856.

CLOSE OF VOLUME SIXTY-SIX.

WITH this number we complete the sixty-sixth year of the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Since its first issue nearly two-thirds of a century has elapsed, and these three score and six years have carried away with them two generations of the Adamic family, to their eternal home. Few indeed of the names that were on the original subscription list of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, can now be found on our books. How transient all that pertains to earth! While nearly all the first patrons of the paper have disappeared, and the names of contributors to its columns changed, yet the eternal truth of God remains the same, and can never change. The same fundamental principles of this truth that were set forth in the prospectus of the SIGNS, have always been, and are to-day, advocated in its columns. Although the editors and readers may pass away, the doctrine remains, and once the truth forever the truth.

Though we are painfully aware of our own weakness, yet trusting in the sustaining power of God, and the forbearance of our brethren, we venture on another year of the responsible duties of conducting the publication.

Thanking our brethren and friends for their kind support through the past volume, both financially, and by contributions to the columns of the paper, we close our labors for the year 1898.

B.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEPARTED this life, Nov. 22d, 1898, after a week's illness of appendicitis, at Charles E. Burroughs', on Roses Brook, Miss Sarah Burroughs, aged 64 years. Sister Burroughs was brought up under a Presbyterian discipline, of the Calvinistic order, but as she came to years, and the order emerged into the modern Arminian way, she became separated from her former belief, and had no fellowship with the idea of sprinkling for baptism. She was associated with the Old School Baptists, and with her half brother and sister, both older than herself, came in years past to our meetings. As they had both preceded her to the grave, and left her alone in the world, she removed to the home of her nephew, Daniel Burroughs, at Hobart, Delaware Co., N. Y., where she had lived several years. She thought she would visit her nephew's son before winter set in, accordingly went there, it being near her old home, and was taken ill and died in the neighborhood of her old home, and burying ground. Last August she came to our regular second Saturday church meeting, Second church of Roxbury, and related her exercise to the church, with a desire to be baptized in the fellowship of the church, and was received and baptized the following Sunday, and realized "rest to her soul," in following her Lord and Master in baptism. On two occasions since, she was with us at meeting, and we very much loved her company, and she also enjoyed the preaching of the word, and the company of the saints. She was indeed a dear sister in Christ, of a meek and quiet spirit; such as are always an ornament to their profession. But she is at rest, and her spirit with Jesus, while her body rests in the tomb, to be changed from mortal to immortality, from natural to spiritual, from weakness to power, and in that God-given body to be with and like Jesus, though friends, neighbors and the church, mourn their loss. May our God comfort us all, and his name be glorified.

The day of her burial was a very stormy one, yet a large company of friends and neighbors were present, with the writer, to attend the last solemn rites to the departed dead.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLEY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Nov. 29, 1898.

BY request of sister Phebe Alice Horton, of Goshen, N. Y., I send the following notice of the death of her son, Ray Horton, in the hospital at Cavite, Philippine Islands.

The subject of this notice was a volunteer in the service of the United States, in Light Battery G, Sixth Artillery, and was 20 years old July 23d, 1898. Being prostrated with typhoid fever, he was sent to the hospital, where he died, Sept. 23d, 1898. A letter from his Captain to his mother testifies to his faithful performance of the duties of a soldier until he was dis-

abled by sickness, and expresses earnest sympathy with the relatives who mourn the early death of our young friend. May our dear sister feel the support of divine grace in this severe bereavement, and be enabled to rest in the confidence that her grief is but the fellowship of that suffering by which she is identified with her gracious Redeemer. Only the God who has called her to endure this sorrow, can give the consolation of the gospel of his grace by which she may be enabled to say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good."

WM. L. BEEBE.

WARWICK, N. Y., Dec. 5, 1898.

BROTHER William Shaw was born in Surry Co., N. C., July 12th, 1816, being one of a family of six, of whom only one, the youngest, John Shaw, now survives. In 1831 he was taken by his parents to Henry Co., Ind., where on April 5th, 1838, he was married to Catherine M. Barnard, with whom he lived until her death, last November, a space of nearly sixty years. To them were born nine children, and of the family there are now living four sons and two daughters. In 1843, brother and sister Shaw joined the Primitive Baptist Church, and continued active members the remainder of their lives. Their home was always a home for those of like precious faith, and they had meeting at their house once a month, for the last five or six years. He died in the early morning of Nov. 8th, 1898, at his home in Clarksville, Iowa, being 82 years old.

The services were conducted by the writer, having Elders William Stillwell and E. A. Norton, to assist. The writer tried to speak a few comforting words from Philippians iii. 20, 21. After services we repaired to the cemetery, to lay the body to rest till the resurrection morning.

M. L. JACKSON.

NORA SPRINGS, Iowa.

RECEIPTS.

TO AID IN SENDING THE "SIGNS"
TO INDIGENT SUBSCRIBERS.

Abram Smith, Ind., \$.50; Mrs. J. H. Rockefeller, N. Y., \$1.00; Philemon Stout, Ill., \$4.00; John Hobson, N. Y., \$3.00; Mrs. John Muir, N. Y., \$4.00; C. A. Spencer, N. Y., \$1.00.—Total, \$13.50.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

Previously acknowledged.....	\$167 15
Mrs. John Pettit, N. Y., \$3.00; Philemon Stout, Ill., \$4.00; Attie A. Curtis, Me., \$1.00; C. A. Spencer, N. Y.; 5.00; Eli Cartwright, Cal., \$1.00.—Total.....	14 00
Total to date.....	\$181 15

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